

Acts

CHAPTER 1

THE former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom he had chosen:

3 To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, you have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come to-

gether, they asked of him, saying, Lord, will you at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said to them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in his own power.

8 *But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth.*

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 *Which also said, You men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.*

1:5 Water baptism doesn't save us. In Acts 2:38, Peter's hearers repented and believed the gospel *before* they were baptized. In Acts 10:47, those who believed the gospel received the Holy Spirit (they passed from death to life) *before* they were baptized.

1:8 "Oh my friends, we are loaded down with countless church activities, while the *real* work of the church, that of evangelizing the world and winning the lost, is almost entirely neglected!" *Oswald J. Smith*

1:10,11 The inference is, "Don't stand here gazing up into the heavens. God has granted everlasting life to sinful humanity. Go and wait for the power to take the gospel to the world." We haven't been saved to gaze up to heaven, but to take the light to those who sit in the dark shadow of death. How can any person, who professes to have the love of God in him, sit passively while sinners die daily and go to hell? Paul said, "Woe is to me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16).

1:11 **Second coming of Jesus:** See 1 Corinthians 4:5.

12 Then returned they to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

19 And it was known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Akeldama, that is to say, The field of blood.

20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishopric let another take.

21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

22 Beginning from the baptism of John, to that same day that he was taken up

from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed, and said, You, Lord, which know the hearts of all men, show whether of these two you have chosen,

25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

CHAPTER 2

AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared to them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and

1:14 Prayer—the secret weapon: See Acts 4:24.

1:18 When a hanging body decomposes, this will be the grisly result.

1:21–26 As Israel crossed over the Jordan on dry ground, God instructed them to place twelve stones as immovable witnesses—a memorial to tell the Israelite children what God had done for them (Joshua 4:1–7). Likewise, the Church was established with twelve witnesses so that we would know and tell our children what God has done for us through Christ.

POINTS FOR OPEN-AIR PREACHING



How to Draw a Crowd

One of the most difficult things to do is draw a crowd to hear the gospel. Today's society has been programmed to want immediate action, and open-air preaching isn't too attractive to guilty sinners. Therefore we have to be as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves. A serpent gets its heart's desire subtly. Our desire is for sinners to gather under the sound of the gospel.

Ask people passing by what they think is the greatest killer of drivers in the U.S. This stirs their curiosity. Some begin calling out "Alcohol!" or "Falling asleep at the wheel!" Tell them it's not and repeat the question a few more times, saying that you will give a dollar to the person who gets the answer. Tell them that they will never guess what it is that kills more drivers than anything else in America. A few more shouts emit from the crowd. People are now waiting around for the answer. What is it that kills more drivers than anything else in the United States? What is it that could be the death of you and me? You won't believe this, but it is "trees." Millions of them line our highways, waiting for a driver to kill. When one is struck, the tree stays still, sending the driver into eternity.

Then tell the crowd that you have another question for them. Ask what they think is the most common food on which people choke to death in U.S. restaurants. Over the next few minutes, go through the same scenario. People call out "Steak!" "Chicken bones!" Believe it or not, the answer is "hard-boiled egg yoke."

By now you have a crowd that is enjoying what is going on. Ask them what they think is the most dangerous job in America. Someone calls out "cop." It's not. Someone else may name another dangerous profession like "fire fighter." Say, "Good one... but wrong." Give a suggestion by saying, "Why doesn't someone say 'electrician'?" Someone takes the suggestion and says, "Electrician!" Say, "Sorry, it's not electrician." The most dangerous job in the United States... is to be the president. Out of forty or so, four have been murdered while on the job.

Then tell the crowd you have another question. "Does anyone in the crowd consider himself to be a 'good person'?" By now you will have noted who in the crowd has the self-confidence to speak out. Point to one or two and ask, "Sir, do you consider yourself to be a good person?" The Bible tells us that "every man will proclaim his own goodness" (Proverbs 20:6), and he does. He smiles and says, "Yes, I do consider myself to be a good person." Ask him if he has ever told a lie. Has he stolen, lusted, blasphemed, etc.? That's when all heaven breaks loose. There is conviction of sin. Sinners hear the gospel, and angels rejoice.

MORE QUESTIONS FOR CROWD DRAWING

- Who wrote, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country"? (*President Kennedy's speechwriter*)
- What is the only fish that can blink with both eyes? (*A shark*)
- Who was John Lennon's first girlfriend? (*Thelma Pickles*)
- How long does it take the average person to fall asleep: 2 minutes, 7 minutes, or 4 hours? (*7 minutes*)
- How long is a goldfish's memory span: 3 seconds, 3 minutes, or 3 hours? (*3 seconds*)
- How many muscles does a cat have in each ear: 2, 32, or 426? (*32*)

the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works

of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What means this?

13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

14 But Peter, standing up with the elev-

en, lifted up his voice, and said to them, You men of Judea, and all you that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known to you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as you suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, said God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 You men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be held by it.

25 For David speaks concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and

my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because you will not leave my soul in hell, neither will you suffer your Holy One to see corruption.

28 You have made known to me the ways of life; you shall make me full of joy with your countenance.

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us to this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He, seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has shed forth this, which you now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he said himself, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand,

35 Until I make your foes your footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission

2:21 Salvation is possible for every person. See Romans 10:13.

2:31 Messianic prophecy fulfilled: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10). See 1 Peter 2:24 footnote.

2:38 Repentance—its necessity for salvation. See Acts 3:19.

PRINCIPLES OF GROWTH FOR THE NEW AND GROWING CHRISTIAN



Water Baptism—Sprinkle or Immerse?

The Bible says, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . .” (Acts 2:38). There is no question about whether you *should* be baptized. The questions are how, when, and by whom?

It would seem clear from Scripture that those who were baptized were fully immersed in water. Here’s one reason why: “John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there” (John 3:23). If John were merely sprinkling believers, he would have needed only a cupful of water. Baptism by immersion also pictures our death to sin, burial, and resurrection to new life in Christ. (See Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12.)

The Philippian jailer and his family were baptized at midnight, the same hour they believed (Acts 16:30–33). The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized as soon as he believed (Acts 8:35–37), as was Paul (Acts 9:17,18). Baptism is a step of obedience, and God blesses our obedience. So what are you waiting for?

Who should baptize you? It is clear from Scripture that other believers had the privilege, but check with your pastor; he may want the honor himself.

For the next principle of growth, see Mark 12:41–44 footnote.

of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his

word were baptized: and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

USING THE LAW IN EVANGELISM



Peter’s audience was composed of “devout men” (v. 2) who were gathered at Pentecost to celebrate the giving of God’s Law on Mount Sinai. Even though these were godly Jews, Peter told them that they were “lawless” — that they had violated God’s Law by murdering Jesus (v. 23). He drove home that fact by saying, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same Jesus, *whom you have crucified*, both Lord and Christ” (v. 36, emphasis added). It was then that they saw that their sin was personal. They were “pricked in their heart” and cried out for help. Only after the Law convicted them of their guilt did Peter tell his hearers the good news of the fine being paid for them in Christ (v. 38).

CHAPTER 3

NOW Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that

POINTS FOR OPEN-AIR PREACHING

**Crowd Etiquette**

If you have other Christians with you, have them form an audience and look as though they are listening to your preaching. This will encourage others to stop and listen. Tell the Christians to never stand with their back to the preacher. I have seen open-air meetings when a fellow laborer is preaching for the first time, and what are the Christians doing? They are talking among themselves. Why then should anyone stop and listen if those in front of the speaker aren't even attentive? It is so easy to chat with friends when you've heard the gospel a million times before. I have found myself doing it, but it is so disheartening for the preacher to speak to the backs of a crowd.

Also, instruct Christians not to argue with hecklers. That will ruin an open-air meeting. I have seen an old lady hit a heckler with her umbrella and turn the crowd from listening to the gospel to watching the fight she has just started. Who can blame them? Remember, the enemy will do everything he can to distract your listeners. Don't let him. See 2 Timothy 2:24–26 footnote.

entered into the temple;

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed to them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

10 And they knew that it was he which

sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened to him.

11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

12 And when Peter saw it, he answered to the people, You men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? or why do you look so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his Son Jesus; whom you delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let

2:44–46 The need for church. "None of us is self-sufficient in our spiritual lives. We need God, and we need each other. A lot of people go to church because they think God takes roll. For them, the important thing is to make sure their name gets checked off every Sunday on the heavenly roster. But that's not the way it works. Church is not some kind of moral obligation, some habit or tradition that is 'the right thing to do.' Church is a place where we worship God, share our faith with the community of believers, build each other up, and get empowered to go out into the world and *live out our faith!*

"Similarly, some people think of their spiritual life as if they were one person in a telephone booth, talking to God on a private line. They don't want to be bothered by the demands of 'organized religion' and don't think they need anyone else. 'Oh yeah, I'm spiritual,' they say, 'I just don't like church.' To those folks I say: You cannot grow spiritually in isolation." *Rich DeVos, Hope From My Heart: Ten Lessons for Life*

him go.

14 But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted to you;

15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God has raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

16 And his name through faith in his name has made this man strong, whom you see and know: yes, the faith which is by him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17 And now, brethren, I realize that through ignorance you did it, as did also your rulers.

18 But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he has so fulfilled.

The open-air speaker's calling is as honorable as it is arduous, as useful as it is laborious. God alone can sustain you in it, but with Him at your side you will have nothing to fear.

CHARLES SPURGEON

19 Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached to you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

22 For Moses truly said to the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you of your brethren, like to me; him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say to you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet,

shall be destroyed from among the people. 24 Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

25 You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, And in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 To you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

CHAPTER 4

AND as they spoke to the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold to the next day: for it was now eventide.

4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have you done this?

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, You rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by

4:12

Is Suffering the Entrance to Heaven?

