

Is God Powerless Today?

If I deny that God still heals miraculously as He did in the first century, some of my religious neighbors deride me saying, "Do you believe that God has become powerless?" And when I teach that sinners must hear, believe, and obey the gospel, others will say, "Don't you think that God is able to save a man without his help?"

The issue is not a question of what power God has but one of how He elects to use that power. God certainly doesn't do all the things that He has the power of doing. John told Jews who were putting their trust in their lineage, "That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Mt. 3:9). Now, God is "able" to do that but I challenge you to find where He ever turned a stone into a Jew! God had the power to take a rib from Adam and from it give him a wife. But He didn't give you a wife in that way. Is it because He

By Lowell Blasingame

has lost some power and is no longer able to do for you what He did for Adam? Surely it isn't; it's because He no longer uses His power in these ways.

Miracles performed by the apostles were to confirm His word as they revealed it to men (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:1-3). When the New Testament was completely revealed and confirmed, miraculous power was no longer needed and ceased to be given. My doing God's will to enter the kingdom or obeying the gospel to be saved isn't something that is optional, but mandatory (Mt. 7:21; 2 Th. 1:7-8) - not because God needs my help in saving me but because He has required me to obey Christ to be saved (Heb. 5:8-9). He has never turned a stone into a Jew and He has never saved a disobedient person.



Classes This Week

Sunday 5:15 Kid's class in the Auditorium	Sunday Evening College Devo and Singing at the White's. Christopher White will be teaching!
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Lisa Carter (Luke's mother)	Jesse Godwin (Troy's father and Mac's grandfather)	Virginia Box (Sarah Norman's grandmother)	Louise Pack (Anna and Christopher's grandmother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier)	David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father)	Jamin Hymel (Chad's son)
Terri Moore (Joey's aunt)	Artina Hunt (Esther's friend's sister)	Betty Bradford	Hazel Gilliland and Sherry Carroll (Toni's relatives)
Ricky Tucker (Tyler's cousin)	Ermogene Laxson (Sara Lail's grandmother)	Danny Weldon (Rusty Weldon's brother)	William Smith (Ken Sullivan's brother)
Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father)	Bernice Martin (Will Harris' great-grandmother)	Brian Myers (Kimberlee's cousin)	Eva Jean Cavender (Matt's grandmother)
John M. Rhodes and Bonnie Rhodes Kirkley (Toni Herd's family)	Howard Vaughan (Mary Ann's Granddad)	Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephew)	Ben Raine (baby of Rachel Hobbgood's friend)

Graduating May 2016
Jon Hornback – vet school
Orie Cecil – masters

Dylan Bartlett
Luke Carter
Brettlyn Currier
Kristi Garlock
Abigail Gilbert
Abbie Harrison
Ali Ingram
Dave Johnson
Valerie Liverett
Christian McGee
Jessica Shaver
Jacob Smith
Casie Spencer
Philip Stephens
Hope Walker
Chris Zeanah

News and Notes

- ☑ - Ken Sullivan was able to come home from the hospital on Wednesday!
- ☑ - Our VBS will be June 6-9, on the "journeys of Paul."
- ☑ - Thankful that baby Ben Raines was able to go home this week!
- ☑ - Ken Sullivan had successful hernia surgery on Wed, but remains in hospital in LaGrange for pain management.
- ☑ - Looking for a host and teacher for the monthly kids' classes on may 14th. Please see list on bulletin board to sign up!
- ☑ - Baby Everett Nowlin made good progress and was able to go home this week!
- ☑ - Will Harris' grandmother, Linda Williams, had successful hip surgery and will go home after some rehab.
- ☑ - Pray for Liseth's mother, Maria Aragon, who fell and broke her arm recently. She will have surgery on Wed.

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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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The War Against God

By J.R. Bronger



Thoughts to Ponder

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." (Psalm 14:1)

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday

Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

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Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Have you ever wondered why there is such an effort to remove God from public consciousness? I see billboards along the interstate saying things like "God is an imaginary friend," or "In the beginning man created God," and "There is no God, don't believe everything you hear."

