

The Amish Voice



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July 2008

PART VI—What Is The Church

The Church: A Mystery, Finally Revealed

Well, believe it or not, we have actually made it all the way to *Part VII* on "**What Is the Church**". My original plan had been to do no more than two or three parts at the most, but it seemed that once I got started, I couldn't stop.

Because of this study, I personally have a much deeper understanding of how important the church is to our Lord Jesus.

For those of you who are just now joining us, **here is a short recap of what we have learned about the church in past lessons.**

Jesus had pretty much come to the end of His earthly ministry and one day as He and His 12 disciples were walking along toward Caesarea Philippi, He stopped them and made a very important announcement.

As a matter of fact, as we will learn in our lesson today, **Jesus was about to share a very special mystery (secret) with them that had never been revealed to mankind before.** The mystery was this... "I am going to build me a church and **NO ONE, not even the gates of hell will overcome it**". Let's listen in as Jesus gives the mystery or secret away.

I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;



and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt 16:18)

Never before in all of the Old Testament had the CHURCH been mentioned, brought up or discussed with mankind.

The Mystery of the Church Kept Secret

The Apostle Paul would later write to the early churches and share how that God had actually hidden the "church concept" from previous ages and generations and that up until now, the "church" had only been a MYSTERY that heaven knew about.

To the Church at Ephesus, Paul wrote...

...the MYSTERY, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God (Eph 3:9)

To the Church of Colossi, Paul wrote...

...the MYSTERY which hath been hid from ages and from generations (Col 1:26)

To the Church at Rome, Paul wrote...

...the MYSTERY, which was kept secret since the world began, (Rom 16:25)

The Mystery of the Church Revealed

So you ask, what is so secretive about the church? **Why would God want to keep the church a mystery?**

The complete answer to that question may never be known for sure but we do know that after the death of Christ, God revealed His mysterious secret of the church, to the following people:

1. The Apostle Paul, the holy apostles, and the prophets

How that by revelation He (Jesus) made known unto me (Paul) the MYSTERY;...Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; (Eph 3:3-5)

2. All men

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the MYSTERY... (Eph 3:9)

3. The saints (Christians)

Even the MYSTERY which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: (Col 1:26)

Whenever I read scriptures like this, I am reminded that of all the previous TIME PERIODS in history, such as ...

- (A) from creation to the flood
- (B) from the flood to the law of Moses
- (C) from the law of Moses to Christ

We live in what could probably be classified as **the greatest and most exciting TIME PERIOD** ever...

- (D) the church stage (God's mystery revealed)

The Mystery of the Church

What Is So Great About It?

Before we get into "WHAT IS SO GREAT ABOUT THE CHURCH" let's discuss the meaning of the word "CHURCH".

The meaning of the word CHURCH simply means "A CALLED OUT ASSEMBLY"

1. *It is God who calls together and gathers His church. His church is the body of people "called out" from the world of unbelievers. They are His body of people, a people sanctified or set apart by Him to form the church of the living God.*
2. *God dwells within the very presence of believers when they gather together. (1 Cor. 3:16-17)*
3. *The gathering of God meets together for two purposes—worship and mission. God is the object of worship, and His mission becomes the very purpose*

of the church. Therefore, God's church, the local assembly, gathers together to worship and to pool its resources in order to carry out the mission of God Himself.
— POSB Commentary

Although we can't read about the church in



the Old testament—in a sense, Israel was God's church, God's called out assembly in the wilderness.

ISRAEL WAS A TYPE OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD. (SEE ACTS 7:38)

And yet there is something very different when you compare the New Testament "Church Assembly" with the Old Testament "Israel Assembly". And it is because of the difference that God would call the church of the New Testament a GREAT MYSTERY, a

secret that was held back for more than 4,000 years, before being revealed to the 12 disciples in Matthew 16.

And with that in mind, let's discuss the GREATNESS of the church.

The Great Mystery

A New Body of People

God's mysterious purpose was to take two very different groups of people (Jews & Gentiles), join them together, and call them church.

For Jews and Gentiles to come together as ONE and worship Almighty God was something that was almost next to impossible during Old testament times. But through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, this is now possible. Let's read what the Bible says in Ephesians 2:14-16—please

HEART TO HEART WITH JOE



When was the last time you stopped, closed your eyes and looked all the way down deep into your heart and soul to see whether you were truly prepared to die and meet your creator? If you have not done so in awhile, would you consider doing that now? And when you do that, would you consider the following scripture?

(2 Cor 13:5) Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

First, Paul says we should EXAMINE ourselves to see whether we are in the faith or not. Notice however that he does not say DOUBT yourself, whether ye be in the faith. He says EXAMINE yourselves, look deep within and make double sure that you are in the faith. Don't depend on what someone else said because that someone else could be wrong.

Esther and I taught our children about Jesus Christ the Savior, from a very young age and up. And each one, on separate

occasions, came to us and said that they wanted to ask Jesus to come into their life and be saved. These were of course joyful times in the Keim family because it had been our prayer for many years that God would draw our children to Himself, convict them of their sins, and save them.

As joyful as it was for us to see them experience the new birth, I would on occasion ask them to go back and re-examine their "new birth" experience. I wanted to hear them tell me one more time — dad, my salvation was real; I still have assurance of my salvation. I also wanted to make sure that they knew they were saved, because after all, they are my offsprings and I want to be sure." Now, not only have I done that for our children, I do it for myself also. I think every believer ought to do that.