In January 2000, a well-known ex-televangelist said on a worldwide TV talk show, "I believe that every person who died in the Holocaust went to heaven." He was very sincere, and if he was seeking the commendation of the world, he surely got it with that statement. Who wouldn't consider what he said to be utterly compassionate? However, let's look at the implications of his heartfelt beliefs. His statement seemed to limit salvation to the Jews who died in the Holocaust, because he added that "their blood laid a foundation for the nation of Israel." If the slaughtered Jews made it to heaven, did the many *Gypsies* who died in the Holocaust also obtain eternal salvation? If his statement includes Gentiles, is the salvation he spoke of limited to those who died at the hands of Nazis? Did the many *Frenchmen* who met their death at the hands of cruel Nazis go to heaven also?

Perhaps he was saying that the death of Jesus on the cross covered *all* of humanity, and that all will eventually be saved—something called "universalism." This means that salvation will also come to Hitler and the Nazis who killed the Jews. However, I doubt if he was saying that. Such a statement would have brought the scorn of his Jewish host, and of the world whose compassion has definite limits.

If pressed, he probably didn't mean that only the Jews in the camps went to heaven, because that smacks of *racism*. He was likely saying that those who died were saved because they died in such *tragic circumstances*. Then Jesus was lying when He said, "I am the

way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). There is another way to heaven—death in a Nazi concentration camp. Does that mean that the many Jews who died under *communism* went to heaven? Or is salvation limited to *German* concentration camps?

If their salvation came because of the grim circumstances surrounding their death, does a Jew therefore enter heaven after suffering for hours before dying in a car wreck... if he was killed by a drunk driver who happened to be German? Bear in mind that his suffering may have been much greater than someone who died within minutes in a Nazi gas chamber.

Many unsaved think we *can* merit entrance into heaven by our suffering. Their error was confirmed by this sincere, compassionate man of God. They may now disregard the truth, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). They can now save themselves by the means of their own death... if they suffer enough.

The ex-televangelist was concerned that his indiscretions of the 1980s brought discredit to the kingdom of God. However, those actions fade into history compared to the damage done by saying that there is another means of salvation outside of Jesus Christ, on a program watched by untold millions around the world. Who on earth needs to repent and trust in Jesus, if millions entered the kingdom without being born again? No one.

him does this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of

them, that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle has been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it.

17 But that it spread no further among

the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken to you more than to God, you judge.

20 *For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done.

22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was showed.

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, you are God, which have made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

25 Who by the mouth of your servant David have said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

27 For of a truth against your holy child Jesus, whom you have anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gath-

ered together,

28 For to do whatsoever your hand and your counsel determined before to be done.

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant to your servants, that with all boldness they may speak your word,

30 By stretching forth your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of your holy child Jesus.

31 *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that anything of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made to every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

4:24 Prayer—the secret weapon: See Acts 12:12.

4:24 Fossil evidence points to creation. "The creation account in Genesis and the theory of evolution could not be reconciled. One must be right and the other wrong. The story of the fossils agrees with the account of Genesis. In the oldest rocks we did not find a series of fossils covering the gradual changes from the most primitive creatures to developed forms but rather, in the oldest rocks, developed species suddenly appeared. Between every species there was a complete absence of intermediate fossils." *D. B. Gower* (biochemist), "Scientist Rejects Evolution," *Kentish Times*

4:29 When we are afraid to witness to sinners, we can stand firmly upon the wonderful promise of God given in Isaiah 41:10. We need not fear or be dismayed because He is with us. He will strengthen, help, and uphold us with His righteous right hand.

CHAPTER 5

BUT a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not your own? and after it was sold, was it not in your own power? why have you conceived this thing in your heart? you have not lied to men, but to God.

5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered to her, Tell me whether you sold the land for so much? And she said, Yes, for so much.

9 Then Peter said to her, How is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried your husband are at the door, and shall carry you out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

13 And of the rest no man dared join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and wo-



"We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel."

Benjamin Franklin

men.)

15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about to Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

21 And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morn-

ing, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told,

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that you should not teach in this name? and, behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew and hanged on a tree.

31 Him has God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to them that obey him.

33 When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all

the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;

35 And said to them, You men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do as touching these men.

36 For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

38 And now I say to you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

39 But if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it; lest haply you be found even to fight against God.

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

.....

*For how to witness to Jews,
see Romans 3:1 footnote.*

.....

CHAPTER 6

AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude

of the disciples to them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 *And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.*

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke.

11 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceases not to speak blasphemous

words against this holy place, and the law:

14 For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.

15 And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

CHAPTER 7

THEN said the high priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,

3 And said to him, Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and come into the land which I shall show you.

4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein you now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

6 And God spoke on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and

7:5 The Bible's fascinating facts. In the Book of Beginnings, in Genesis 16:12, God said that Ishmael (the progenitor of the Arab race, see *Time*, April 4, 1988) would be a "wild man... and every man's hand [will be] against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." Almost four thousand years later, who could deny that this prophecy is being fulfilled in the Arab race? The Arabs and the Jews are "brethren" having Abraham as their ancestor. The whole Middle East conflict is caused by their dwelling together.

Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

11 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.

12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

13 And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known to Pharaoh.

14 Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

15 So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers,

16 And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.

17 But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

18 Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

19 The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

21 And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.

26 And the next day he showed himself to them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, you are brethren; why do you wrong one to another?

27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?

28 Will you kill me, as you did the Egyptian yesterday?

29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian,

7:22 Don't be concerned that you aren't "gifted" as a speaker when it comes to reaching the lost. Moses "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds," yet God didn't use him to deliver Israel until 40 years later. It took all that time of tending sheep to produce in him a meekness of character. We are told, "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Psalm 25:9). The "wisdom" that Moses gained in Egypt was not wisdom from above. When he saw injustice, he took the law into his own hands and committed murder. God doesn't need the wisdom of this world. He merely desires a pure, humble, peace-loving, compassionate soul to use as a mouthpiece for the gospel. He wants us to be a lighthouse of His love. The moment we receive the Spirit of Christ, we receive the gift of those virtues. We don't need to tend sheep for 40 years when we have the character of the Good Shepherd manifesting through us.

7:26 "We do wrong, we think wrong, and our efforts to deal with wrong are themselves corrupted by wrong." *Chuck Colson*

where he begat two sons.

30 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

31 When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came to him,

32 Saying, I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and dared not behold.

33 Then said the Lord to him, Put off your shoes from your feet: for the place where you stand is holy ground.

34 I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you into Egypt.

35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made you a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

36 He brought them out, after that he had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

37 This is that Moses, which said to the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you of your brethren, like to me; him shall you hear.

38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spoke to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give to us:

39 To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,

40 Saying to Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which

brought us out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him.

41 And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O you house of Israel, have you offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?

43 Yes, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which you made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking to Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen.

45 Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, to the days of David;

46 Who found favor before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

47 But Solomon built him an house.

48 Howbeit the most High dwells not in temples made with hands; as said the prophet,

49 Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will you build me? said the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

50 Has not my hand made all these things?

51 You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do you.

52 Which of the prophets have not your

7:33 Moses was told to remove his sandals because by God's presence even the ground on which he stood was made holy. Through faith in Christ, the believer himself is made holy. Now his feet are shod with the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15), to take the word of salvation to those who stand on unholy ground.

7:39 When you turn your back on God, any way you go is a wrong direction.

History reveals the fate of the apostles:

PHILIP: Stoned to death, Phrygia, A.D. 54

BARNABAS: Burned to death, Cyprus, A.D. 64

PETER: Crucified, Rome, A.D. 69

PAUL: Beheaded, Rome, A.D. 69

ANDREW: Crucified, Achaia, A.D. 70

MATTHEW: Beheaded, Ethiopia, A.D. 70

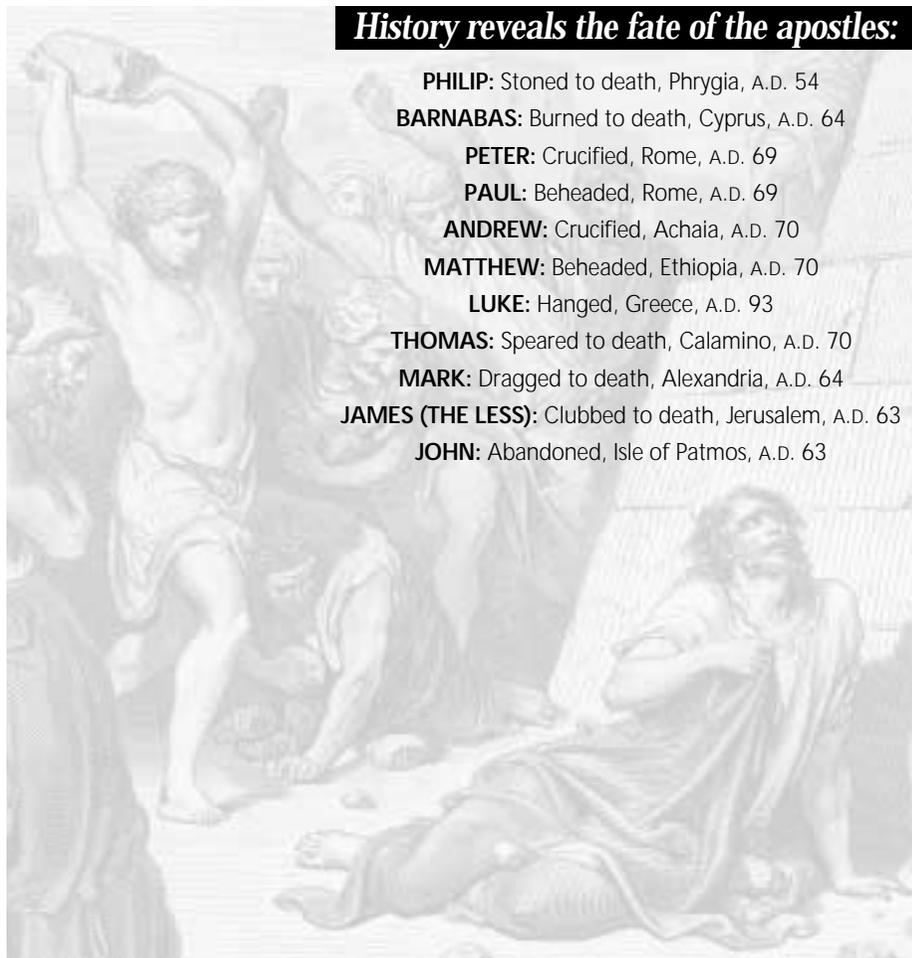
LUKE: Hanged, Greece, A.D. 93

THOMAS: Speared to death, Calamino, A.D. 70

MARK: Dragged to death, Alexandria, A.D. 64

JAMES (THE LESS): Clubbed to death, Jerusalem, A.D. 63

JOHN: Abandoned, Isle of Patmos, A.D. 63



fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers:

53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing

7:55 Honesty Road. As I was open-air preaching one day, a man looked to the heavens not to see the glory of God, but to shout obscenities at Jesus Christ that would make your hair curl in tight knots. He concluded his conversation by telling the Lord to strike him dead. He then turned to me and screamed, "Nothing happened!" I said, "Yes, it did. You have just stored up wrath for yourself, which will be revealed on the Day of Wrath."

