

Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

"...Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body." - Ephesians 5:23

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BEYOND THE NEXT MOUNTAIN

by Claudene Connally

I have one more mountain to climb and I am excited about it. It is always a joy to anticipate a journey. I know this journey may be fraught with some pitfalls and pain, but the journey's end will be brighter because of the struggle. One passage in the Bible that has sustained me through some of my trials is Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

I want to thank everyone who prayed for me to have my Indian Summer. You know God granted that desire of mine and after finishing my chemo, I had six good and wonderful months. I was able to do what I felt I needed to do. God is so good! But, my last report was not good. My cancer has come back with a vengeance and the doctors gave me two choices: get on hospice or try chemo again. But, they have already given me the best chemo for what I have and I can't take it again. This new chemo has only about 25 to 30 percent chance of working at all, and if it did work it would be a short remission as my cancer is very aggressive and each time it comes back, it could be worse. It is very possible that I might not have any quality time going that route. I prayed for one week about this decision, earnestly and sincerely, that I would make the best choice for the most quality time. And finally, one week from learning the news, it seemed clear to me that today, this day, the sun is shining and I am here and relatively well. This is the day that God has made and I want to take it and savor it. I don't want to spend the last of my days fighting and struggling with a disease that is going to win in the end anyway. I want to spend these days in peace and harmony with God, my family and my friends.

I told you this so you would know why I made this decision and perhaps understand. Don't grieve when you look at me, but know that I am preparing for a very wonderful journey and rejoice with me.

Don't ask, "Why, God?" because I know a secret. That secret is that we grow closer to God through every tribulation. "We can glory in our tribulations knowing that tribulations work patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed in our hearts and by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us" (Romans 5:3-5).

The Lord has not promised to hedge us about and keep us from every trial of life, but He has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). And how true this is. After the loss of my beloved husband, Andrew, I missed him terribly, but gradually I realized that I was growing. I was not so dependent any more. I had the opportunity to be myself and not just "Andrew's wife." Not that I ever minded being that; I was proud to be his wife and walk by his side, but I realized that my own individual faith was growing and I had the opportunity to stretch my wings a bit. I wrote a book, something that I never seemed to have time for before. But, I lost both legs due to diabetes and I found the time. Another blessing in disguise. It is true that women usually outlive men. Did you ever stop to think that maybe God is giving us (widows) a chance to develop our own abilities, giving us a chance to grow closer to Him, to lean on Him and put our whole faith in Him? Thank you God for giving me this time, even though it was a painful loss and at times a lonely road. I have gained much.

My hardest trial was when my son went to prison some six months after losing Andrew. My faith grew weak in that I could not see how any good could come from this. I would sit by Andrew's grave and weep bitter tears. I was ashamed, I was hurt. It was a severe blow to my heart and spirit. But, do you know what? I finally saw how everything can work together for good to them that love the Lord. Because slowly, but surely, I have seen my son growing from a bitter young

man to a Christian striving to do what is right under the hardest circumstances. And, do you know what my son told me? "I would never have changed if I had not gone to prison." Oh, me of little faith. God is coming out of the worst experience. I can still see that swollen, cut face, that bowed head, shorn hair, untidy clothes, chained and shackled child of mine at the trial. But, finally I can see that good came from it. Yes, we can learn and we can grow from every experience of life, but we have to learn to lay those burdens down at Jesus' feet and give God time to work.

I just wanted to share these thoughts with you, and if I can in some small way help you to bear your burdens, I will be thankful. For we are brethren and helping one another is what it is all about.

We are here on this earth to bring glory to God. He made us, He formed us and when we are able to persevere to the end, we do bring glory to God and salvation to our own souls through the gift of God's Son on the cross. Only through His grace and mercy will any of us make it.

*Beyond the next mountain
The dawn of heaven breaks.*

from
THE AFRICAN CHALLENGE

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Editor's Note: According to an e-mail I received from Ferman Carpenter, sister Claudene Connally reached the peak of her last mountain and passed from this life at 7:00 A.M. on Saturday, May 23rd. I did not personally know sister Connally, but I heard so much of her work with her husband, Andrew, when he was living. Andrew was a great gospel preacher and a friend to preachers who walked in the old paths. Brother Carpenter said of sister Claudene, "Claudene was one of the finest Christian ladies I have ever met. She endured so much over the years, but never lost her Christian smile and love. She will truly be missed."