(Lament. 3:40) "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD"

~ Joe Keim

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read slowly and understand what God is saying.

For HE [Jesus] is our peace, WHO hath made both [Jew & Gentile] one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; ¹⁵ Having abolished in HIS flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances;

Here is HIS purpose for doing so...

for to make in HIMSELF of twain [Jew & Gentile] one new man, so making peace; ¹⁶ And that HE might reconcile both [Jew & Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (Eph 2:14-16)

JESUS MADE ALL MEN AS ONE

Christ brings a deep sense of peace when we realize that He has brought perfect love and unity to the world—that He did away with all divisions and barriers and differences between God and man and also between men.



All men now come to God on the same basis and that is by the blood of Jesus Christ. There is no other way. Therefore, when a man comes to the cross, he comes with everyone else who is standing at the feet of Jesus. He stands as one with them—all on an equal basis: sinners who need a Savior. Standing there he is not accepted by God because he is better, healthier, wealthier, Amish, English, or Chinese. **He is acceptable to God because He acknowledges his unworthiness and nothingness—his desperate need—to be saved by the blood of Christ. He is acceptable to God because he acknowledges that he is as all other men—lost and needful—and he comes as one with all other men to confess Christ as his Savior.**

Every believer who comes to Jesus Christ loves Him, and that common love among believers stirs a common love between believers. Love for Jesus Christ stirs love for all those whom Christ loves—which is every-one. Christ leads men to love one another.

"So we, being many, are one body in

Christ, and every one members one of another" (Rom 12:5)

JESUS BROKE DOWN ALL BARRIERS

For HE is our peace, WHO hath made both [Jew & Gentile] one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; (Eph 2:14)

Men build all kinds of walls and barriers against other men. These walls are put in place because of...

Race | Color | Religion | Wealth | Health Appearance | Position | Dress code



But Christ has now done away with all those walls and barriers. He has broken them all down by the

blood of His cross. All men now approach God and become worthy on the same basis: by bowing before the cross and surrendering their lives to God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28)

JESUS WIPED OUT ORDINANCES

Having abolished in HIS flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; (Eph 2:15a)

Christ brings peace by wiping out the enmity of the law against us. Before Christ, man had to approach God through law. However, man discovered something: the law did not make him acceptable to God; it condemned him and showed him how far away from God he really was—totally corrupt. **Every time he broke the law, the law cried out "guilty" and pronounced the punishment of being imperfect and unworthy and unacceptable to God.** Man discovered that the law was against him. But now, Christ has done away with the enmity and condemnation of the law.

- Christ has lived a sinless life, fulfilling the law perfectly; and thereby He has secured the Perfect and Ideal Righteousness.
- Christ has also paid the penalty for

man's having broken the law. As the Ideal and Perfect Man He could do this. When He died on the cross, He bore our condemnation and punishment for us.

The point is this: when Christ fulfilled the law, He became the embodiment of the law. He is now the Way. A man is to approach God through Him, not the law. **Therefore, there are no laws, no rules, and no ordinances to keep men from God.**

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (Col 2:14)

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? (Col 2:20-22)

JESUS CREATES A NEW MAN

...for to make in HIMSELF of twain [Jew & Gentile] one new man, so making peace; (Eph 2:15b)

Christ brings peace by creating a "new man." God planned and promised a "new creation"—the creation of a *new man individually* and *corporately*, a new man in whom Jesus Christ dwells (Col. 1:27).

Individually when a man turns to Christ, Christ causes the man to be *born again*.



He re-creates the man—creates the man *all over again*. The man has a new life; he begins life all over again. He has a new beginning, and this new beginning brings peace—peace of heart and mind.

THEREFORE IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, he is a new creature: OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY; behold, all things are become new. (2 Cor 5:17)

Corporately in Jesus Christ all men who believe, both Jew and Gentile, make up *one new body* (Eph 2:16), *one new family* (Eph 2:19), *one new building* (Eph 2:20-22), *one new temple* (Eph 2:21), *one new fellowship* (Eph 1:22).

— POSB Commentary

It is important that we pause here and remind ourselves that **when we look through the eyes of God, there are ONLY two groups of people**—they are the BELIEVERS and UN-BELIEVERS. Man on the other hand has created many more groups, such as Baptist, Brethren, Amish, Methodist, Mennonite, Hutterites, etc. **Many of these same groups have even broken up into more groups.** For instance, we now have Old Order, New Order, Schwartzentruber, Tobe, Weaver, etc. Can you imagine the great power and strength that would come to this fallen world if **ALL the born again believers would pull together and get on the same page?** It is true that there is no other group of people, more divided than those who call themselves Christians. **It must break the heart of God to see so much pride and men's traditions get in the way of a lost and dying world.**

Maybe this would be a good time to just stop and look deep into your own heart and see if there be any pride there. If so, why not give it to the Lord?

Well, let's go back to our discussion on the great mystery of God. **I really think that with what we have covered on the past page we will now be able to better understand what follows here in Ephesians, chapter 3.** The Apostle Paul writes...