Why would a man lack *any* fear of God? I believe it's because we insist on telling a sinful world that God loves them and has a wonderful plan for their lives. This is the gospel according to the contemporary Church. We give the world a choice: Do they choose God's wonderful plan, or is their own life's plan more wonderful? For the answer to this dilemma and the biblical way to witness, see Matthew 10:22 footnote.

on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

CHAPTER 8

AND Saul was consenting to his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

4 *Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.*

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ to them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed to those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were pos-

sessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

11 And to him they had regard, because for a long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit:

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit.

20 But Peter said to him, Your money perish with you, because you have thought that the gift of God may be purchased with

7:59 "You can kill us, but you cannot do us any real harm." *Justin Martyr* (martyred A.D. 165)

8:19 **Using God's power.** "Waste of power is a tragedy. God does not waste the great power of his Spirit on those who want it simply for their own sake, to be more holy, or good, or gifted. His great task is to carry on the work for which Jesus sacrificed his throne and his life—the redemption of fallen humanity." *Alan Redpath, The Life of Victory*

money.

21 You have neither part nor lot in this matter: for your heart is not right in the sight of God.

22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

23 For I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

24 Then answered Simon, and said, Pray to the Lord for me, that none of these things which you have spoken come upon me.

25 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

26 And the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south to the way that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Isaiah the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, Go near, and join yourself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran there to him, and heard him read the prophet Isaiah, and said, Do you understand what you read?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray you, of whom does the prophet speak? of himself, or of some other man?

No man who preaches the gospel without zeal is sent from God to preach at all.

CHARLES SPURGEON

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached to him Jesus.

36 **And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what does hinder me to be baptized?**

37 **And Philip said, If you believe with all your heart, you may. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into

8:26,27 “God has placed you where He has placed no one else. No one else in the world has the same relationships you have. No one will stand in the same grocery store line at exactly the same moment you do. No one else will come across a hungering diplomat in the desert at exactly the same time you do. God hasn’t put you in those places merely to model the truth. Listen for the voice of the Spirit to whisper in your ear. Watch for the stranger on the road. And be aware of your opportunities to go where He would send you.” *Chuck Swindoll*

8:35 Wisdom in witnessing. The Scriptures tell us, “He who wins souls is wise” (Proverbs 11:30). If we are wise, we will discern the condition of a person’s heart. If he is a sincere Nicodemus, tell him the good news; if he is like the arrogant lawyer (Luke 10:25–29) who has no understanding of sin, righteousness, and judgment, use the Law to stir his conscience and will. If he is not conscious of his sin, use the Law to convict him. If he has a knowledge of sin, give him the gospel. (See Matthew 19:17–22 footnote.)

When the fruit is ripe, it should practically fall off the tree, as with the Ethiopian eunuch. God led Philip to a soul that was ripe for salvation! If you have to twist and pull an apple off a branch, you will probably find it to be sour.

the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

CHAPTER 9

AND Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, **2** And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?

5 And he said, Who are you, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you persecute: it is hard for you to kick against the pricks.

6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what will you have me to do? And the Lord said to him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told you what you must do.

7 And the men which journeyed with

him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said to him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prays,

12 And has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem:

14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on your name.

15 But the Lord said to him, Go your way: for he is a chosen vessel to me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even

8:39 God does the "follow-up." The exciting thing about true conversion is that there will be little need for what is commonly called "follow-up." A true convert will not need to be followed. He will put his hand to the plow and not look back (Luke 9:62). Of course, he will have to be fed, disciplined, and nurtured. These things are biblical and most necessary. This can be done simply by encouraging him to read the Bible daily, answering questions he may have, and teaching him principles of fellowship, prayer, evangelism, etc.

Sometimes there is confusion between "follow-up" (we need to follow the new convert because he will fall away if we don't) and discipleship (instructing him to continue in the word of Christ—John 8:31). Look what happened after the Ethiopian eunuch was saved—he was left without follow-up. The Spirit of God transported Philip away and left the new convert in the wilderness. This is because his salvation wasn't dependent on Philip, but upon his relationship with the indwelling Lord. Those whom God saves, He keeps. If He is the author of their faith, He will be the finisher. If He has begun a good work in them, He will complete it. He is able to keep them from falling and present them faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Jesus, that appeared to you in the way as you came, has sent me, that you might receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.



*The Buddhist seeks salvation by works.
For how to witness to him,
see page 628.*

19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

21 But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came here for that intent, that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?

22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

23 And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:

24 But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared to them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

28 And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

29 And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.

30 Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

31 Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied.

32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda.

33 And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, which had kept his bed

9:22 Don't be discouraged if, as a new Christian you feel inadequate to share your faith. The very fact that you were once enjoying the pleasures of sin and are now walking that path of righteousness is a testimony that Jesus is the Christ. Many no doubt heard of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus without hearing him preach. A changed life is a testimony in itself.

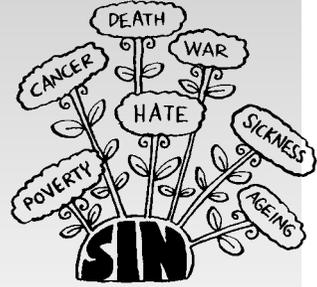
9:31 Fear of the Lord. "The fear of the Lord involves a sober awareness of what He loves, of what He despises, and of the consequences of disobedience and rebellion against Him. It leads to a sincere desire to please Him, heartfelt gratefulness for His mercy, and unending delight in His loving presence. So when we choose to 'fear the Lord' we will heed Romans 12:9, 'Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.'" *Berit Kjos*

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

9:37

“What should I say to someone who has lost a loved one through cancer?”

Be very careful not to give the impression that God was punishing the person for his sins. Instead, speak about the fact that all around us we can see the evidence of a “fallen creation.” Explain how in the beginning there was no disease, pain, suffering, or death. But when sin entered the world, it brought suffering with it. Then gently turn the conversation away from the person who died to the person who is still living. Ask if he has been thinking about God, and if he has kept the Ten Commandments. Then take the opportunity to go through the spiritual nature of God’s Law. Someone who has lost a loved one often begins to ask soul-searching questions about God, death, and eternity. Many people are so hard-hearted that it takes a tragedy to make them receptive to God.



eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34 And Peter said to him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ makes you whole: arise, and make your bed. And he arose immediately.

35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was near to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent to him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted

her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

CHAPTER 10

THERE was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave many alms to the people, and prayed to God always.

3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying to him, Cornelius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said to him, Your prayers and your alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

6 He lodges with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell you what you ought to do.

7 And when the angel which spoke to Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout sol-

dier of them that waited on him continually;

8 And when he had declared all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew near to the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending to him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

12 Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

15 And the voice spake to him again the second time, What God has cleansed, that call not common.

16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said to him, Behold, three men seek you.

20 Arise therefore, and get you down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent to him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom you seek: what is the cause wherefore you are come?

22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that fears God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an

holy angel to send for you into his house, and to hear words of you.

23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

If people are to be saved by a message, it must contain at least some measure of knowledge. There must be light as well as fire.

CHARLES SPURGEON

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

28 And he said to them, You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come to one of another nation; but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 Therefore came I to you without gain-saying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent you have sent for me?

30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

31 And said, Cornelius, your prayer is heard, and your alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call here Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he comes, shall speak to you.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to you;

and you have well done that you are come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded you of God.

34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that fears him, and works righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

37 That word, I say, you know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly;

41 Not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

10:38 The Trinity at work in redemption. "In every major phase of the redemption, each Person of the Godhead is directly involved. Their involvement in each successive phase may be set out as follows:

1. *Incarnation.* The Father incarnated the Son in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit (see Luke 1:35).
2. *Baptism in the Jordan River.* The Spirit descended on the Son, and the Father spoke His approval from heaven (see Matthew 3:14–17).
3. *Public ministry.* The Father anointed the Son with the Spirit (see Acts 10:38).
4. *The crucifixion.* Jesus offered Himself to the Father through the Spirit (see Hebrews 9:14).
5. *The resurrection.* The Father resurrected the Son by the Spirit (see Acts 2:32; Romans 1:4).
6. *Pentecost.* From the Father the Son received the Spirit, whom He then poured out on His disciples (see Acts 2:33).

Each Person of the Godhead—and I mean this reverently—was jealous to be included in the process of redeeming humanity." *Derek Prince, Atonement*

10:47 Baptism. If we are saved by being water baptized (as certain Scriptures *seem* to imply), then we are saved by works and not grace. The Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles *before* they were baptized. This means they were saved (by God's grace) *before* they went near water. Paul said that Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach (1 Corinthians 1:17). That's because it is the gospel that saves us, not our works in response to it. As this verse shows, baptism is an act of obedience *after* salvation.

CHAPTER 11

AND the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

3 Saying, You went in to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them.

4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order to them, saying,

5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying to me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean has at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God has cleansed, that call not common.

10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come to the house where I was, sent from Caesarea to me.

12 And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

13 And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said to him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell you words, whereby you and all your house shall be saved.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did to us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance to life.

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but to the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spoke to the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord.



Each individual is unique from the moment of conception. For how we are fearfully and wonderfully made, see Psalm 139:14 footnote.

