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The Sword & The Plow

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Announcing the Preston-Simmons Debate

We are pleased to announce an important Preterist event – the Preston-Simmons Debate.

Don Preston is a great guy and first rate debater; he has made a career debating Preterism with futurists of all sorts. Among those Don has met in debate include Tommy Ice, James Jordan, F. La Guard Smith, and Mac Deaver, just to name a few. To my knowledge, this is Don's first debate with a full Preterist like himself.

But if both Don and I are full Preterists, what is there to discuss?

More than you might suspect. Preterism today holds three main camps: The first camp consists of Universalists, of whom Max King and his Presence Ministries is the moving force. This group takes a *spiritualized* view of the

resurrection, holding that the general, eschatological resurrection consisted in justification from the Mosaic law. This view is commonly referred to as the "corporate body view" because it sees mankind as being corporately dead in sin and corporately raised (justified) at Christ's Second Coming. It is also known as "Covenant Eschatology" because it postpones the end of the Old Covenant until AD 70 and sees the second coming as consisting primarily in the change of the Old Testament to the New. According to this view, mankind was dead in sin by virtue of the Old Law; the Decalogue was a "ministration of death" and Judaism was the "state and power of death" to be annulled at Christ's coming. Man continued under the condemning power of the law from the cross until the AD 70 second coming, when the law was removed and man was justified and made free of the law's power.

At first, this view was not overtly universalistic, and applied only to the Jews and first century, pre-parousia (pre-second coming) Christians. Later, when it was realized that men of every race and tongue were under the power of sin and death, this view was expanded to include all men. The Max King/Presence Ministries crowd is now overtly Universalistic, claiming that all men are justified from sin regardless of faith or repentance. Needless to say, Bible-believing Christians abominate Universalism and shun the King crowd as teachers of a false gospel.

The second camp of Preterists include men like Don who came under the early influence of Max King and subscribe to his view of a spiritualized resurrection. However, Don is *not* a Universalist, and does not see the correlation between King's view and Universalism. Even so, he embraces the spiritualized view of the resurrection advanced by King, affirming that the law was valid, binding, and obligatory until AD 70, at which time it was removed and man was then, and only then, justified from sin. There is a Calvinistic wing of this camp that substitutes "imputed Adamic guilt/death" in place of the Mosaic law, but otherwise subscribes to the spiritualized resurrection view. Don will be representing the "corporate body view" camp.

The third camp of Preterists holds that the general, eschatological resurrection was of the soul or spirit from Hades. This group sees redemption and atonement as being fulfilled at the *cross*, affirming that grace was full and free from and after Jesus' crucifixion; it rejects the idea that AD 70 in anyway added to or completed man's salvation from sin, affirming that the destruction of Jerusalem was irrelevant in terms of man's redemption and atonement. I will be representing the "cross-camp."

I had hoped that Don would agree to debate the nature of the resurrection directly, but he refused my invitation. Instead, Don proposed we debate when the law ceased to be "valid." This indirectly bears upon the question of the "corporate body view" because if man was justified at the cross and the law ceased to hold man under its condemning power, then the corporate body view is invalid. However, Don and I were unable to settle upon mutually antithetical propositions. Don's definition of the "law" is very different from mine and this prevented us from being able to frame

propositions that were actually the antithesis of the other's.

Finally, we were able to settle upon the following propositions:

Resolved: The Bible teaches that the coming of Christ for salvation in Romans 11:25-27 occurred in AD 70 at the climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant Age.

Affirm: Don K

Deny: Kurt Simmons

Resolved: The Bible teaches that the coming of Christ for salvation in Romans 11:25-27 occurred at the Cross at the climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant Age.

Affirm: Kurt Simmons

Deny: Don K. Preston

These propositions are sufficiently broad to allow full discussion of the differences between us. As may be seen, Don places salvation at the Parousia in AD 70, I place salvation at the cross. The validity of the "corporate body view" is therefore fully at issue, albeit without having to delve into the question of whether the Bible actually teaches that the general resurrection was the spiritualized model the "corporate body view" supposes. It is at issue, because if salvation (justification/atonement) happened at the cross, then the "corporate body view" is erroneous and invalid and must be rejected.