We are thrilled to present this article of hers as she contemplated the end of her life and her going to be with the Lord. We complain about so much and sometimes let such trivial matters keep us from serving God. Next time you are tempted to complain about minor matters or let some minor problem interfere with your service to God, think of this dear sister and imitate her faith (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:10).

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IF BAPTISM IS NOT A CONDITION OF SALVATION, WILL YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?

by Franklin Camp (deceased)

I. Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

1. If baptism is not a condition of salvation, why did Peter mention baptism since he was answering the question of what to do to be saved? (Acts 2:37).

2. If baptism comes after salvation, would not repentance also follow salvation, since they are joined by the conjunction *and*?

3. Is not repentance and baptism in this verse both for the same purpose?

4. If salvation comes before baptism, why does Peter say it is for the remission of sins?

5. If the phrase, "for the remission of sins" in Acts 2:38 means because of remission, would not the same phrase in Matthew 26:28 mean because of remission of sins?

6. Did Jesus shed his blood because men were already saved?

7. If Christ did not shed his blood because men were already saved,

would it not follow that men are not baptized because they were already saved? The phrase in Matthew 26:28 and Acts 2:38 are identical in both the Greek and English.

8. Would it not be a false doctrine to teach that Christ shed his blood because men were already saved?

9. Likewise, is it not a false doctrine to teach that men are baptized, because they are already saved?

10. If the people on Pentecost were saved before they were baptized, why were they not added to the church until they were baptized, since such as should be saved were added to the church? (Acts 2:47).

11. The word church means "the called out" and only those baptized were added to the church. If one is saved before he is baptized, would he be saved before he is called out of the world?

12. Is salvation in the world or in Christ? (2 Timothy 2:10).

II. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls" (Acts 2:41).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the words that I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

"Then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved" (Luke 8:12).

1. Can one be saved and not receive the word?

2. All who received the word on Pentecost were baptized.

3. Were there any on Pentecost who were saved that did not receive the word?

4. Does the word say baptized for the remission of sins or baptized because of remission of sins?

5. How is it possible for one to be baptized as the word teaches, and not be baptized for the remission of sins?

6. If you were not baptized for the remission of sins, you were not baptized as the word teaches and therefore were not saved.

7. If not, why not?

Sin is a hard boss to work for. Long hours, broken hearts, worried minds, and a multitude of bitter memories are the products of the devil.

HAVE YOU GROWN WEARY OF GOD?

by Danny L. Box

Micah 6:2, 3 reads "Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with His people and He will plead with Israel. O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me."

In these two verses we see the faithful prophet of God delivering a message to the last of the children of Israel. God, through the prophet, reminds them of all that He had done for them. God tells them that it was He that had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, and that had fed, protected, guided and loved them all of those years. He told them that He had shown them what is good and all that He had required of them was that they "do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6:8).

But, regardless of all that God had done for the people, they stopped following Him and chose instead to follow the gods of the heathens around them. They had taken on the name of Baal and Balaam and were not willing to do as the one true God required of them. They had become like their forefathers before them; "What iniquity have your fathers found in me that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?" (Jer. 2:5).

Now because the people were no longer following Him, God asks through the prophet, "What have I done? What has caused you to get tired of me? Tell me what have I done? What is the reason that you no longer follow me?" As we read the rest of the chapter, we see that because they had grown weary of God and were no longer following Him, they were going to face some serious consequences (Micah 6:13-16).

Let us take a close personal look at ourselves. Have we become like the children of Israel and grown weary of God? If we truthfully examine ourselves we may see a people that act as if indeed we have grown weary of God. Examine some areas in our lives that may indicate our weariness of God the Father.

Have we grown weary of His Word?