22 Then tidings of these things came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave to the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith: and much people was added to the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judea:

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

CHAPTER 12

NOW about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to

THE FUNCTION OF THE LAW



12:7

"The very first end of the Law [is], namely, convicting men of sin; awakening those who are still asleep on the brink of hell... The ordinary method of God is to convict sinners by the Law, and that only. The gospel is not the means which God hath ordained, or which our Lord Himself used, for this end." *John Wesley*

"Few, very few, are ever awakened or convinced by the encouragements and promises of the gospel, but almost all by the denunciations of the law." *Timothy Dwight*

four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church to God for him.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said to him, Gird your-

12:6 The chains of sin and death. Peter lay soundly asleep in Herod's prison. This is faith in action. Faith snoozes, even in a storm. Stephen had been stoned, James had just been killed with a sword, . . . and Peter sleeps like a parishioner in the back row of a dead church. He was bound with chains between two soldiers. More guards stood before the door of the prison. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and stood by him, "and a light shined in the prison." There is a strong inference that the light didn't awaken Peter from his sleep, because the Scriptures then tell us that the angel struck him on the side. As he arose, his chains fell off, he girded himself, tied on his shoes, put on his garment, and followed the angel. After that, the iron gate leading to the city opened of its own accord, and Peter was free.

The sinner is in the prison of his sins. He is taken captive by the devil. He is bound by the chains of sin, under the sentence of death. He is asleep in his sins. He lives in a dream world. But it isn't the gospel light that will awaken him. How can "Good News" alarm a sinner? Rather, the Law must strike him. He needs to be struck with the lightning of Sinai and awakened by its thunderings. That will rouse him to his plight of being on the threshold of death. Then he will arise and the gospel will remove the chains of sin and death. It will be "the power of God unto salvation." Then he will gird himself with truth, tie on his gospel shoes, put on his garment of righteousness, follow the Lord, and the iron gate of the Celestial City will open of its own accord.

self, and bind on your sandals. And so he did. And he said to him, Cast your garment about you, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him; and did not know that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord has sent his angel, and has delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said to her, You are mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he, beckoning to them with the hand to hold their peace, declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go show these things to James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter.

19 And when Herod had sought for him,

and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and there abode.

20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country.

21 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration to them.

22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.

23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

.....

*For questions to ask evolutionists,
see Proverbs 3:19 footnote.*

.....

CHAPTER 13

NOW there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy

Spirit, departed to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their minister.

6 And when they had gone through the isle to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus:

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, you child of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue

sent to them, saying, You men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and you that fear God, give audience.

17 The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it.

18 And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

19 And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

20 And after that he gave to them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

21 And afterward they desired a king: and God gave to them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

22 And when he had removed him, he raised up to them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

23 Of this man's seed has God according to his promise raised to Israel a Savior, Jesus:

24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom do you think that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there comes one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fears God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

13:22 The psalms reveal that David was sometimes vindictive and even hateful in prayer. However, he proved to be "a man after [God's] own heart" in his dealings with King Saul. He was full of mercy and grace in the face of murderous hostility. This may be because he had the good sense to pour his heart out to God, dealing with his anger in the privacy of prayer.

27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

30 But God raised him from the dead:

31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people.

32 And we declare to you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers,

33 God has fulfilled the same to us their children, in that he has raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, You are my Son, this day have I begotten you.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

35 Wherefore he said also in another psalm, You shall not suffer your Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid to his fathers, and saw corruption:

37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

38 Be it known to you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is

preached to you the forgiveness of sins: 39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

41 Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it to you.

Some have used the terrors of the Lord to terrify, but Paul used them to persuade.

CHARLES SPURGEON

42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44 And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing you put it from you, and

13:38,39 Notice to whom Paul was speaking. This was to Jews who knew the Law (v. 15). He therefore preached the gospel of grace—Christ crucified and risen from the dead.

13:39 Justification. “[Justification] is the judicial act of God, by which He pardons all the sins of those who believe in Christ, and accounts, accepts, and treats them as righteous in the eye of the Law, i.e., as conformed to all its demands. In addition to the pardon of sin, justification declares that all the claims of the Law are satisfied in respect of the justified. It is the act of a judge and not of a sovereign. The Law is not relaxed or set aside, but is declared to be fulfilled in the strictest sense; and so the person justified is declared to be entitled to all the advantages and rewards arising from perfect obedience to the Law.” *Easton Bible Dictionary*

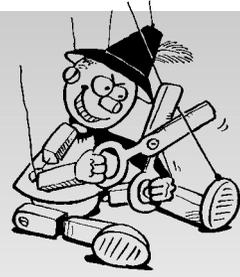
QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

13:47

“If I submit to God, I’ll just become a puppet!”

“A brilliant young man questioned Dr. Henrietta Mears about surrendering his life to God. He was convinced that becoming a Christian would mean the destruction of his personality, that he’d be altered in some strange way, and that he’d lose control of his own mind. He feared becoming a mere puppet in God’s hands.

“So Miss Mears asked him to watch as she turned on a lamp. One moment it was dark, then she turned on the switch. She explained, ‘The lamp surrendered itself to the electric current and light has filled the room. The lamp didn’t destroy its personality when it surrendered to the current. On the contrary—the very thing happened for which the lamp was created: it gave light.’”
Vonette Bright, Renew a Steadfast Spirit Within Me



judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so has the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set you to be a light of the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came to Iconium.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 14

AND it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony to the word of his grace, and grant-

ed signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

6 They were ware of it, and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the region that lies round about:

7 And there they preached the gospel.

8 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother’s womb, who never had walked:

9 The same heard Paul speak: who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on your feet. And he leaped and walked.

11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas

14:15

“Missing Link” Still Missing

“Did dinos soar? Imaginations certainly took flight over *Archaeoraptor Liaoningensis*, a birdlike fossil with a meat-eater’s tail that was spirited out of northeastern China, ‘discovered’ at a Tucson, Arizona, gem and mineral show last year, and displayed at the National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C. Some 110,000 visitors saw the exhibit, which closed January 17; millions more read about the find in November’s *National Geographic*. Now, paleontologists are eating crow. Instead of ‘a true missing link’ connecting dinosaurs to birds, the specimen appears to be a composite, its unusual appendage likely tacked on by a Chinese farmer, not evolution.

“*Archaeoraptor* is hardly the first ‘missing link’ to snap under scrutiny. In 1912, fossil remains of an ancient hominid were found in England’s Piltdown quarries and quickly dubbed man’s ape-like ancestor. It took decades to reveal the hoax.” *U.S. News & World Report*, February 14, 2000

“Darwin admitted that millions of ‘missing links,’ transitional life forms, would have to be discovered in the fossil record to prove the accuracy of his theory that all species had gradually evolved by chance mutation into new species. [See next page.] Unfortunately for his theory, despite hundreds of millions spent on searching for fossils worldwide for more than a century, the scientists have failed to locate a *single missing link* out of the millions that must exist if their theory of evolution is to be vindicated.” *Grant R. Jeffery, The Signature of God*

“There are gaps in the fossil graveyard, places where there should be intermediate forms, but where there is nothing whatsoever instead. No paleontologist . . . denies that this is so. It is simply a fact. Darwin’s theory and the fossil record are in conflict.” *David Berlinsky*

“Scientists concede that their most cherished theories are based on embarrassingly few fossil fragments and that huge gaps exist in the fossil record.” *Time magazine*, Nov. 7, 1977

“The evolutionists seem to know everything about the missing link except the fact that it is missing.” *G. K. Chesterton*

and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

15 And saying, Sirs, why do you these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach to you that you should turn from these vanities to the liv-

ing God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

17 Nevertheless he left not himself with-

14:15 Evolutionary fraud. “Charles Dawson, a British lawyer and amateur geologist, announced in 1912 his discovery of pieces of a human skull and an apelike jaw in a gravel pit near the town of Piltdown, England. . . Dawson’s announcement stopped the scorn cold. Experts instantly declared Piltdown Man (estimated to be 300,000 to one million years old) the evolutionary find of the century. Darwin’s missing link had been identified.

“Or so it seemed for the next 40 or so years. Then, in the early fifties. . . scientists began to suspect misattribution. In 1953, that suspicion gave way to a full-blown scandal: Piltdown Man was a hoax. Radiocarbon tests proved that its skull belonged to a 600-year old woman, and its jaw to a 500-year old orangutan from the East Indies.” *Our Times: The Illustrated History of the 20th Century*

The Piltdown Man fraud wasn’t an isolated incident. The famed Nebraska Man was derived from a single tooth, which was later found to be from an extinct pig. Java Man, found in the early 20th century, was nothing more than a piece of skull, a fragment of a thigh bone, and three molar teeth. The rest came from the deeply fertile imaginations of plaster of Paris workers. Java Man is now regarded as fully human. Heidelberg Man came from a jawbone, a large chin section, and a few teeth. Most scientists reject the jawbone because it’s similar to that of modern man. Still, many evolutionists believe that he’s 250,000 years old. No doubt they pinpointed (continued on next page)

out witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice to them.

19 And there came there certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

23 And when they had ordained them



"As by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth? The number of intermediate links between all living and extinct species must have been inconceivably great!"

Charles Darwin

(14:15 continued) his birthday with carbon dating. However, *Time* magazine (June 11, 1990) published a science article subtitled, "Geologists show that carbon dating can be way off." And don't look to Neanderthal Man for any evidence of evolution. He died of exposure. His skull was exposed as being fully human, not ape. Not only was his stooped posture found to be caused by disease, but he spoke and was artistic and religious.

"Shells from *living* snails were carbon dated as being 27,000 years old." *Science* magazine, vol. 224, 1984 (emphasis added)

14:17 Scientific facts in the Bible. Job stated, "[God] made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder" (Job 28:26). Centuries later, scientists began to discern the "decrees [rules] for the rain." Rainfall is part of a process called the "water cycle." The sun evaporates water from the ocean. The water vapor then rises and becomes clouds. This water in the clouds falls back to earth as rain, and collects in streams and rivers, then makes its way back to the ocean. That process repeats itself again and again. About 300 years ago, Galileo discovered this cycle. But amazingly the Scriptures described it centuries before. The prophet Amos (9:6) wrote that God "calls for the water of the sea, and pours them out upon the face of the earth." Scientists are just beginning to fully understand God's "decrees for the rain."