Of course, resurrection is not the real issue. The real issue is where does the Bible place redemption, atonement, and justification? At the cross or at the second coming? I affirm the former, Don the latter. Christianity has traditionally assigned salvation to the cross. In this discussion, Don will attempt to show this is incorrect.

Each man will have three 12 page affirmatives and three 12 page negatives, for a total of as much as 144 pages, to be published monthly here, and on our respective web sites. The first installment should be in the April edition of *The Sword & The Plow*. Don is a good friend, faithful gospel preacher, and beloved brother. I look forward to our discussion. I know I will learn a lot and am sure you will too.

A. Excerpts from God's Prophetic Word

Matthew Twenty-four

And The Destruction of Jerusalem

by

Foy E. Wallace Jr.

Before going into the details of Matthew 24 to show that the signs of that chapter refer to the fall and destruction of Jerusalem, a look into some Old Testament passages leading up to it will lay a foundation upon which to stand and at the same time answer some questions which some will be sure to ask. Let us take a look at the background.

(1) In the Old Testament - Zech. 14.

We shall not here read the chapter, but rather refer to its contents verse by verse. Zechariah 14 is almost universally used as "a second coming of Christ chapter" but it is a "destruction of Jerusalem chapter" instead.

Verse 1: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee."

The symbolic "day of the Lord" here is the same expression precisely that is used in Isa. 13:9 in reference to the destruction of Babylon. If the destruction of Babylon could be called "the day of the Lord," why not the destruction of Jerusalem? That expression does not mean the second coming of Christ in either of these passages. Compare Isaiah 13 as a prophecy against Babylon, Isaiah 17 as a prophecy against Damascus, Isaiah as a prophecy against Ethiopia, Isaiah 19 as a prophecy against Egypt, with Zechariah 14 as a prophecy against Jerusalem, and it can be seen that the assertions of the Millennialists that Zechariah is prophesying the second coming of Christ and the millennium are wrong.

Verse 2: "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

The historical accounts of the siege of Jerusalem by Josephus, Pliny, Horne and Clarke fulfill Zechariah's descriptions.

Reference to "nations gathered for battle" is a description of besieged Jerusalem, the houses rifled and the women ravished. The same description is found in Isaiah 13, verses 15 and 16, concerning the fall and destruction of Babylon. The comparison is forceful.

Verse 3: "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."

Factually, all the nations were represented in the Roman army, and God afterward fought against them by means of the Northern nations. Read Zech. (14-15): "And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The Lord of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones." The visitations are figurative, of course, but nevertheless significant of the fact that all the nations referred to "against" whom the Lord "fought" were destroyed.

Verse 4: "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east

and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."

The prophetic declaration that "his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem," does not refer to the second coming of Christ but rather to the siege of Jerusalem. Jesus Christ stood with his feet on the mount of Olives when he uttered the doom of the city. The Roman general stood on the Mount of Olives when Jerusalem was besieged. The formations of the battle lines, entrenchments and redoubts, the circumvallations of the Romans, all enter into the graphic description and portrayal of the prophet that the mount should "cleave in the midst" and "toward the north" and "toward the south."

Verses 5-7: "And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."

Obviously, these verses are a metaphorical description of the mixture of divine mercy with justice. After the visitation there would be light - the diffusion of divine knowledge. This did follow the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish state.

Verses 8-9: "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."

The only consistent application of this language is a spiritual fulfillment in the gospel of Christ and the church. Who is ready to deny that the clause "in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one," refers to the present dispensation? There is one Lord, his name is one, and the Lord is "king over all the earth." It finds its fulfillment in the church of Christ where there is neither Jew

nor Gentile, but all one in Christ, and one Lord over all.

Verses 16-17: "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, and Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain."