Those most militant in God with believing in the Tooth Fairy, the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus. If this is the case, then why haven't we seen billboards proclaiming "The tooth fairy is an imaginary friend"? There is no concerted effort to keep the Tooth Fairy out of schools? There is a reason you know!

Millions of people need money but there is no one who puts a tooth beneath his pillow expecting the Tooth Fairy to replace it with needed money. Yet, millions of people who believe in God pray diligently believing that God hears and answers prayers (1 John 3:22).

Hospitals are filled with the sick and dying but nobody asks Santa to heal their loved ones. However, countless sick petition God to intervene and providentially provide healing. But suppose people actually put a tooth under the pillow expecting an answer from the Tooth Fairy. Or suppose people really wrote Santa asking for healing—would any try to make such unconstitutional? It is doubtful anyone would

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respond with little more than a "ho hum—how silly can people be?"

An article in the New York Times lamented just how out of touch America is with the rest of the industrialized world. The article pointed out that all the other industrialized countries were secular rather than religious, and America (in their view) remains religious. Do you really think the writer just wants us to get in step with the rest of the world?

The apostle John closed his first letter with this profound admonition: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 Jn 5:21). What these "anti-God" zealots are pushing is idolatry. They seek to replace God with the State. They wish to

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have all our “prayers” answered by the “gods” we have elected to federal and state offices.

This nation was established upon biblical principles—none can with honesty deny this. The Declaration of Independence asserts this link when it says: All men “are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Do you know why the Liberty Bell (located in Independence Hall in Philadelphia, PA) is called the liberty bell? Because it has engraved on it **Leviticus 25:10**, “proclaim liberty throughout all the land.”

For centuries Americans have acknowledged that our liberties come from God not man. God, not government gives us our freedoms. Because the Creator of the world is the source of our freedom, no state, no human being, no government may take it away. If the State were the source of liberty, then obviously the State could take it away. So, there is a push underway to remove God and replace Him with the State. Then the State (Idol) can dispense rights or withhold rights.

While there is a war being waged against God, there seems to be an acceptance of Islam. If there are efforts to remove the God of the Bible (Whom they call the Judeo-Christian God), why isn't there the same effort to remove Allah (the god of Islam)? It is because Allah is not regarded as the source of liberty, but as the object of submission (“Islam” means “submission”). On the other hand, “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (**2 Cor 3:17**).

In 1962 the war against God gained momentum. The Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional for schools to allow a non-denominational prayer to be said. Something as humble as “Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our Country.” The purpose of the ruling was to impose secularism upon this country. Skirmishes and battles have continued and frankly the secularists are winning. Now, a valedictorian cannot thank God for his/her success. Efforts are underway to remove “under God” from our Pledge of Allegiance. Professional sports teams are told to stop having the song “God Bless America” sung before games.

God is replaced by the government, the Lord by the President, the Bible by the edicts from the Supreme Court. Generations of Americans are more afraid of

the government (political correctness—not speaking out against homosexuality, hate speech you know) than God. Christians also seem to fear government more than God (“I can't mention God, Christ or church at work, I might get fired”). Obedience to state has replaced submission to God. Where are the bold among us who stand up and say “We ought to obey God rather than men” (**Acts 5:29**)?

Peter warned: “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage” (**2 Pet 2:19**). Without God in the heart and consciousness of this land, we will become slaves of corruption; unimaginable corruption.

Without God there is no good and evil. Who is to say that murdering the unborn, or the aged is evil? Flash mobs, knockout games and random acts of violence will become more pronounced.

To God we are always important, but without God, there is no objective meaning to life. If you cease being important to society (old, infirmed, disabled, etc.) then the state can give you “end of life” care (translated euthanasia).

Without God, the human being has no free will. That is, we become like robots programed by our genes or our environment. Homosexuality becomes a genetic predisposition rather than a choice. The murderer is not to be held accountable because he became that way because he was abused and unloved by his mother.

Without God, there are no inalienable human rights. Nothing can be granted by “our Creator” if a Creator does not exist. Rights are then granted and removed by the capricious whim of the government under which we are forced to live. Think NAZI Germany! In their 25-point Party Program, published in 1920, NAZI party members publicly declared their intention to segregate Jews from Aryan society and to abrogate Jews' political, legal, and civil rights. They were stripped of all rights to own property, operate businesses and were expected to pay restitution to the aggrieved. The result? More than 6,000,000 murdered in the holocaust.