14:19 Open-air preaching. "The [street] preachers needed to have faces set like flints, and so indeed they had. John Furz says, 'As soon as I began to preach, a man came forward and presented a gun at my face; swearing that he would blow my brains out if I spoke another word. However, I continued speaking and he continued swearing, sometimes putting the muzzle of the gun to my mouth, sometimes against my ear. While we were singing the last hymn, he got behind me, fired the gun, and burned off part of my hair.'

"After this, my brethren, we ought never to speak of petty interruptions or annoyances. The proximity of a blunderbuss in the hands of a son of Belial is not very conducive to collected thought and clear utterance." *Charles Spurgeon*

elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

24 And after they had passed through-out Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into At-talia:

26 And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

CHAPTER 15

AND certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question.

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy to all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to

command them to keep the law of Moses.
6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said to them, Men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8 And God, which knows the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did to us;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why do you tempt God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken to me:

14 Simeon has declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, said the Lord, who does all these things.

18 Known to God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we

15:18 God doesn't think as we do. He is omniscient—He knows all things. That means He never has an idea. If a concept suddenly came to Him, then He would be ignorant of the thought before it formed in His mind. However, God doesn't have thoughts "come to His mind." Because He is omniscient, His mind has all thoughts resident.

trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

20 But that we write to them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moses of old time has in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

My main business is the saving of souls. This one thing I do.

CHARLES SPURGEON

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting to the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, You must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That you abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if you keep yourselves, you shall do well. Fare you well.

30 So when they were dismissed, they

came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle:

31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

33 And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren to the apostles.

34 Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.

35 Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And some days after Paul said to Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus;

40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren to the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

CHAPTER 16

THEN came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia,

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel to them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spoke to the women which resorted there.

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

16:6 "I think a good rule of thumb to follow would be to presume the Lord wants you to share the gospel with everyone unless He leads you not to." *Danny Lehmann*

16:16 Those who think they are contacting their dead loved ones through the occult are actually contacting "familiar spirits" (demons), a forbidden practice (Leviticus 19:31; 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:10-12).

16:16-18 The woman (or the demon) was speaking the truth. These men *were* servants of the Most High God, and they *were* showing the way of salvation. Why then was Paul grieved? Satan is very subtle. Rather than openly oppose the truth, he will often attempt to conceal it by maintaining that the occult and God are compatible. If you are open-air preaching, don't be surprised to have someone who is obviously demonically controlled loudly agree with you, so that it looks to the crowd that you are both preaching the same message. This *is* very frustrating.

For two years I was heckled almost daily by a woman named Petra. She dressed in black, carried a wooden staff, and said she was a prophet to the nation. As in the days of Noah, only eight would be saved. She maintained that she was one of them, and that she determined who the other seven would be. She also said claimed that my spirit visited her spirit in the night (it did not!). My problem was that she would "Amen" much of what I preached, adding her thoughts at the points I made. She would do this at the top of her very loud voice. It must have appeared to newcomers to the crowd that we were a team, preaching the same thing. This was why I was delighted when (every now and then) she would get angry with something I said and let out a string of cuss words, revealing to the crowd that we were *not* on the same side.

The question arises as to whether Paul did the right thing by casting out the demon. I'm not sure he did. If the woman wasn't repentant, she may have received seven more demons (Matthew 12:43-45). After his action, great persecution came against the disciples, but God in His goodness worked it out for their good, and for the good of the Philippian jailer and his family (see vv. 24-34).

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show to us the way of salvation.

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace to the rulers,

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates tore off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises to God: and the prison-

ers heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do yourself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 **And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**

31 **And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, and your house.**

32 And they spoke to him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

35 And when it was day, the magistrates

16:25 Ira Sankey, before he became D. L. Moody's famous song leader (and a powerful preacher himself), was assigned to night duty in the American Civil War. While he was on duty, he lifted his eyes toward heaven and began to sing, praising the Lord while he was alone. At least, he thought he was alone.

Years later, after the war had ended, Sankey was on a ship traveling across the Atlantic Ocean. Since he was now a famous singer, a crowd of people approached him and asked him to sing. He lifted his eyes toward heaven and sang a beautiful hymn.

After his song, a man from the crowd asked him if, on a certain night during the Civil War, he had performed night duty for a certain infantry unit. "Yes, I did," was his reply.

The man continued, "I was on the opposite side of the war, and I was hiding in a bush near your camp. With my rifle aimed at your head, I was about to shoot you when you looked toward heaven and began to sing. I thought, 'Well, I like music, and this guy has a nice voice. I'll sit here, let him sing the song, . . . and then shoot him. He's not going anywhere.' But then I realized what you were singing. It was the same hymn my mother used to sing at my bedside when I was a child. And it's the same hymn you sang tonight! I tried, but that night during the Civil War, I was powerless to shoot you."

Ira Sankey pointed that man to Christ. He and thousands of others were saved under Sankey's ministry. All this stemmed from the fact that Sankey praised the Lord at all times.

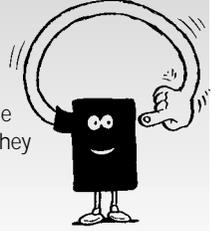
QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

17:2

“Christians can’t use ‘circular reasoning’ by trying to prove the Bible by quoting from the Bible!”

The “circular reasoning” argument is absurd. That’s like saying you can’t prove that the President lives in the White House by *looking into* the White House. It is looking into the White House that will provide the necessary proof. The fulfilled prophecies, the amazing consistency, and the many scientific statements of the Bible prove it to be the Word of God. They provide evidence that it is supernatural in origin.

See also Psalm 119:105 footnote.



sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

37 But Paul said to them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privately? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.

38 And the serjeants told these words to the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.

39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

CHAPTER 17

NOW when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in to them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach to you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the de-

vout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took to them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren to the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come here also;

7 Whom Jason has received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the others, they let them go.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night to Berea: who coming there went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 **These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came there also, and stirred up the people.

POINTS FOR OPEN-AIR PREACHING



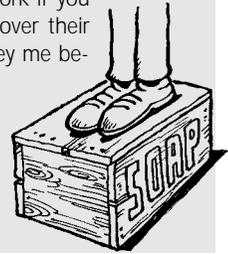
Give Yourself a Lift

If you are going to preach in the open-air, elevate yourself. For eighteen months, I preached without any elevation and hardly attracted any listeners. As soon as I did it "soapbox" style, people stopped to listen. Their attitude was "What has this guy got to say?" They had an excuse to stop.

Also, elevation will give you protection. I was once almost eaten by an angry 6'6" gentleman who kept fuming, "God is love!" We were eye to eye . . . while I was elevated. On another occasion, a very heavy gentleman who had a mean countenance placed it about 6" from mine and whispered, "Jesus said to love your enemies." I nodded in agreement. Then he asked in a deep voice, "Who is your enemy?" I shrugged. His voice deepened and spilled forth in a chilling tone, "*Lucifer!*" I was standing beside my stepladder at the time so he pushed me backwards with his stomach. He kept doing so until I was moved back about 20 feet. I prayed, "Wisdom, Lord," then said, "You are either going to hit me or hug me." He hugged me and walked off. That wouldn't have happened if I had been elevated.

Elevation will also give you added authority. Often hecklers will walk right up to you and ask questions quietly. This is an attempt to stifle the preaching, and it will work if you are not higher than your heckler. If they come too close to me, I talk over their heads and tell them to go back to the heckler's gallery. They actually obey me because they get the impression I am bigger than they are.

When Ezra preached the Law, he was elevated (Nehemiah 8:4,5). John Wesley used elevation to preach. Jesus preached the greatest sermon ever on a mount (Matthew 5-7), and Paul went up Mars' Hill to preach (Acts 17:22). So if you can't find a hilltop to preach from, use a soapbox or a stepladder. See Acts 3:4 footnote.



14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.

15 And they that conducted Paul brought him to Athens: and receiving a commandment to Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babler say? other some, He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached to them Jesus, and the resurrection.

19 And they took him, and brought him to Areopagus, saying, May we know what

this new doctrine, whereof you speak, is?

20 For you bring certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, You men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore you ignorantly worship, him declare I to you.

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing,

17:22 *How to Witness to Muslims*

In Acts 17:22–31 the apostle Paul built on areas of “common ground” as he prepared his listeners for the good news of the gospel. Even though he was addressing Gentiles whose beliefs were erroneous, he didn’t rebuke them for having a doctrine of devils—“The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God” (1 Corinthians 10:20). Neither did he present the great truth that Jesus of Nazareth was Almighty God manifest in human form. This may have initially offended his hearers and closed the door to the particular knowledge he wanted to convey. Instead, he built on what they already knew. He first established that there is a Creator who made all things. He then exposed their sin of transgression of the First and Second of the Ten Commandments. Then he preached future punishment for sin.

There are three main areas of common ground upon which Christians may stand with Muslims. First, that there is one God—the Creator of all things. The second area is the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet of God. The Bible makes this clear: “And He shall send Jesus Christ, . . . For Moses truly said to the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you of your brethren, like to me; him shall you hear in all things whatsoever he shall say to you” (Acts 3:20–22).

The Qur’an (Koran) says: “Behold! The angel said ‘O Mary! Allah giveth you Glad Tidings of a word from Him. His name will be (Christ Jesus) the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah’” (Surah 3:45). In Surah 19:19, the angel said to Mary, “I am only a messenger of thy Lord to announce to you a gift of a holy son.” Surah 3:55 says, “Allah said: ‘O Jesus! I will take you and raise you to Myself.’”

It is because of these and other references to Jesus in the Qur’an that a Muslim will not object when you establish that Jesus was a prophet from God.

This brings us to the third area of common ground. Muslims also respect Moses as a prophet of God. Therefore, there should be little contention when Christians speak of God (as Creator), Jesus the prophet, and the Law

of the prophet Moses.