If these verses are not figurative, if they are to be taken literally, then all nations and families must literally go up to Jerusalem and literally offer animal sacrifices and keep the Passover, restore Judaism with all of its literal ceremonies, in order to fulfill the prophecy. That would be a complete reestablishment of old Judaism and everything that characterized it, all of which was taken away. But if these verse are not literal, then the application made of the whole chapter by the Millennialists loses its force. These last verses refer to the expansion of the blessing of the gospel dispensation after the destruction of Jerusalem. Upon all who received the gospel, its blessings descended as rain; but to the unbelievers who rejected the gospel "upon them shall be no rain" - all such are barred from its promises and privileges.

The simple truth of the matter is that as Isaiah 13 is a prophecy on the destruction of Babylon, Zechariah 14 is a prophecy on the destruction of Jerusalem. It does not teach millennialism in a sentence or a syllable.

(2) In the New Testament. - Matt. 24

Each sign listed on this chart has special application to the then impending destruction of Jerusalem.

When Matthew 24 is taken away from the Premillennial preachers their argument on the imminent return of the Lord based on "the signs of the times" is torn away from them, and their sources of speculative supply is cut off. A verse by verse study will do it:

1. False teachers - verse 5. "For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Jesus simply warned the disciples that false teachers would be numerous,

more than ever before. Josephus, the historian, verifies the fact that near the time of Jerusalem's fall, many false Messiahs appeared, claiming to be the Christ. He says these became more numerous before the sieges of Titus. Luke, the historian, records such pseudo-signs and false wonders as the magical deceptions of Simon Magus - Acts 8 - which were employed on the professional deceivers mentioned in the Lord's predictions.

2. Wars and rumors of wars - verse 6: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars." Many smaller nations were at war with the Romans at that time, enemies at war with each other and rumors of war in abundance on every hand, and from every quarter as the destruction of Jerusalem drew near. Josephus verifies the fact that from every part of the empire wars followed in succession, and in waves of revolt, like the swells of the ocean, to the final dissolution of the empire.

3. Famine and pestilence - verse 7: "For nations shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." In the days of Claudius Caesar, before the destruction of Jerusalem, there was a unparalleled famine - the greatest famine the world ever knew occurred. The record of Matthew 24 is corroborated by the Spirit in Agabus, the prophet, as reported by Luke in Acts 11:28: "And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar."

Again Josephus testified that the famine actually occurred before the destruction of Jerusalem, and the fulfillment is a matter of historical record.

4. Earthquakes - verse 8: "All these are the beginning of sorrows." That great earthquakes occurred during the reign of Nero is a historical fact, and the testimony of Jesus is added to that of Josephus of an unusual number of earthquakes occurring in various countries, before the destruction of Jerusalem. Many cities of Asia Minor were destroyed by earthquakes.

5. Delivered to death - verse 9: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's

sake." Paul, Peter, and James, and James the Less were all put to death before the destruction of Jerusalem.

6. Apostasies - verse 10: "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." This is the Lord's warning of many apostasies, when the faith of the disciples would fail, as under pressure of persecution many should become offended. Such apostasies were everywhere in evidence prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, the evidences of which are not only mentioned in the sacred text, but in parallel secular history. The most valuable of such historical evidence is the testimony of Josephus, who was an eye-witness to the destruction of Jerusalem.

7. The gospel to all the world - verse 14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come." Within this period of gospel history the sound of the messengers' feet had been heard all over the Roman world - Rom. 10:15 - and the gospel was, in fact, preached to the whole creation before the destruction of Jerusalem. Read Col. 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; for which I Paul am made a minister." Hence, before the death of Paul this "sign" was actually fulfilled - literally enough, indeed, to satisfy the most exacting literalist. Eusebius says "The gospel was like the sun, enlightening the world at once." It was universally published; the Gentile nations were illuminated with Christianity, providing the events to correspond with the prophecies, a fact so striking as to be convincing without disputation.