Ephesians 3:1-6

¹For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, ²If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: ³How that by revelation He made known unto me the MYSTERY; ⁴Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the MYSTERY of Christ ⁵Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of

men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; ⁶That the Gentiles should be FELLOW-HEIRS, and of the SAME BODY, and PARTAKERS of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

We, the Gentiles are fellow-heirs of God with the Jews. **Before Jesus Christ, if a person wished to be saved, he had to approach God through the Jewish religion.** However, since Christ came, Gentile believers—or for that matter, all peoples of the earth—no longer have to approach God through any other people or religion. No matter who we are, we are now to approach God face to face through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. **Every person now has the glorious privilege of approaching God no matter...**

- who he is
- what he has done
- where he is or has been
- when he comes
- how he comes

If a person is genuine in seeking after God, he can now approach God through Jesus Christ. There are no barriers—none whatsoever—to prevent him from coming to God and being adopted by God as an heir of God with all other believers.

According to Eph 3:10, this GREAT MYSTERY even affects the heavenly beings. **Heavenly beings stand in stark amazement at what God is doing in the church.**



God's glorious purpose in salvation and in the church is to show His love and wisdom to the whole universe—to stir every creature in heaven to stand in stark amazement at what He is doing.

The Apostle Paul ends the 3rd chapter of Ephesians with a prayer:

Ephesians 3:14-19 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; ¹⁷That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; ¹⁹And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

It is utterly impossible to grasp and experience the love of Christ anywhere close to its full measure, but we should pray for God to help us learn more and more of His love—and we should make the request *often every day.*

There has never been penned a greater description of the unsurpassing love of Christ than that of F.M. Lehman in the song, "The Love of God":

Could we with ink the ocean fill, and were the skies of parchment made; were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade, to write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry. Nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky. O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong! It shall forever more endure.



Written by Joe Keim

WHEN I SAY, I AM BORN AGAIN

When I say... "I am Born Again" I'm not shouting "I'm clean livin'"... I'm whispering "I was lost," Now I'm found and forgiven.

When I say... "I am Born Again" I don't speak of this with pride...I'm confessing that I stumble and need Christ to be my guide.

When I say... "I am Born Again" I'm not

trying to be strong... I'm professing that I'm weak and need HIS strength to carry on.

When I say... "I am Born Again" I'm not bragging of success... I'm admitting I have failed and need God to clean my mess.

When I say... "I am Born Again" I'm not claiming to be perfect... My flaws are far

too visible but, God believes I am worth it.

When I say... "I am Born Again" I still feel the sting of pain... I have my share of heartaches, So I call upon His name.

When I say... "I am Born Again" I'm not holier than thou... I was a simple sinner who received God's good grace, somehow.

SIMPLE THOUGHTS FROM ELI

Still The Manna Fell

One of the more familiar stories from the Old Testament is about the time when the children of Israel needed food and God gave them manna.

Exodus 16:35 *And the children of Israel did eat the manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat the manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.*



This fills me with wonder at the size of God's grace. As they were in the desert after fleeing Egypt, it was not possible to grow grain of any kind. So each morning, they went out and

gathered manna, one omer for each person. An omer is about 1/10 bushel. An omer may have weighed about 5 pounds, more or less. Now there were 600,000 people that left Egypt, not counting women and children. The sheer amount of manna rained from heaven over the forty year period is staggering. Every day's supply would fill many truckloads. If you do a little math, forty years is about 14,600 days.

Joshua 5:12 *And the manna ceased on the morrow, after they had eaten of the produce of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.*

Consider how often they offended God as they traveled through the desert. Moses



hadn't even returned from the mountaintop when they were making the golden calf! Even though they sinned greatly at times, still every morning manna came down from heaven. When the destroying serpents made their way through the camp, still the manna fell. Here we see grace at work. Undeserved supply of food simply because God had said so. No one ever had to plow, weed or harvest the 'manna fields'. No crop failures. No worry about the weather or insects. All that you had to do was gather the one omer per person allowed. What does this story mean to us today?

God is teaching us that when He makes a promise, He will keep it, no matter how badly we fail. Had God caused manna to not fall any more, the children of Israel would have perished in short order. The nations around would have quickly finished them off. The word would have been, "God delivered them out of Egypt and couldn't bring them through." Even though Israel was often punished, they still had manna for food. If you choose to do the math on the amount of manna, it will become ap-



parent that **God is not short on grace.**

This story gives an illustration of

what grace really is. Grace has been called "undeserved merit". Put more simply, God gives us things we didn't earn. Nobody had to do anything to earn manna. Just get out there and gather it. The manna was a free gift to the people who were delivered from Egypt. No other neighboring countries got manna, only the people to whom it was promised.

Now there were many nations around the area that worshipped idols, yet they did not receive the same punishment as God's own children did. They also did not experience God's grace, the daily manna. When God adopts us into his family as children, he too has a right to chastise us at the same time as we are receiving his grace. The German word for grace is *gnade*

Mercy is another story. The German word is *barmherzig*. When we break the law, we are required to pay the penalty, even if we disagree with the law. Our own reasoning will not change the law. We are found guilty and must pay the penalty. Our only hope is mercy. How can we find mercy when all the evidence is against us? It all depends on the judge. Does he have mercy?

Psalm 100:5 *For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.*

He have mercy to all who come to Him, He is full of grace too! And in this we can find assurance because **His Word** says so.

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DON'T INTERRUPT

Most people react badly to being interrupted. They often feel disrespected and small when you talk over them. People who tend to interrupt others generally do so for one of these reasons:

1. They don't place enough value on what the other person has to say.
2. They want to impress others by showing how smart or intuitive they are.
3. They're too excited by the conversation to let the other person finish talking.