Most Muslims do have some knowledge of their sinfulness, but few see sin in its true light. It is therefore essential to take them through the spiritual nature of the Ten Commandments. While it is true that the Law of Moses begins with, “I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before Me,” it may be unwise to tell a Muslim, at that point, that Allah is a false god. Such talk may close the door before you are able to speak to his conscience. It is wise rather to present the Law in a similar order in which Jesus gave it in Luke 18:20. He addressed the man’s sins of the flesh. He spoke directly to sins that have to do with his fellow man. Therefore, ask your hearer if he has ever told a lie. When (if) he admits that he has, ask him what that makes him. Don’t call him a liar. Instead, gently press him to tell you what someone is called who has lied. Try to get him to say that he is a “liar.”

Then ask him if he has ever stolen something, even if it’s small. If he has, ask what that makes him (a thief). Then quote from the Prophet Jesus: “Whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:27). Ask if he has ever looked at a woman with lust. If he is reasonable, he will admit that he has sinned in that area. Then gently tell him that, *by his own admission*, he is a “lying, thieving adulterer-at-heart.” Say, “If God judges you by the Law of Moses on Judgment Day, will you be innocent or guilty?”

At this point, he will more than likely say that he will be innocent, because he confesses his sins to God. However, the Qur’an says: “Every soul that has sinned, if it possessed all that is on earth, would fain give it in ransom” (Surah 10:54). In other words, if he possessed the *whole world* and offered it to God as a sacrifice for his sins, it wouldn’t be enough to provide atonement for his sins.

Imagine that a criminal is facing a \$50,000 fine. He is penniless, so he sincerely tells the judge that he is sorry for a crime and vows never to do it again. The judge won’t let him go on the basis of his sorrow, or his vow never to commit the crime again. Of course, he

(continued on next page)

(17:22 *continued*)

should be sorry for what he has done, and of course, he shouldn't break the law again. The judge will, however, let him go if someone else pays the fine for him.

Now tell him that Moses gave instructions to Israel to shed the blood of a spotless lamb to provide a temporary atonement for their sin; and that Jesus was the Lamb that God provided to make atonement for the sins of the world. Through faith in Jesus, he can have atonement with God. All his sin can be washed away—once and for all. God can grant him the gift of everlasting life through faith in Jesus Christ on the basis of His death and resurrection.

The uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth was that He claimed He had power on earth to forgive sins (Matthew 9:2–6). No other prophet of any of the great religions made this claim. Only Jesus can provide peace with God. This is why He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but

by me" (John 14:6). God commands sinners to repent and trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior, or they will perish.

To try to justify himself, your listener may say something like, "The Bible has changed. It has been altered. There are many different versions, but the Koran has never changed." Explain to him that there are many different versions, printed in different languages and in modern English, to help people understand the Bible, but the content of the Scriptures remains the same. The Dead Sea Scrolls prove that God has preserved the Scriptures. Tell him that the 100% accurate prophecies of Matthew 24, Luke 21, and 2 Timothy 3 prove that this is the Book of the Creator.

Your task is to present the truth of the gospel. It is God who makes it come alive (1 Corinthians 3:6,7). It is God who brings conviction of sin (John 16:7,8). It is God who reveals who Jesus is (Matthew 16:16,17). All God requires is your faithful presentation of the truth (Matthew 25:21).

seeing he gives to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find

him, though he be not far from every one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like to gold, or silver, or

17:24 Evolution should not be taught. *Dr. Colin Patterson*, senior paleontologist, British Museum of Natural History, gave a keynote address at the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, in 1981. In it, he explains his sudden "anti-evolutionary" view: "One morning I woke up and...it struck me that I had been working on this stuff for twenty years and there was not one thing I knew about it. That's quite a shock to learn that one can be misled so long...I've tried putting a simple question to various people: 'Can you tell me anything you know about evolution, any one thing, any one thing that is true?' I tried that question on the geology staff at the Field Museum of Natural History and the only answer I got was silence. I tried it on the members of the Evolutionary Morphology Seminar in the University of Chicago, a very prestigious body of evolutionists, and all I got there was silence for a long time and eventually one person said, 'I do know one thing—it ought not to be taught in high school.'"

17:26 Mormons believe that God cursed Cain with black skin and a flat nose. However, the "mark" was set upon Cain *before* the Flood. In that Flood all flesh perished except for Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives. If the curse upon Cain was dark skin, the only way the race could have survived was for Noah to be a direct descendent of Cain. However, Noah's genealogy didn't come from Cain, but from Seth (Genesis 5:3,6–32).

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

17:26

“Where do all the races come from?”

Some have wondered, if we are all descendents of Adam and Eve, why are there so many races? The Bible informed us 2,000 years ago that God has made all nations from “one blood.” We are all of the same race—the “human race,” descendents of Adam and Eve, something science is slowly coming to realize.

Reuters news service reported the following article by Maggie Fox:

Science may have caught up with the Bible, which says that Adam and Eve are the ancestors of all humans alive today.

Peter Underhill of Stanford University in California remarked on findings published in the November 2000 issue of the journal *Nature Genetics*. . . Geneticists have long agreed there is no genetic basis to race—only to ethnic and geographic groups.

“People look at a very conspicuous trait like skin color and they say, ‘Well, this person’s so different’ . . . but that’s only skin deep,” Underhill said. “When you look at the level of the Y chromosome you find that, gee, there is very little difference between them. And skin color differences are strictly a consequence of climate.”



stone, graven by art and man’s device.

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men every where to repent:

31 Because he has appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he has ordained; whereof he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead.

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear you again of this matter.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave to him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

USING THE LAW IN EVANGELISM

17:29

Paul was preaching the essence of the First and Second Commandments to show his hearers that they were idolaters. See Acts 28:23 footnote.

17:30 Repentance—its necessity for salvation. See Acts 20:21.

“If my six-year-old daughter was out on the road playing in front of my house and I saw a huge truck barreling around the corner, what would I do in that moment? Out of my love for my daughter I would not gently invite her to step away from the street. I would *command* her to change her direction, and get off the road! Why? Because of my love for her. I know that the truck would not be able to stop in time and it would run her over and kill her. The same is true of the Father’s love for us. Out of His love, he commands us to repent, because at any moment the truck of sin and death could run us over for playing on the road of rebellion!” *Rob Price*

17:31 Judgment Day: For verses that warn of its reality, see Romans 2:16. We preach Christ and Him crucified for the sins of the world, seeking to warn every man of the great and coming Day of the Lord, in which God will judge the world in righteousness. The standard of judgment will be a perfect Law (Psalm 19:7), and those who fail to meet its perfect requirements will come under its terrible wrath. See also Acts 18:9 footnote.

CHAPTER 18

AFTER these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came to them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said to them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from hence-

forth I will go to the Gentiles.

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

9 Then spoke the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not your peace:

10 For I am with you, and no man shall set on you to hurt you: for I have much people in this city.

11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,

18:4 Paul did not go to the synagogue to keep the Sabbath holy. He went there to *reason* with the Jews about Christ. His manner was to become like a Jew to the Jews. His heart's desire was to reach his own nation with the gospel. See 1 Corinthians 9:20–22.

18:9 "God [has] appointed a day in which He will judge the world, and we sigh and cry until it shall end the reign of wickedness, and give rest to the oppressed. Brethren, we must preach the coming of the Lord, and preach it somewhat more than we have done, *because it is the driving power of the gospel*. Too many have kept back these truths, and thus the bone has been taken out of the arm of the gospel. Its point has been broken; its edge has been blunted. The doctrine of judgment to come is the power by which men are to be aroused. There is another life; the Lord will come a second time; judgment will arrive; the wrath of God will be revealed. *Where this is not preached, I am bold to say the gospel is not preached.*

"It is absolutely necessary to the preaching of the gospel of Christ that men be warned as to what will happen if they continue in their sins. Ho, ho sir surgeon, you are too delicate to tell the man that he is ill! You hope to heal the sick without their knowing it. You therefore flatter them; and what happens? They laugh at you; they dance upon their own graves. At last they die! Your delicacy is cruelty; your flatteries are poisons; *you are a murderer*. Shall we keep men in a fool's paradise? Shall we lull them into soft slumbers from which they will awake in hell? Are we to become helpers of their damnation by our smooth speeches? In the name of God we will not." *Charles Spurgeon*

18:10 Never be discouraged by thinking that you are the only one God can use to reach the lost. Elijah, fearing that all the other prophets had been killed, said, "I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:10). Yet God had reserved 7,000 faithful followers who hadn't bowed their knee to worship Baal (v. 18). Because God has His laborers, we need never panic when it comes to our loved ones being reached with the gospel. If we faithfully reach out and touch the lives of other peoples' loved ones, God (in His perfect timing) can use others to touch the lives of the ones we love so dearly. Claim your family in prayer, then thank God for His faithfulness in answering those prayers.

13 Saying, This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.

14 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O you Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:

15 But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, you look to it; for I will be no judge of such matters.

16 And he drove them from the judgment seat.

17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

The great benefit of open-air preaching is that we get so many new comers to hear the gospel who otherwise would never hear it.

CHARLES SPURGEON

18 And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that comes in Jerusalem: but I will return again to you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.

23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him to them, and expounded to him the way of God more perfectly.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

CHAPTER 19

AND it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said to them, Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? And they said to him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit.

3 And he said to them, to what then were you baptized? And they said, to John's

18:19 "The proper goal in apologetics is not to force someone to admit that we have proved our position, but simply to remove objections so that a nonbeliever cannot hide behind intellectual objections." *John S. Hammett*

18:26 "It is better to be divided by truth than united in error; it is better to speak truth that hurts and then heals than to speak a lie; it is better to be hated for telling the truth than to be loved for telling a lie; it is better to stand alone with truth than to be wrong with the multitude... The religion of today is 'get-along-ism.' It is time for men and women of God to stand, [even] if they have to stand alone." *Adrian Rogers*

I Have a Problem

“FATHER, I HAVE a problem. It’s weighing heavy on me. It’s all I can think about, night and day. Before I bring it to you in prayer, I suppose I should pray for those who are less fortunate than me—those in this world who have hardly enough food for this day, and for those who don’t have a roof over their heads at night. I also pray for families who have lost loved ones in sudden death, for parents whose children have leukemia, for the many people who are dying of brain tumors, for the hundreds of thousands who are laid waste with other terrible cancers, for people whose bodies have been suddenly shattered in car wrecks, for those who are lying in hospitals with agonizing burns over their bodies, whose faces have been burned beyond recognition. I pray for people with emphysema, whose eyes fill with terror as they struggle for every breath merely to live, for those who are tormented beyond words by irrational fears, for the elderly who are wracked with the pains of aging, whose only ‘escape’ is death.