8. The end of the Jewish world - verse 14: "Then shall the end come." Here, at once, with one accord, the Millennialist jumps to the conclusion that this "end" means the end of the world - "then shall the end come" - but the end of what? The end of Jerusalem; the destruction of the temple and the end of the Jewish state and the end of Judaism. Please turn the chart.

9. The abomination of desolation - verse 15: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him

understand.” This description refers to the heathen symbols and Roman standards raised in the temple. When the Romans conquered the city, and entered it, the Roman soldiers marched into the temple, and raised instead the symbols and standards of paganism and Romanism. That is what was called the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. The “abomination of desolation” was fulfilled when those Roman standards and pagan symbols were seen in the holy place “where they ought not to be.”

10. The disciples flee – verses 16-18: “Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains; let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.” The destruction of Jerusalem was regarded by all pious Jews as pestilence and desolation and was taken as a sign at the time for them to escape had come – to do what Jesus had warned them to do – to flee to the mountains. The disciples did as Jesus said – they heeded the warnings and fled. From the flat roofs of their houses in the city or from their fields in the country, they saw the Roman army in full march, there was no time to go inside for goods or raiment. Life was more than personal property. When they saw the sign of the standards and symbols of the Romans in the temple, they remembered that Jesus had warned them of that very thing, and at the news of the Roman approach they fled to Pella, the northern boundary of Perea.

It is a remarkable but historical fact that Cestius Gallus, the Roman general, for some unknown reason, retired when they first marched against the city, suspended the siege, ceased the attack and withdrew his armies for an interval of time after the Romans had occupied the temple, thus giving every believing Jew the opportunity to obey the Lord’s instruction to flee the city. Josephus the eye-witness, himself an unbeliever, chronicles this fact, and admitted his inability to account for the cessation of the fighting at that time, after a siege had begun. Can we account for it? We can. The Lord was fighting against Jerusalem Zech. 14:2: “For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.” The Lord was

besieging that city. God was bringing these things to pass against the Jewish state and nation. Therefore, the opportunity was offered for the disciples to escape the siege, as Jesus had forewarned, and the disciples took it. So said Daniel; so said Jesus; so said Luke; so said Josephus.

As so it was – it was left for Titus, the Roman general, to execute the siege, after the faithful disciples had fled. Verses 19-22: “And woe unto them that are with child, and them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.” These verses deal with the hindrances to flight from the besieged city, the tribulation of the sieges, and the lifting of the sieges for the escape of the disciples.

11. Pseudo-signs - verses 23-26: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Here was the Lord's warning against deceivers, fake prophets, false alarms and fraudulent signs - the forewarnings to tenable the disciples to discriminate between the spurious and the genuine. "Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not." These warning observed by the disciples of the Lord enabled them to escape the traps incident to the approaching siege.

12. The eagles and the carcass - verses 27-28: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

The coming here refers to the approach of the Roman armies. The Jewish nation was the carcass which the Roman eagles were sent to devour.

These verses describe the swiftness of the events and the suddenness of all the occurrences connected with the siege of Jerusalem. The

illustration of the eagles gather where the carcass is found, is a figurative description of the Romans as the eagles swarming over Jerusalem and Judea as the carcass, to loot and spoil the city and all the land of Judea.

13. After the tribulation - verse 29: 'immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.' After the tribulation of these days - that is, after the things that occurred during the siege. The siege began August 10, A.D. 70, six hundred year after Nebuchadnezzar's siege and destruction of first temple. All of the houses and underground chambers were filled with putrefied corpses. One million one hundred thousand people perished, and the remnants were scattered. Think of it - in only two months with only two armies fighting in the limited areas around Jerusalem, one million one hundred thousand people perished. Every building was filled with perishing bodies; famished people ate the putrefied flesh of human carcasses; mothers ate the flesh of their own babies. And outside the besieged city the families of the expatriated race of Jews in many places throughout the empire were slaughtered. Josephus, the historian, verifies the fact that there was never anything like it before or since, nor ever shall be.