If you are in the habit of interrupting other people, examine your motives and determine to make a change.

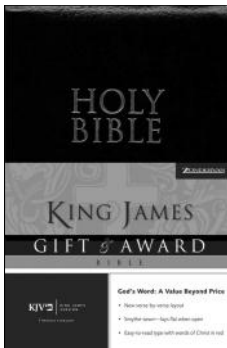
1. Give people the time they need to express themselves.
2. Don't feel that one of you has to be speaking all the time.
3. Periods of silence give you a chance to reflect on what's been said so that you can respond appropriately.

The Apostle Paul writes: *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. (Philippians 2:3-4)*

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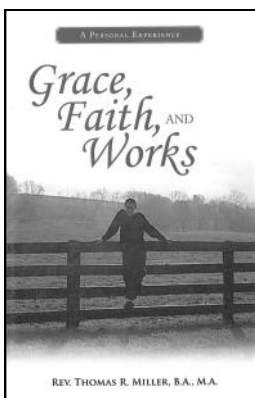
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Did you Know?

1. Honeybees have hair on their eyes.
2. Human teeth are almost as hard as rocks.
3. Human thigh bones are stronger than concrete.
4. "I am." is the shortest sentence in the English language.
5. In 75% of American households, women manage the money and pay the bills.
6. In Kentucky, 50 percent of the people who get married for the first time are teenagers.
7. In space, astronauts cannot cry, because there is no gravity, so the tears can't flow.
8. It takes about a half a gallon of water to cook macaroni, and about a gallon to clean the pot.
9. It was discovered on a space mission that a frog can throw up. The frog throws up its stomach first, so the stomach is dangling out of its mouth. Then the frog uses its forearms to dig out all of the stomach's contents and then swallows the stomach back down again.

AMAZING FACTS IN THE BIBLE

"What do angels look like?"

Answer: Angels are spirit beings (Hebrews 1:14), so they do not necessarily have a physical form. However, angels do have the ability to take on human form. When angels appeared to humans in the Bible, they resembled normal males. In Genesis 18:1-19, God and two angels appeared as men and actually ate a meal with Abraham. Angels appear as men many times throughout the Bible (Joshua 5:13-14; Mark 16:5), although they never appear in the likeness of women.

At other times, angels appeared not as humans, but as something other-worldly. At times, their appearance was terrifying to those who encountered them. Often the first words from these angels were *"do not be afraid,"* because extreme fear was such a common reaction. Zacharias in Luke 1:12 was speechless before the angel who visited him, as were the keepers of Jesus' tomb, who became as dead men when they saw the angel of the Lord (Matthew 28:4). The shepherds in the fields in Luke 2 were *"sore afraid"* when the angel of the Lord appeared and the glory of the Lord shone around them. To others, however, angelic appearances did not produce terror. Mary's encounter with the angel who announced the birth of Jesus produced confusion at the pronouncement, but did not seem to produce the same fear experienced by Zacharias.

As for physical characteristics, angels are often described as having wings. The cherubim on the ark of the covenant have wings that cover the mercy seat (Exodus 25:20). Isaiah also saw winged seraphim in his vision of the throne of heaven, each one having six wings (Isaiah 6:2). Ezekiel, too, saw visions of winged angels. Isaiah 6:1-2 depicts angels having human features—voices, faces and feet. Angel voices are heard singing and praising God in several other passages. One of the most complete descriptions of an angel is in **Daniel 10:5-6:** *"THEN I LIFTED UP MINE EYES, AND LOOKED, AND BEHOLD A CERTAIN MAN CLOTHED IN LINEN, WHOSE LOINS WERE GIRDED WITH FINE GOLD OF UPHAZ: HIS BODY ALSO WAS LIKE THE BERYL, AND HIS FACE AS THE APPEARANCE OF LIGHTNING, AND HIS EYES AS LAMPS OF FIRE, AND HIS ARMS AND HIS FEET LIKE IN COLOUR TO POLISHED BRASS, AND THE VOICE OF HIS WORDS LIKE THE VOICE OF A MULTITUDE"* The angel guarding Jesus' tomb was similarly described in **Matthew 28:3:** *"HIS COUNTENANCE WAS LIKE LIGHTNING, AND HIS RAIMENT WHITE AS SNOW"*.

Whatever appearance angels take on, there is reason to believe they are incredibly beautiful. First, Ezekiel tells us that Lucifer's beauty was such that it caused his heart to be "lifted up" in pride. In addition, it stands to reason that angels have extraordinary beauty because they are continually in the presence of Almighty God, whose glory is reflected upon all that is

THE DUCK AND THE DEVIL

There was a little boy visiting his grandparents on their farm. He was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods; but he could never hit the target. Getting a little discouraged, he headed back for dinner. As he was walking back he saw Grandma's pet duck.



Just out of impulse, he let the slingshot fly, hit the duck square in the head and killed it. He was shocked and grieved! In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the wood pile; only to see his sister watching! Mary had seen it all, but she said nothing.

After lunch the next day Grandma said, "Mary, let's wash the dishes" But Mary said, "Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen."

Then she whispered to him, "Remember the duck?" So Johnny did the dishes.

Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing and Grandma said, "I'm sorry but I need Mary to help make supper." Mary just smiled and said, "Well that's all right because Johnny told me he wanted to help" She whispered again, "Remember the duck?" So Mary went fishing and Johnny stayed to help.