“I pray for people who are watching their loved ones fade before their eyes through the grief of Alzheimer’s disease, for the many thousands who are suffering the agony of AIDS, for those who are in such despair that they are contemplating suicide, for people who are tormented by the demons of alcoholism and drug addiction. I pray for children who have been abandoned by their parents, for those who are sexually abused, for wives held in quiet despair, beaten and abused by cruel drunken husbands, for people whose minds have been destroyed by mental disorders, for those who have lost everything in floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, and earthquakes. I pray for the blind, who never see the faces of the ones they love or the beauty of a sunrise, for those whose bodies are deformed by painful arthritis, for the many whose lives will be taken from them today by murderers, for those wasting away on their deathbeds in hospitals.

“Most of all, I cry out for the millions who don’t know the forgiveness that is in Jesus Christ... for those who in a moment of time will be swept into hell by the cold hand of death, and find to their utter horror the unspeakable vengeance of eternal fire. They will be eternally damned to everlasting punishment. O God, I pray for them.

“Strange. I can’t seem to remember what my problem was. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”

baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spoke evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

12 So that from his body were brought to the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

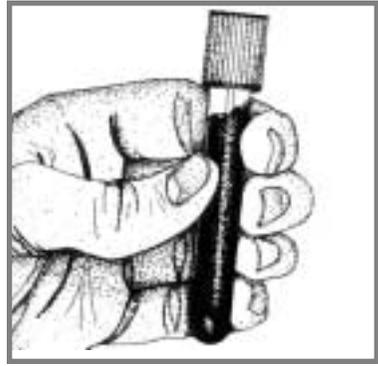
17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and

fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.



The platelets in blood reveal the folly of evolution. See Matthew 9:20 footnote.

21 After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered to him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain to the craftsmen;

25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, you know that by this craft we have our wealth.

26 Moreover you see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and

turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:
27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worships.

28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

30 And when Paul would have entered in to the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent to him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence to the people.

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

35 And when the town clerk had appeased the people, he said, You men of Ephesus, what man is there that knows not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, you ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37 For you have brought here these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38 Wherefore if Demetrius, and the crafts-

men which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39 But if you inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

.....

*For the key to reaching the lost,
see Luke 11:32 footnote.*

.....

CHAPTER 20

AND after the uproar was ceased, Paul called to him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.

2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,

3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.

4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

5 These going before tarried for us at Troas.

6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came to them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered

together.

9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

That sin must die, or you will perish by it. Depend on it, that sin which you would save from the slaughter will slaughter you.

CHARLES SPURGEON

13 And we went before to ship, and sailed to Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot.

14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.

15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

18 And when they were come to him, he said to them, You know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,

19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

20 **And how I kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,**

21 **Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

23 Save that the Holy Spirit witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

25 And now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching

20:9 Eutychus had some good excuses for dozing off:

- Paul's sermon was long.
- The many lights no doubt made the room hot.
- He was a young man staying up until midnight.
- He was "overcome" by sleep.

It is the midnight hour. We sit on the window of eternity. We can fall into eternity in a heartbeat. If the stale air of this world's influence makes us sink into a sleep of apathy, we must seek refreshing from the presence of the Lord. When our Christian life seems to be a dry and lifeless sermon without end, and the joy of feeding on God's Word is no longer in our hearts, we must get on our knees and return to our first love.

20:21 **Repentance—its necessity for salvation.** See 2 Peter 3:9.

POINTS FOR OPEN-AIR PREACHING



Aim for Repentance Rather Than a Decision

As you witness, divorce yourself from the thought that you are merely seeking "decisions for Christ." What we should be seeking is repentance within the heart. This is the purpose of the Law, to bring the knowledge of sin. How can a man repent if he doesn't know what sin is? If there is no repentance, there is no salvation. Jesus said, "Unless you repent, you shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

Many don't understand that the salvation of a soul is not a resolution to change a way of life, but "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." The modern concept of success in evangelism is to relate how many people were "saved" (that is, how many prayed the "sinner's prayer"). This produces a "no decisions, no success" mentality. This shouldn't be, because Christians who seek decisions in evangelism become discouraged after a time of witnessing if "no one came to the Lord." The Bible tells us that as we sow the good seed of the gospel, one sows and another reaps. If you faithfully sow the seed, someone will reap. If you reap, it is because someone has sown in the past, but it is God who causes the seed to grow. If His hand is not on the person you are leading in a prayer of committal, if there is not *God-given* repentance, then you will end up with a stillbirth on your hands, and that is nothing to rejoice about. We should measure our success by how faithfully we sowed the seed. In that way, we will avoid becoming discouraged.

"If you have not repented, you will not see the inside of the kingdom of God." *Billy Graham*

the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

26 *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.*

27 *For I have not shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God.*

28 Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

31 Therefore watch, and remember, that

by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

34 Yes, you yourselves know, that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me.

35 I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36 And when he had thus spoken, he

20:24 A missionary society wrote to *David Livingstone* and suggested that if he could ensure them of safe roads, they would send him some help. He responded with the following note: "If you have men who will only come if they have a good road, I don't want them. I want men who will come if there is no road at all."

20:26 "My anxious desire in that every time I preach, I may clear myself of blood of all men; that if I step from this platform to my coffin, I may have told out all I knew of the way of salvation." *Charles Spurgeon*

kneeled down, and prayed with them all.
 37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him,
 38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

CHAPTER 21

AND it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course to Coos, and the day following to Rhodes, and from thence to Patara:

2 And finding a ship sailing over to Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.

3 Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unload her burden.

4 And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.

6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again.

7 And when we had finished our course

from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came to Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

10 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

11 And when he was come to us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus says the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 *Then Paul answered, Why do you weep and break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.*

14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.

16 There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with

20:27 How to witness. Here is a suggested structure of a gospel message:

Begin in the natural realm if you are not in a normal church setting. Perhaps you could spring-board off some well-publicized tragedy, then ask if your hearers ever wonder how they are going to die. Say that we will all die because we have broken an eternal law—the Law of God, often referred to as the Ten Commandments. Then open up each Commandment, emphasizing its spiritual nature (lust is seen by God as adultery, hatred is murder—that God sees man's thoughts, and nothing is hidden from His eyes).

Stress the fact of Judgment Day—that God is holy and will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing whether it is good or evil. Don't be afraid to use the word "hell." Tell them that it is God's place of punishment for sin. Emphasize that He doesn't want them to go there, that He has made provision for their forgiveness. Then preach Christ and Him crucified, risen from the dead. Thoroughly lace the message with God's Word—verbally quote relevant Scriptures. Then preach the necessity of repentance (that it's *commanded*), and the importance of faith in and obedience to God's Word. See Acts 20:21 footnote.

21:5 Prayer—the secret weapon: See Mark 11:23.

POINTS FOR OPEN-AIR PREACHING



Raw Nerves

When you're preaching open-air, don't let angry reactions from the crowd concern you. A dentist knows where to work on a patient when he touches a raw nerve. When you touch a raw nerve in the heart of the sinner, it means that you are in business. Anger is a thousand times better than apathy. Anger is a sign of conviction. If I have an argument with my wife and suddenly realize that I am in the wrong, I can come to her in a repentant attitude and apologize, or I can save face by lashing out in anger.

Read Acts 19 and see how Paul was a dentist with an eye for decay. He probed raw nerves wherever he went. At one point, he had to be carried shoulder height by soldiers because of the "violence of the people" (Acts 21:36). Now there's a successful preacher! He didn't seek the praise of men. John Wesley told his evangelist trainees that when they preached, people should either get angry or get converted. No doubt, he wasn't speaking about the "Jesus loves you" gospel, but about sin, Law, righteousness, judgment, and hell. See Matthew 28:19,20 footnote.

them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

18 And the day following Paul went in with us to James; and all the elders were present.

19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said to him, You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

21 And they are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

22 What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that you are come.

23 Do therefore this that we say to you: We have four men which have a vow on them;

24 Them take, and purify yourself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning you, are nothing; but that you yourself also walk or-

derly, and keep the law.

25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teaches all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and has polluted this holy place.

29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came to the chief captain of the

band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.
32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.

33 Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done.

34 And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people.

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

37 And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said to the chief captain, May I speak to you? Who said, Can you speak Greek?

38 Are you not that Egyptian, which before these days made an uproar, and lead out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

39 But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech you, suffer me to speak to the people.

40 And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand to the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

CHAPTER 22

MEN, brethren, and fathers, hear my defence which I make now to you.
2 (And when they heard that he spoke in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he said,)

3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as you all are this day.

4 And I persecuted this way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also the high priest does bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound to Jerusalem, for to be punished.

The greatest enemy to human souls is the self-righteous spirit which makes men look to themselves for salvation.

CHARLES SPURGEON

6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come near to Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?

8 And I answered, Who are you, Lord? And he said to me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute.

9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spoke to me.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told you of all things which are appointed for you to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory

22:9 Contradiction in the Bible? Some may think that this is a mistake in the Scriptures, because in Acts 9:7 Paul said that those who were with him *heard* the voice. However, John 12:29 gives us insight into what God's voice sounds like. People *heard* His voice but thought that it thundered (see also 2 Samuel 22:14; Job 37:4,5; 40:9). They obviously heard it but the words were not coherent to them.



"Labor to keep alive in your breast that spark of celestial fire called conscience."

George Washington

of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there,

13 Came to me, and stood, and said to me, Brother Saul, receive your sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

14 And he said, The God of our fathers has chosen you, that you should know his will, and see that Just One, and should hear the voice of his mouth.