The Word of God was given to man by the inspiration of God so that we could use it for doctrine, for reproof, correction

and instruction, so that we might be that complete men of God (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). The Word is to bring us to a knowledge of the Lord. It will help us grow, and will produce a saving faith (Rom. 10:17). It will also be by this Word that we will be judged in the last day. But so many of us have grown weary of God's Word. We no longer study the Word (2 Tim. 2:15). We no longer search the scriptures daily (Acts 17:11). In fact we have grown so weary of the Word, that we no longer teach it to our children (Deut. 6:4-9; Eph. 6:4). I would ask you now, why have you grown weary of God's Word? Is it because you no longer believe that it is the inspired Word of God? Do you believe that it is no longer applicable to us today? Do you think it is incomplete and needs something added to it? Just why have you grown weary of the Word? We need to get back to feeling about God's Word as the people did in Neh. 8:1-12. They desired the prophet to read the Word; they were attentive to the reading; they respected the reading of the Word; they understood the Word as read; they wept at the reading of the Word; and they went and did according to the Word.

Have we grown weary of His Worship? When David penned these words, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go up to the house of the Lord," how do you think he felt about worshipping God? David was glad to be able to assemble to worship the God that he loved and served. He did not hesitate to pay homage to Him. We can look all around us and see a big portion of the members of the Lord's body who have grown weary of worship. Paul recognized, and addressed this problem even starting in the first century: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:25). God expects those that claim to be His to worship Him. That worship must be in a specific way (John 4:24); at a specific time (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1); and it must contain all of the specified elements (**Singing**...Eph. 5:19; **Preaching/Teaching**...Acts 20:7; **Lord's Supper**...1 Cor. 11:23-29; **Giving**...1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7; and **Praying**...Acts 2:42). Do we not know members of the body of Christ who will make excuses to stay home, or else if they come, will not take an active part in the worship, or some who even try to change the elements of the worship. All of these factors are indications that we have grown tired of God's worship. We need to get back to treating our worship to God as important as life

and death, because it is. If we persist in being weary of God's worship we will die a spiritual death in this life, and face the second death in the life to come.

Have we grown weary of His works? What did James say was the results of faith without works? He let us all know that it was a dead faith, "being alone." Our Lord encouraged us to let our light "so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Even the Lord knew that we must work the works of the Father to be pleasing to Him. The work that we have to be busy doing in service to God is **teaching the lost** (Matt. 28:19-20); **edifying the brethren** (1 Thess. 5:11); and **helping the needy** (Gal. 6:10). Even though this is what God expects of us, many in the church today have gotten away from the works and moved into entertainment. Is it because we have grown weary of working for the Master?

Have we grown weary of God's restrictions? From the very beginning of time, God has placed certain restrictions on man. In the garden of Eden, we see the restrictions of God. "But of the tree of the

knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). We find restrictive commands from God all through His inspired Word. These restrictions placed by God on man are on all aspects of our lives. Our salvation is restricted only to the plan given by God (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6; Luke 13:3; Matt. 10:32; Mark 16:16). Our eternal destiny is based on the restrictions given by God on the way we live (Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:58). We are told what we are to avoid: the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21); the world and the things of the world (1 John 2:15); and all appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). We are told what we are to seek: the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-24); to live soberly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:12); and to add the Christian graces (2 Peter 1:5-10). Today instead of being guided by the restrictions placed on us by God, some have grown weary of those restrictions and have ventured out on their own, no longer walking in the old paths or by the old ways. We must remember that only those who do the Father's will, and live by His restrictions, will enter heaven (Matt. 7:21).

Now, friends and brethren, what has God done to make you weary of Him? We all can see the blessings given us by God, and He requires so little from us in return except, "To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with [Him]." Brethren, please, "Let us not grow weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

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In memory of Luther Haney

**SPIRITUAL RECKLESSNESS
WRECKS US!**

by Neal Pollard

Others reap what we sow. Tragically, this message is transmitted daily by news reports and echoes soundly from the mountain of history behind us. Recently, that story was again relayed for all to witness.