For sure, as David proclaimed before his encounter with the giant Goliath, “the battle is the Lord's” (**1 Sam 17:47**). But we must, like David, seek out five smooth stones and go to the front lines. Stand in our place, take up the sword of the Spirit, and do not fear what man might do. We must have the commitment of another great warrior who said: “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (**Josh 24:15**).



Wine in the Bible – How Fermentation Was Prevented

By Ryan Hasty

With multiple ways of preventing fermentation, this is further proof that wine of biblical times was not necessarily alcoholic, but could easily be preserved and enjoyed as a refreshing alternative to water and a blessing from God that provided joy and not intoxication.

Wine in the bible is spoken of as a blessing in its unfermented state and as an intoxicant in its fermented state. Many do not realize that those living in biblical days were able to keep their wine from fermenting and in fact did so regularly. How did they accomplish this in an age without refrigerators? There were 3 primary methods:

First, they boiled their wine down to thick syrup. Boiling grape juice causes the water to evaporate leaving behind a concentrate with such a high level of sugar that fermentation was impossible. Syrup in this state could be preserved for years. Whenever they wanted to drink this unfermented wine, they would mix a small amount of this syrup with water much like we do with our Kool-Aid. Different ratios were used depending on the type of grape, the age of the syrup, the temperature of the water, and even the season.

Prov 9:1-5 – “Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars; she has prepared her food, she has mixed her wine; she has also set her table; she has sent out her maidens, she calls from the tops of the heights of the city: ‘Whoever is naive, let him turn in here!’ To him who lacks understanding she says, ‘Come, eat of my food and drink of the wine I have mixed.’”

The above verse refers to the mixing of wine as “wisdom” whereas Prov 20:1 refers to a person intoxicated by wine as not being wise. The contrast is clear. Boiling grape juice to prevent it from fermenting and then mixing with water to enjoy as a beverage is incumbent of wisdom and was a blessing from God.

Aristotle – “The wine of Arcadia was so thick that it was necessary to scrape it from the skin bottles in which it was contained and to dissolve the scrapings in water.”

Horace – “There is no wine sweeter to drink than that of Lesbos; it was like nectar . . . and would not produce intoxication.”

Second, those living in biblical times had developed methods to filter wine and remove its strength. While pressing out the grape, they would use a bag called a “sacco” that captured the fermentable substances, allowed the juice from the pulp to flow through, and then collected it in a vase below the bag. Several historians

mention this method as in use during biblical times as well as the fact that one of primary reasons they did this is because unfermented wine tastes better.

Pliny The Younger – “The most useful wine has all its force or strength broken by the filter.”

Plutarch – “Wine is rendered feeble in strength when it is frequently filtered. The strength or spirit thus being excluded, the wine neither inflames the brain nor infests the mind and passions, and is much more pleasant to drink.”

This is the testimony of two non-Christian Gentiles confirming that filtration causes wine to taste better because its strength is removed. But they are merely confirming what we already know. Beverages like grape juice begin fermenting when they are going bad, not when they are getting better. Alcoholic beverages are an “acquired taste” purely for the effects produced in the body by the alcohol and not because it tastes good.

Third, they were able to refrigerate and seal wine. Grape juice kept at 45° or less cannot ferment. If it is kept cool long enough, the gluten settles at the bottom and the juice can be skimmed off of the top where it can never ferment even if warmed. We know from archeology that they stored this kind of wine in caves, under water, and in the ground where it was cooler. So even without refrigerators, they still had the means to keep wine cool. They also kept their containers air tight by corking the bottle and then sealing it with pitch. The Jews also poured olive oil on top to seal the juice from the air. In the 1960s, a sunken ship was discovered at the bottom of the Mediterranean that had containers of wine dating back to the Roman Empire. The containers were sealed so well that water from the sea had not penetrated them.

With multiple ways of preventing fermentation, this is further proof that wine of biblical times was not necessarily alcoholic, but could easily be preserved and enjoyed as a refreshing alternative to water and a blessing from God that provided joy and not intoxication.