After several days of Johnny doing both his chores and Mary's; he finally couldn't stand it any longer.

He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck.

Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug and said, "Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing, but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let Mary make a slave of you."

Thought for the day and every day thereafter. Whatever is in your past, whatever you have done... and the devil keeps throwing it up in your face (lying, cheating, debt, fear, bad habits, hatred, anger, bitterness, etc.) ...whatever it is...You need to know that God was standing at the window and He saw the whole thing. He has seen your whole life. He wants you to know that He loves you and that you are forgiven. He's just wondering how long you will let the devil make a slave of you.

The great thing about God is that when you ask for forgiveness; He not only forgives you, but He forgets. It is by God's grace and mercy that we are saved. Go ahead and make the difference in someone's life today. Share this with a friend and always remember: God is at the window!

JESUS' OBITUARY

Jerusalem OBITUARIES 33 AD



Calvary

Jesus Christ, 33, of Nazareth, died Friday on Mount Calvary, also known as Golgotha, the place of the skull. Betrayed by the apostle Judas, Jesus was crucified by the Romans, by order of the Ruler Pontius Pilate. The causes of death were crucifixion, extreme exhaustion, severe torture, and loss of blood.

Jesus Christ, a descendant of Abraham, was a member of the house of David. He was the Son of the late Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth, and Mary, His devoted Mother. Jesus was born in a stable in the city of Bethlehem, Judea. He is survived by His mother Mary, His faithful Apostles, numerous disciples, and many other followers.

Jesus was self educated and spent most of his adult life working as a Teacher. Jesus also occasionally worked as a Medical Doctor and it is reported that he healed many patients. Up until the time of His death, Jesus was teaching and sharing the Good News, healing the sick, touching the lonely, feeding the hungry, and helping the poor.

Jesus was most noted for telling parables about His Father's Kingdom and performing miracles, such as feeding over 5,000 people with only five loaves of bread and two fish, and healing a man who was born blind. On the day before His death, He held a Last Supper celebrating the Passover Feast, at which He foretold His death.

The body was quickly buried in a stone grave, which was donated by Joseph of Arimathea, a loyal friend of the family. By order of Pontius Pilate, a boulder was rolled in front of the tomb. Roman soldiers were put on guard.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that everyone try to live as Jesus did. Donations may be sent to anyone in need.

THE STORY OF ARTHUR STACE, ALSO KNOWN AS MR. ETERNITY



Arthur Stace was born and raised in Sydney Australia. His father and mother were both drunkards. Two sisters and two brothers also were drunks and they lived much of their time in jail.

Stace used to sleep on bags under the house and when his parents were drunk he had to look after himself. He used to steal milk from the doorsteps, pick scraps of food out of garbage and shoplift cakes and sweets. When he was fourteen he had his first job - in a coal mine - and his first pay check he spent in a hotel. Already he had learned to drink at home, just like the rest of the family. He went to jail for the first time when he was fifteen.

Arthur Stace converted to Christianity on the night of August 6, 1930, after hearing a powerful sermon by Rev. R.B.S. Hammond at St. Barnabas Church, Broadway. Two years later, on 14 November 1932, Arthur was further encouraged by the preaching of Evangelist John G. Ridley—

John Ridley shouted the words, "**Eternity, Eternity, I wish that I could shout that word to everyone in the streets of Sydney. You've got to meet it, where will you spend Eternity?**"

That night, Arthur Stace left with **ETERNITY** ringing through his brain and suddenly **he began crying and felt a powerful call from the Lord to write Eternity all over the streets of Sydney.**"

Several mornings a week, Arthur would leave his wife, Pearl and their home around 5am to go around the streets of Sydney and chalk the word



Eternity on footpaths, train station entrances and anywhere else he could think of. As he walked, every so often he would stop, pull out a crayon, bend down and write on the pavement - **E-T-E-R-N-I-T-Y**. He would move on a hundred yards then write it again, **E-T-E-R-N-I-T-Y**, nothing more, just one simple word. For thirty-seven years he chalked this one-word sermon and he wrote more than half a million times.

Arthur Stace did not like publicity. He regarded his unique style of Evangelism as a serious mission, something between Arthur Stace and his Maker, so for more than 10 years, these Eternity signs puzzled the folks who lived in Sydney.

The mystery man became known as Mr. Eternity!

All the people of Sydney wondered, who it could be that wrote **E-T-E-R-N-I-T-Y** on the streets all over the big city. It became a mystery and everyone was talking about it. Sydney newspaper editors wrote about it and only guessed on who the author might be. Several people even walked into newspaper offices and announced that they were the author. But the real man kept

quiet.

The mystery all came clear in 1956 and the man who cracked it was the Reverend Lisle M. Thompson of the Burton Street Baptist Church. Arthur Stace was actually the church cleaner and one of their prayer leaders.

The way it came about: One day, the Reverend Lisle Thompson saw Stace take out his crayon and write the famous Eternity on the pavement. Arthur Stace had done it without realizing that he has been spotted. Thompson said: "Are you Mr. Eternity?" and Stace replied "Guilty Your Honor".

Arthur Stace died of a stroke in a nursing home on **July 30, 1967**. He was 83.

In **1968** the Sydney City Council decided to carry on Mr. Stace's one-word sermon "**ETERNITY**" by putting down permanent plaques in many numerous locations throughout the city.