The signs in the heavens, the darkening sun and falling stars, refer to the falling of Jewish dignitaries, casting down of authorities and powers, long established, and signified the darkness that settled upon the Jewish state.

The sun of the Hebrew temple was darkened, the moon of the Jewish commonwealth was as blood, the stars of the Sanhedrin fell from their high seats of authority. Isaiah and Joel describe the ruin of both ancient Babylon and Jerusalem in similar description, in Isa. 13 and Joel 2.

14. The coming of the Son of Man - verse 30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."

The sign of the Son of man in the heaven was a signal, the evidence of divine visitation and intervention in the downfall of the Jewish

authorities and in all the transpiring events. The mourning of the tribes of the earth refers to the lamentations of the Jewish families all over the world because of the destruction of their city and their temple and their state. The coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven is not a reference to the second coming of Christ but to the coming foretold by Jesus to Caiaphas in Matt. 26:24: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." Jesus told Caiaphas that he could see, it, he would be a living witness to these events. The reference to the Son of man coming "with power and great glory" and "sitting on the right hand of power" is emphasis on the magnitude of the things that occurred. The Son of man came in power in the transpiring events.

15. Sending forth his angels - verse 31: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Here is the grand announcement of the world-wide success of the gospel, the universal expansion of the Christianity after the destruction of Jerusalem. The angels of this verse were messengers, emissaries of the gospel. The gathering of the elect from the four winds meant that these messengers would carry the gospel to every nook and corner of the inhabited world. This is the history of what occurred. With the downfall of Judaism the greatest foe of the church was removed, and path cleared of the chief obstacle, resulting in the universal sweep of Christianity. The knowledge of God covered the earth as waters cover the sea.

16. The signs that it was near - verse 32-33: "When the branch is yet tender...ye know that summer is nigh...so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." The signs of the approaching events would serve as portents to all faithful disciples that the things of which they were being warned would be near. The disciples would recognize these signs up to the time of the siege, and would know that it was "near, even at the doors." It is here that Luke's account says: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" - Luke 21:28. The providential means for the escape of the faithful was divinely prearranged and when they should see these things "begin to come to pass" they were told to "look up" and

"lift up" their heads in full confidence that their redemption, their deliverance, was at hand. This redemption extended beyond the mere escape from the siege - it was a greater deliverance from the persecutions of the Jewish authorities and the oppositions of Judaism, brought to an end by the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish state.

To say that the expression "it is near" refers to the end of the world, the end of time, or a "rapture" theory is contrary to the context of Matthew 24. When these signs appeared the Lord said, "Let them which are in Judea flee" - and they did. "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof nigh" - and they did know it. I fit meant the end of the world, why say "let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains"? and why say, "let them which are in the midst of Jerusalem depart out of it"? and why say, "let not them that are in the country enter thereinto" - into Jerusalem? These sayings show clearly that the whole thing is a description of the destruction of Jerusalem. Reverting in verses 41 and 42 to these surrounding the Lord said that where two would be "in the field," or "grinding at the mill" - one would be taken and the other left - that is, the believing disciples would recognize the signs and take flight, while the unbelieving companion would remain and perish in the siege.

The statement that all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, as has been previously explained, is a reference to the Jewish families scattered all over the Roman empire - they would mourn the downfall of Jerusalem and the end of their Jewish commonwealth.

17. All these things fulfilled - verse 34: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." In Lk. 21:31-32, the Lord said: when YE see, and know Ye, and I say unto YOU - so here is the Lord's won statement of the period to which "these things" belonged and during which they would all be fulfilled. All of the "signs" mentioned in Matt. 24 are mentioned above verse 24. After