A Georgia truck driver, Dallas Leach, was in Richmond (VA) courts January 5, 1995, to face charges of reckless driving. Pleading guilty, Leach was fined \$250 but retained his license. It was his first ticket ever. In a moment of distraction, Leach was oblivious to the fact that the car in front of him was braking. He

(Continued on page 4)

A WORD TO OUR READERS

The elders, myself, and our congregation desire that everyone who wants to receive the **Fulton County Gospel News** will be able to do so. The church at Mammoth Spring, AR gives very generously and works very hard to make this a reality. There are also a good number of sister congregations and individuals who give sacrificially to support this good work. Our circulation has grown to over 10,000 copies of **FCGN** being mailed out monthly to 48 states and 28 foreign countries. With the present amount of support we are receiving, the elders have decided to keep our circulation as close as possible to the 10,000 number.

We are continually receiving requests for persons to be added to the free subscription list and we are delighted to do so. We plan to keep on doing this as long as we are able. However, in order to keep close to the 10,000 copies printed and mailed each month, we are going to have to trim our mailing list. Since the paper is free to all who desire it, **we feel our readers do have a certain obligation to help us keep unnecessary expenses at a minimum. Therefore, beginning with the August 1998 mailing, we will discontinue mailing to anyone who moves or changes addresses without notifying us.**

The only way we have of knowing whether or not you really want to receive **FCGN** is for you to tell us. If you do not read the paper you receive, let us know and we will delete your name from the mailing list. If you do not care enough about receiving the paper to **remember to notify us if your address changes or you move, we will assume that you do not care if you receive FCGN. It costs us fifty cents for each change of address the Post Office provides us!** Since many communities are going to 911 addresses and so many people are on the move, we usually receive between 50 and 100 changes each month. We can print and mail 100 copies of **FCGN** for \$25.00; 200 for \$50.00.

If you are deleted and you miss receiving **FCGN**, you can let us know and we will put you back on the mailing list. If you receive several different religious papers such as **FCGN**, please remember most of us work on a limited budget. If you move, do the right thing. You can spend 20¢ for a postcard to notify us of a change of address, and you will keep receiving your paper(s) and save us 50¢ of unnecessary expense!

We will post periodic warnings in **FCGN** about this new policy to remind all who want to keep receiving the paper. There is one other thing to remember. When the Post Office tells us that we have an "insufficient address" for you, like when a community changes to 911 addressing, we have no choice but to drop your name. Be alert that when your address changes from a RR/HC and box number to a house number and street or road name or number,

you need to write and give us the change as soon as possible. If you have any questions about your proper address or you begin receiving mail with yellow labels, telling you to notify the sender of your address, call the Post Office in your community and verify your correct Post Office approved mailing address, and send it to us. You'll be glad you did. **THANK YOU!!!**

[Ted J. Clarke, Editor]

(Continued from page 3)

looked up in time to see it, but he was too late to avoid contact. He swerved, but the trailer of his eighteen-wheeler clipped the vehicle. Five motorists perished on that 1994 summer day.

Undoubtedly, Leach is remorseful. He could have avoided the entire incident. But, he "needed it." He reached over across the seat to get it. With it, he lit the cigarette that cost five fatalities. In his mind, Leach will always tell himself, "they gave their lives for my cigarette lighter. My habit killed **them!**"

The use of tobacco is far more deadly than this one, true story reveals. With this substance, a Christian kills his influence (1 Timothy 4:12). Man destroys the body given him by God with it, and such is heinous sin (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). He squanders God's money when he purchases tobacco (cf. James 1:17). Using such he defiles his flesh and spirit and scoffs at holiness (cf. 2 Corinthians 7:1). Puffing away, man is making a poor presentation of his body to Jehovah (cf. Romans 12:1). In the use of it, the Christian violates the command to "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11). If it is not a "such like" activity among the lusts of the flesh, **what** is (see Galatians 5:21)? The use of tobacco is surely not a fruit of the Spirit (cf. Galatians 5:22-25, note 24). Lighting up does not help one "shine his Christian light" (cf. Matthew 5:16). Smokeless or smoking, tobacco invites one down the path of tragic consequences.

It's reckless!

P.O. Box 745
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When you flee temptation, be sure you don't leave a forwarding address.

"YOU CAN HELP WITH POSTAGE"

MOVING? CHANGING TO 911?

Be sure to send us your change of address.



GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (1 Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

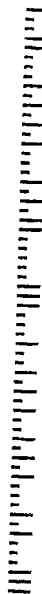
THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2,3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

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