As a tribute to the man known as Mr. Eternity, the Sydney Harbour Bridge was lit up with the word "Eternity" as part of the celebrations for the beginning of the year 2000 and the beginning of the new century.



The question I must ask myself is, where will I spend eternity?

BAPTISM: SPRINKLING, POURING, OR IMMERSION?

(Continued on Page 9)

The following article is pretty straight forward and may even offend some of our readers. It is not my desire to offend anyone but rather, it is my prayer that we would read it, consider it, study it, and most of all believe God's Word.

Please feel free to respond—I always enjoy hearing from our readers.

— Joe Keim

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus commanded for us to go and baptize all nations.

GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NA-

TIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST:



Without a doubt baptism is a very important requirement for the one who becomes a believer, yet it is also one of the most misunderstood topics in the Bible. What did Jesus mean when He said to baptize people? Some churches sprinkle or pour water on the person's

head. Other churches only baptize by immersion which means putting one completely under water.

Please read the quotation below from Martin Luther.

"Martin Luther urged, in opposition to the standard practice of pouring, that baptism should be by immersion. He pointed out that the word in the Greek language (original writings) means 'To plunge something entirely into the water, so that the water closes over it,' and urged that immersion should be the mode of baptism. A Compend of

Luther's Theology, p. 167, via Handbook of Religious Quotations, p. 11.

As you may or may not know, the New Testament was originally written in the **Greek** language. The reason being, it was the most popular language of that day. Now, since none of us are able to read or understand the Greek language, people over the centuries have taken it upon themselves to translate the Bible into a language such as English so that we in the English world can read and understand it. I say all this to say this, if we really want to know what "baptize" means we have to go to someone that understands and can tell us the true meaning of the word "baptize".

After checking the *Strong's Greek & Hebrew Dictionary* and found that the original word for "baptize" was spelled "**baptizo**" and the true meaning of the word "**baptizo**" is, **to fully dip or fully wet**. Another words, Martin Luther was 100% correct when he said it means 'To plunge something entirely into the water, so that the water closes over it,' I checked and found that all Bible dictionaries define the word "**baptizo**" only as immerse, dip or plunge.

"**Baptizo**" does not mean sprinkle or pour. If Jesus had wanted people to be sprinkled, he would have moved the New Testament writers to use the Greek word "**rhantizo**". If Jesus had wanted people to be poured He would have moved New Testament writers to use the Greek word "**katacheo**". But he didn't, so "**baptizo**" was used, which can only mean to **immerse**.

Why don't we look in the Bible to see how people were baptized?

In John 3:23 we read, "AND JOHN ALSO WAS BAPTIZING IN AENON NEAR TO SALIM, **BECAUSE THERE WAS MUCH WATER THERE: AND THEY CAME, AND WERE BAPTIZED.**"

Why was John baptizing Aenon? Answer: because there was much water there. Biblical baptism, which is immersion (completely buried), requires much water.

In Mark 1:5 we read, "AND THERE WENT OUT UNTO HIM ALL THE LAND OF JUDAEA, AND THEY OF JERUSALEM, **AND WERE ALL BAPTIZED OF HIM IN THE RIVER OF JORDAN.**"

Why was John baptizing in the Jordan River? Could it be because there was much water there in a river?

In Mark 1:9-10, we read, "JESUS CAME FROM NAZARETH OF GALILEE, AND WAS BAPTIZED OF JOHN IN JORDAN. AND STRAIGHTWAY **COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER**, HE SAW THE HEAVENS OPENED, AND THE SPIRIT LIKE A DOVE DESCENDING UPON HIM"

When Jesus was baptized, he was baptized in the Jordan River. Why? Answer: because there is much water in a river which is required for Biblical baptism, which is immersion. Also notice that after Jesus was baptized,



he came "up out of the water." So Bible baptism not only requires much water, but it also requires "coming up out of the water." This cannot be said of sprinkling or pouring.

In Acts 8 we read where preacher Philip had been teaching the gospel or good news of Christ to an Ethiopian eunuch while they were riding along in a chariot.

Then in verses 36-39 we read: "AND AS THEY WENT ON THEIR WAY, THEY CAME UNTO A CERTAIN WATER: AND THE EUNUCH SAID, SEE, HERE IS WATER; WHAT DOT HINDER ME TO BE BAPTIZED? AND PHILIP SAID, IF THOU BELIEVEST WITH ALL THINE HEART, THOU MAYEST. AND HE ANSWERED AND SAID, I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD. AND HE COMMANDED THE CHARIOT TO STAND STILL: AND **THEY WENT DOWN BOTH INTO THE WATER, BOTH PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH;** AND HE BAPTIZED HIM. 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 RE-

JOICING".

Here again we see that the baptism that God has approved in the Bible requires the "coming to some water", "going down into the water," and after a person is completely buried in the water it requires "coming up out of the water." How much clearer could the Bible be on the manner of baptism?

Romans 6:4 says, "THEREFORE WE WERE **BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH.**"

Here we see that baptism is a **burial**, which is what is done when one is immersed. Sprinkling is not a burial; it is only sprinkling. Neither is pouring a burial. Both are substitutes that were made by man.