having mentioned these signs, Jesus then said, "this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Notice - "all these things" - not some of them - all of them would be fulfilled before that generation passed. But we are told that "this generation" meant that race - meaning only that the race of the Jews would not pass till all this was fulfilled. The Lord would not be guilty of such a truism - telling the Jews what would happen to their race, and then saying the race will not pass away until everything that will happen to the race happens to it! A truism would not be the word for that. It is sheer nonsense to have Christ say that certain things would happen to the Jewish race, but the Jewish race would not pass away until what would happen to the Jewish race happened to it! No, Jesus said "this generation" - the generation living then - would not pass "till all these things be fulfilled." The Lord's use of the same language after pronouncing the woes on the Pharisees in the previous chapter of Matthew shows clearly the reference was to their own time. There are nine woes pronounced upon these Jewish officials

in Matthew 23, which are followed by verse 36: "verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation." Immediately following this statement is the pronouncement on Jerusalem in verse 37, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," and the verdict of verse 38, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." there is but one conclusion, and it is clear - all the woes of Matthew 23 and all the signs of Matthew 24 referred to that generation of time and span of life, and were all fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, and immediately thereafter.

Predestination According to Calvin

[Editor's note: the following is taken from the 1803 *Orthodox Churchman*, a publication of the Anglican Church, when the English clergy represented some of the world's most learned men. In this review, the author sets out the basic doctrines of Calvin regarding predestination. I suspect most Christian will found them shocking.]

The Articles of the Church of England proved not to be Calvinistic. By Thomas Kipling, D.D. Dean of Peterborough, and late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. 8vo. 1802. Second Edition.

In the supplement to our second volume, p. 414, one of our correspondents had so fully expressed our sentiments respecting this treatise, that we did not deem it necessary to notice it in our reviewing department. We think it right, however, to announce its appearance in a second edition, more especially as it is now enlarged by the addition of an Appendix.

The learned author, after premising, that all the peculiar opinions of Calvin, which are connected with the subject of his enquiry, may be comprised under the single doctrine of predestination, proceeds to prove, that the doctrines of our Church are not, as has sometimes been asserted, in unison and correspondence with those op[inions] of Calvin. This he does, and in the most satisfactory manner, 1st, by delineating the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination; and, 2^{dly}. By comparing this doctrine with the Articles and Liturgy of the Church of England.

He considers the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination as reducible to the following propositions.

1st. That omnipotent Being, who has existed from all eternity, after he had decreed to create man in his own image, and had fore-ordained his fall from original righteousness, by which fall Adam's own nature would be corrupted and depraved, viewed with the eye of prescience the whole of Adam's offspring as a mass of corruption and perdition.

2nd. Among the vast multitude of human beings composing this mass of corruption and perdition, Almighty God decreed, before the foundation of the world, to bring some everlasting salvation and to damn all the rest eternally. This decree or

purpose of God is denominated by Calvin predestination, some being thereby predestined to everlasting happiness, and other condemned by it to everlasting misery.

3^{dly}. The objects of this decree are, not collective bodies of men, as *Jews, Gentiles, Greeks, Romans*, but individuals, as *John, Matthew, Thomas, Peter*, every one of whose fate after death is fixed by it, before he is born, immutably and everlastingly.

4^{thly}. Adam, agreeably to the preordainment of God (for we are now come to the *execution* of this decrees) fell from innocence; and, in consequence of this lapse, the whole of man's nature, as the Deity had foreseen and foreordained, underwent a complete change. It became corrupt, depraved, vicious; and every descendant of Adam, through his first parents' transgression, became a lost, a damned, an accursed creature, and fuel for the flame of divine vengeance.

5^{thly}. From the birth of Abraham (if not from an earlier period) to this present time, the Deity, agreeably to his eternal purpose and immutable decree, hath constantly been taking, and will continue daily to take, those individuals, whom he hath predestinated before the world began to everlasting salvation, out of this mass of corruption and perdition. All the rest, every one, whom he Passeth by, and leaves in this state of corruption and perdition, he reprobates; that is, abandons to wickedness in this life, and will torture eternally in the next. Those, whom he makes choice of, selects, and segregates for salvation, are called *elect*. Those whom he leaves in their original pollution, abandons, and will eternally torment, are called *preterits* (*praeteriti*) but most commonly reprobates. By election and reprobation is executed the immutable decree of predestination.