15 For you shall be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.

16 And now why do you tarry? arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;

18 And saw him saying to me, Make haste, and get quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive your testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on you:

20 And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting to his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said to me, Depart: for I will send you far hence to the Gentiles.

22 And they gave him audience to this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.

23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air,

24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what you do: for this man is a Roman.

27 Then the chief captain came, and said to him, Tell me, are you a Roman? He said, Yes.

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.

29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

CHAPTER 23

AND Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.

2 And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

3 Then said Paul to him, God shall smite you, you whited wall: for you sit to judge me after the law, and command me to be smitten contrary to the law?

4 And they that stood by said, Do you revile God's high priest?

5 Then said Paul, I knew not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your people.

6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God.

10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as you have testified of me in Jerusalem, so must you bear witness also at Rome.

12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore you with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down to you tomorrow, as though you would inquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

I have known what it is to use up all my ammunition, and then I have, as it were, rammed myself into the great gospel gun and fired myself at the hearers—all my experience of God's goodness, all my consciousness of sin, and all my sense of the power of the gospel.

CHARLES SPURGEON

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions to him, and said, Bring this young man to the chief captain: for he has a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me to him, and prayed me to bring this young man to you, who has something to say to you.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that you have to tell me?

20 And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire you that you would bring down Paul tomorrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not yield to them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from

you.

22 So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged him, See you tell no man that you have showed these things to me.

23 And he called to him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Caesarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night;

24 And provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe to Felix the governor.

25 And he wrote a letter after this manner:

26 Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor Felix sends greeting.

27 This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman.

28 And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council:

29 Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.

30 And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to you, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before you what they had against him. Farewell.

31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris.

32 On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle:

33 Who, when they came to Caesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.

34 And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia;

35 I will hear you, said he, when your accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.

CHAPTER 24

AND after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.

2 And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by you we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done to this nation by your providence,

3 We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious to you, I pray you that you would hear us of your clemency a few words.

5 For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes:

6 Who also has gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.

7 But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands,

8 Commanding his accusers to come to you: by examining of whom yourself may take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.

9 And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.

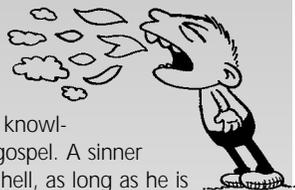
10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned to him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that you have been of many years a judge to this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

11 Because that you may understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.

24:5 The apostle Paul was called a "pestilent fellow," a "mover of sedition," and a "ringleader" of a "sect." The prophet Elijah was called a "troubler of Israel" (1 Kings 18:17). Those who stand for righteousness will be considered troublemakers in the world's eyes.

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

Q 24:25 “Is ‘hell-fire’ preaching effective?”



Preaching the reality of hell, without using the Law to bring the knowledge of sin, can do a great deal of damage to the cause of the gospel. A sinner cannot conceive of the thought that God would send anyone to hell, as long as he is deceived into thinking that God’s standard of righteousness is the same as his. Paul “reasoned” with Felix regarding righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come (Acts 24:25). This is the righteousness that is of the Law and judgment by the Law. Felix “trembled” because he suddenly understood that his intemperance made him a guilty sinner in the sight of a holy God. The reality of hell suddenly became *reasonable* to him when the Law was used to bring the knowledge of sin.

Imagine if the police burst into your home, arrested you, and shouted, “You are going away for a long time!” Such conduct would probably leave you bewildered and angry. What they have done seems unreasonable.

However, imagine if the law burst into your home and instead told you specifically why you were in trouble: “We have discovered 10,000 marijuana plants growing in your back yard. You are going away for a long time!” At least then you would understand *why* you are in trouble. Knowledge of the law you have transgressed furnished you with that understanding. It makes judgment *reasonable*. Hell-fire preaching without use of the Law to show the sinner why God is angry with him will more than likely leave him bewildered and angry—for what he considers *unreasonable* punishment.

12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.

14 But this I confess to you, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

19 Who ought to have been here before you, and object, if they had anything against me.

20 Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council,

21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

22 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.

23 And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come to him.

24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come Felix trembled, and answered, Go your way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for you.

26 He hoped also that money should

have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

CHAPTER 25

NOW when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

2 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,

3 And desired favor against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.

4 But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly there.

5 Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

6 And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought.

7 And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.

8 While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all.

9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Will you go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

10 Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as you very well know.

11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar.

12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, have you appealed to Caesar? to Caesar shall you go.

13 And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to salute Festus.

14 And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause to the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix:

15 About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him.

16 To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.

17 Therefore, when they were come here, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth.

18 Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed:

19 But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

20 And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.

21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved to the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar.

22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, I would

also hear the man myself. Tomorrow, said he, you shall hear him.

23 And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.

24 And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, you see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer.

25 But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself has appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him.

26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write to my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before you, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write.

27 For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

CHAPTER 26

THEN Agrippa said to Paul, You are permitted to speak for yourself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before you touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews:

3 Especially because I know you to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech you to hear me patiently.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;

5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most strait sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God to our fathers:

7 To which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.

11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even to strange cities.

The early disciples were fishers of men—while modern disciples are often little more than aquarium keepers.

UNKNOWN

12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking to me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? it is hard for you to kick against the pricks.

15 And I said, Who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom you persecute.

16 But rise, and stand upon your feet: for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of these things which you have seen, and of those things in the which I will appear to you;

17 *Delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, to whom now I send you,*

18 *To open their eyes, and to turn them*

from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision:

20 But showed first to them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue to this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light to the people, and to the Gentiles.

24 And as he thus spoke for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, you are beside yourself; much learning does make you mad.

25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king knows of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

27 King Agrippa, do you believe the

prophets? I know that you believe.

28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, You almost persuade me to be a Christian.

29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only you, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

30 And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them:

31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

32 Then said Agrippa to Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Caesar.

CHAPTER 27

AND when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.

2 And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.

3 And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go to his friends to refresh himself.

4 And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.

5 And when we had sailed over the sea of

26:20 The problem with modern evangelism. Many Christian obtain "decisions" by using the following method: "Do you know that you are going to heaven when you die?" Most will say, "I hope so." The Christian then says, "You can *know* so. The Bible says 'All have sinned.' Jesus died on the cross for our sins, and if you give your heart to Him today, you can know for sure that you are going to heaven. Would you like to have that assurance that you will go to heaven when you die?" He will almost always say, "Yes." The person is then led in what is commonly called a "sinner's prayer."

There are a few difficulties with the popular approach: 1) There is no mention of Judgment Day—the very *reason* men are commanded to repent; 2) There is no mention of hell; and 3) The Law isn't used to bring the knowledge of sin. The apostle Paul said that the Law was the *only* means by which he came to know what sin was (Romans 7:7). The modern approach may get a decision or gain a church member, but if there is no biblical repentance, there will be a false conversion. See John 4:7–26 footnote.

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS
Q
 26:28

“What should I say to someone who acknowledges his sins, but says, ‘I just hope God is forgiving?’”

These people could be referred to as “awakened, but not alarmed.” Explain that God *is* forgiving—but only to those who repent of their sins. Ask him, “If you died right now, where would you go?” If he says, “Hell,” ask if that concerns him. If it does concern him, ask, “What are you going to do?” Then tell him that God *commands* him to repent and trust the Savior. If it doesn’t concern him, speak of the value of his life, the threat of *eternal* damnation, and the biblical description of hell. Caution him that he doesn’t have the promise of tomorrow, and plead with him to come to his senses.



Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia.

6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.

7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone;

8 And, hardly passing it, came to a place which is called The fair havens; near whereunto was the city of Lasea.

9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,

10 And said to them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

12 And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lies toward the south west and north west.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.

14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.

16 And running under a certain island which is called Claudia, we had much work to come by the boat:

17 Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

18 And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship;

19 And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, you should have hearkened to me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship.

23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God has given you all them that sail with you.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26 Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country;

28 And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms.

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.

A. W. TOZER

29 Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, you cannot be saved.

32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that you have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

34 Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.

37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves to the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:

44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

CHAPTER 28

AND when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita.

2 And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffers not to

live.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.

8 And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

9 So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed:

10 Who also honored us with many honors; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary.

11 And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux.

12 And landing at Syracuse, we tarried there three days.

13 And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli:

14 Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appiiforum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that

USING THE LAW IN EVANGELISM

28:23

Notice that Paul used *both* prophecy and the Law of Moses in his evangelism. Prophecy appeals to a man's intellect and creates faith in the Word of God. As he realizes that the Bible is no ordinary book—that it contains numerous indisputable prophecies that prove its supernatural origin—he begins to give Scripture credibility. However, the Law of Moses appeals to a man's conscience and brings conviction of sin. A "decision" for Jesus purely in the realm of the intellect—with no biblical knowledge of sin, which comes only by the Law (Romans 7:7)—will almost certainly produce a false convert. See Romans 2:21 footnote.

kept him.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said to them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.

19 But when the Jews spoke against it, I was constrained to appeal to Caesar; not that I had anything to accuse my nation of.

20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

21 And they said to him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning you, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spoke any harm of you.

22 But we desire to hear of you what you think: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his

28:23 The goal of evangelism is to persuade people concerning Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life. There is salvation in no other name.

THE FUNCTION OF THE LAW

28:23

"The Law's part in transformation is to make a person aware of his sin and of his need for divine forgiveness and redemption and to set the standard of acceptable morality.

"Until a person acknowledges his basic sinfulness and inability to perfectly fulfill the demands of God's Law, he will not come repentantly to seek salvation. Until he despairs of himself and his own sinfulness, he will not come in humble faith to be filled with Christ's righteousness. A person who says he wants salvation but refuses to recognize and repent of his sin deceives himself.

"Grace means nothing to a person who does not know he is sinful and that such sinfulness means he is separated from God and damned. It is therefore pointless to preach grace until the impossible demands of the Law and the reality of guilt before God are preached." *John MacArthur*

lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spoke the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the prophet to our fathers,

26 Saying, Go to this people, and say, Hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and not perceive:

27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore to you, that the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in to him,

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

*"The great of the kingdom
have been those who
loved God
more than others did."*

A. W. TOZER