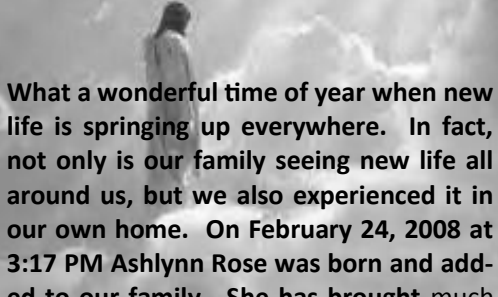
Colossians 2:12 says that we are "**BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM, WHEREIN ALSO YE ARE RISEN WITH HIM THROUGH THE FAITH OF THE OPERATION OF GOD, WHO HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD.**"

Here again God requires the one being baptized, to be **buried** and **raised** when he is baptized. When we bury a dead person in the cemetery, we do not lay him out on the grass and sprinkle a little dirt on him. No, that would be silly, and it is just as silly in trying to substitute sprinkling for baptism. Sprinkling or pouring for baptism is unknown to the scriptures. God did not give us permission to it that way. There is not one instance anywhere in the Bible where anyone was sprinkled or poured for baptism.

Do you wonder then where sprinkling or pouring comes from? The first recorded case in all of early church history was that of Novatian in 251 AD, who lay sick on his bed and water was poured on him. Now, ask yourself, who made this first exception, was it man or God? Man did. He did it without the approval of God. Sprinkling is just as vain as if it had never been done. Part obedience to God cancels out complete obedience to God.

In Conclusion it is clear that Biblical baptism requires all the following (Water), (Much water), (Coming to the water),

Making Heaven My Future Home



What a wonderful time of year when new life is springing up everywhere. In fact, not only is our family seeing new life all around us, but we also experienced it in our own home. On February 24, 2008 at 3:17 PM Ashlynn Rose was born and added to our family. She has brought much joy to the hearts of all who have met her including her big sister, Amy Elizabeth. Amy adores her and showers her with kisses every opportunity she gets.

I recently went to a conference and was reminded of so many truths in the Word of God. The scripture says that we shall know the truth and the truth shall set us free. He also says that He is the only way by which we are to be saved from hell. Jesus is the only name given under heaven by which we can be saved. What does the Bible say about being saved so we can go to heaven when we die?

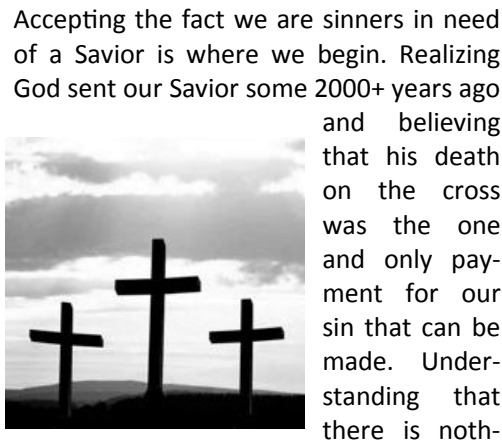
John 8:31, 32 *Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

John 14:6 *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

John 10:7-11 *Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to*

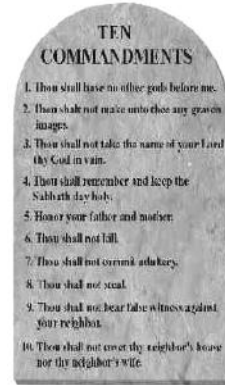
steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Romans 10:8-13 *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*



Accepting the fact we are sinners in need of a Savior is where we begin. Realizing God sent our Savior some 2000+ years ago and believing that his death on the cross was the one and only payment for our sin that can be made. Understanding that there is nothing we can do other than believe it is through His shed blood on the cross that we are made righteous in the eyes of God. It is also realizing that a Christian commits his life daily to God through reading His Word, spending time with Him in prayer, and allowing the Holy Spirit to be our guide. The Bible says we are the temple of God and that the Holy Spirit dwells inside of us. He is the one who guides us into all

truth the Bible says and teaches us and convicts us. We then live our lives according to the commandments He left us. The two greatest commandments are to love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love your neighbor as you love yourself. The Ten Commandments also tell us what our attitude should be first toward God and then towards other people.



Do you love God? Do you believe in Jesus?

Start walking with God today and let the Holy Spirit guide your every step! Get excited about what Jesus has done for you on the cross! He died for you so you don't have to die an eternal death! He died to pay the price for every sin God already knew you were going to commit!

Your justification before God is going to come from your faith and belief in Jesus Christ, not from your works. Justification means we are made right in the sight of God. The only way we are made right in the sight of God is through Jesus. As Christians we should all be able to go to the same church with no divisions along denominational lines or cultural lines. This is what it will be like in heaven and this is what it should be like among Christians in the world today! If we want heaven to be our future home we have to live according to the rules God has set up for us to get there. God says, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life and no one comes to the Father but by me! Pray and accept Jesus as your only way to heaven and then spend time with God in His Word and His Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth and He will teach you what His purpose is for you in the earth!!

**Barbara Kay Keim
1903 Liberty Hill Drive
Belton, TX 76513**

When you're looking back... only do so to take the lesson you learned, not to dwell. Be grateful for the experience, even if it caused you pain, because it brought you wisdom. Be happy for the lessons for they bring blessings. Keep your eyes on

BEFORE YOU JUDGE AND CRITICIZE...

James 2:13 "For He shall have judgment without mercy, who has showed no mercy; and mercy rejoices against judgment."

Below are some questions to ask before you point the finger critically at someone else. When you're tempted to criticize go through this list and see which questions apply. Let's honor God by not unfairly judging others!



Am I sure all the information I have about this situation is true?

Am I sure I have ENOUGH information to come to a conclusion?

Do I know the WHOLE CONTEXT of the information?

Have I talked directly to this person about my feelings, instead of telling my feelings to others first?

Am I being like Job's friends in any way: merciless, accusative and insensitive?

Have I questioned the involved party personally to find out his/her point of view?

Proverbs 18:13 "He who answers before listening—that is his folly and shame."

Have I followed the commandment of Galatians 6:1, to restore any brother overtaken in a fault?

Am I sure the thing I'm concerned about in my brother's life is something God wants to change in that person NOW? Perhaps it is on God's timetable 10 years from now.



Is this a situation or flaw to which I should apply I Peter 4:8?

I Peter 4:8: "Love covers over a multitude of sins."?

Is my motive for criticizing selfish? Am I defending myself?

Am I ever guilty of doing or saying something as bad as what I'm upset about in another person? (Am I worthy to *point the finger*?)

Am I prepared for others criticizing me in the way I am criticizing this situation?

With all the real evil in the world: abortion, murder, rape, broken families, terrorism, prostitution, anti-Christ religion, and on and on, am I being too technical—perhaps much more concerned than God is?

Am I willing for them to find out everything that I've said about them?

Are they my servant? (Romans 14:4) Do I have God-given authority to criticize this person?

Have I prayed about it as fervently as the ones I feel are wrong have prayed about it?

Do I need to repent? Do I need to go and talk with my brother?

— BRUCE LENGEMAN

Bruce travels the country as a national speaker and counselor for Door of Hope.

BRUCE LENGEMAN

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Door of Hope invites you to attend:

- *Take Back Your Life* conference September 8-12, 2008. Many lives and marriages are transformed during this intense week of learning the principles of overcoming in Christ. Everything is based on the authority of the Bible, God's Holy Word.
- Teens may want to attend the conference for youth August 11-15.

For more information call *Door of Hope* at 828-859-0126.

MOST WORRY IS UNNECESSARY

It's almost as though we search for problems to give ourselves stress. The amazing news is that much of what we worry about doesn't matter at all! Take a look at these statistics about worry:

- 40% of all things that we worry about never come to pass.
- 30% of all our worries involve past decisions that cannot be changed.
- 12% focus on criticism from others who spoke because they felt inferior.
- 10% are related to our health, which gets worse when we worry.

- 8% of our worries could be described as "legitimate" causes for concern.

Isn't that remarkable?



Fewer than one problem in every ten that we worry about is a real concern. All the others are things that we can learn to see differently or eliminate.

Matthew 6:34 *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself...*

QUIZZ: WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

1. This woman hung a red rope from her window...
Eve | Rahab | Tamar | Ruth
2. This woman drove a tent peg through her guest's head...
Jael | Athaliah | Jezebel | Delilah
3. This woman laughed at God's promise concerning her child...
Sarah | Jezebel | Rachel | Anna
4. This woman was seen bathing...
Rachel | Bathsheba | Naomi | Esther
5. This woman and her husband were tent makers...
Mary Madeline | Delilah | Priscilla | Jezebel
6. This woman was David's great-grandmother...
Michal | Abigail | Ruth | Leah
7. This woman was raped by her half-brother...
Tamar | Dinah | Rahab | Ruth
8. This woman died after being pushed out of a window...
Delilah | Jezebel | The witch at Endor | Dinah
9. This woman won a beauty contest...
Delilah | Rachel | The Queen of Sheba | Esther
10. This woman had bad eyesight...
Leah | Rachel | Sarah | Hagar
11. This woman had her boyfriend's head shaved...
Delilah | Michal | Abigail | Sarah

NOTEWORTHY NEWS

Group Offers to Help Town



A national group that defended the Amish in a landmark U.S. Supreme Court case that preserved religious freedom is offering to help the town's building codes violation saga.

The National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom sent a letter Thursday to the Town Council offering its knowledge of building codes and experience in finding exemptions for the Amish.

The town has charged 10 Amish men with building or moving homes without a permit. The town denied permits because the men will not meet requirements such as installing smoke detectors and having designs approved by a state-certified engineer.

The town made a public appeal for help

because council members believe the state has failed to intervene or offer financial assistance even though building codes are set by the state and enforced on the local level.

The town has received no word from the state. Its appeal drew the attention of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a non-profit that has accused the town of discriminatory enforcement.

Both the town and the Amish defense attorney said Tuesday that they'll consider the group's offer.

Midwife Can Resume Practice



Diane Goslin, a midwife who lives near Lancaster PA has delivered more than 5,000 babies over a period of 27 years. Over 75% of her clientele have consisted of Amish and Mennonite women.

Last year however, government officials stepped in and tried to stop her from

practicing because she was practicing without a license. The state law requires all midwives to be registered nurses and to operate under strict guidelines.

Gostlin's argument was, I only provide coaching for normal births, and anything beyond that, I refer to specialists.

In late May, the court overturned an \$11,000 civil suit and for now, she can resume her practice as midwife.

Amish Pair May Get Jail Sentence

Hasting New York—Earlier this year, two men were convicted by Zungali of illegally dumping waste from two unpermitted outhouses onto farm fields. The members belong to a Schwartzentruber sect and say that the requirements violate their First Amendment rights of religious freedom; they told Zungali they would neither pay the \$1,051 fine nor appeal. Barbin said, putting the men in jail isn't the answer but we still need to find a way to solve the problem." The deadline was up last week.

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