6^{thly}. This discrimination made by the Deity between the *elect* and the *reprobates* is arbitrary; in no degree owing to any superior excellence,

worth, or merit in the former, either present and actual, or future and foreseen, but wholly and solely to God's will and pleasure. He extricates the *elect* from destruction for a demonstration of his mercy and goodness. He leaves the *reprobates* in their original state of perdition for a display of his power and glory.

7thly. The *elect* are put under the custody and protection of Jesus Christ; and, do what they will in this life, they cannot fail of being saved finally, being under an immutable decree, and guarded by omnipotence. The *reprobates*, how much soever they may exert themselves for the purpose, cannot attain everlasting salvation, being *hindered* therefrom, and *repelled* by Almighty God. As the final salvation of the *elect* is in no degree doubtful, from their first entrance into this world to their departure out of it, but is all the time fixed and certain; so neither is the eternal damnation of a *reprobate* ever uncertain, during his passage through this world, but is even before he is born unalterably fixed and sure. That he should perish, is the very purpose, for which he was created.

8thly. Neither the best purposes, nor the best endeavors, nor the best acts, of an *elect*, even after regeneration, are in any wise *preparatory* to eternal salvation. On the contrary, as the elect people of God under the Mosaic dispensation, were commanded to desist on the Sabbath day from their worldly occupations, so, in respect of a all *spiritual* concerns, the elect under the Gospel dispensation are enjoined to bid adieu to all wills, works, and endeavors of their own, and to keep most religiously a perpetual Sabbath; that there may be free and ample scope within them for the operation of God's spirit.

9thly. God, who of his own will and pleasure predestinated the elect to eternal salvation, himself prepares and fits them for it. The means used by him for this purpose are the preaching of his word, and the operations of his spirit; both which together constitute what is denominated special calling.

10thly. The operations of God's spirit are manifold –

1. He forms in the elect a new understanding.
2. He destroys their natural, and creates in them a new will.

3. Every propensity they may have, and every effort they may make, to do works pleasing and acceptable to God, is his.

4. He also, it is, who begins; continues, and finishes, every good work done by them; and who makes them persevere unto the end in well doing.

In each of these operations, he does not concur or co-operate with the elect, but is the sole and entire operator; and they are his instruments or organs.

11thly. Though the elect may, for a time, resist the grace of God, they cannot finally overcome it. This grace is sovereign, and invincible in its operation.

12thly. God, who arbitrarily predestinated the reprobates to eternal destruction, himself also prepares and fits them for it. He does this by blinding their minds, hardening their hearts, stupefying their intellects, depriving them of the knowledge of himself, withholding from them the influence of his spirit, and delivering them over to the devil.

13thly. The number of the elect is very small. The reprobates, of course, are numberless.

Lastly. The reprobates, those numberless rational beings, whom Almighty God hath raised up for the illustrating of his glory, are hateful to him. He also hates, in proportion to their naughtiness, the chosen few.

When these propositions are brought together, and consider in one view, they almost induce us to think that Calvin had set himself to collect all the absurdities on the subject, which the human imagination was capable of conceiving. That the above is a faithful representation of the opinions of Calvin on the subject of predestination, is most incontrovertibly shown by copious extracts from the writings of Calvin himself. These extracts the learned reader will do well to consult; but it is not necessary for us to transcribe them here. After this delineation of what Calvinism is, we need not follow the author in his comparison of it with the Articles and Liturgy of our Church; but may safely leaven it to the judgment of our readers to determine, whether the doctrines of the Church can with any propriety be called Calvinistic.

Questions from our Readers

Question: Hey Kurt, hope this finds you well. Can you explain two words for me. They are found in 1st. Thessalonians 5:17, and they are clouds and air. Did Paul use aer #5594, instead of ouranos #3772, which means to breathe unconsciously. Does this mean doing things that are pleasing or displeasing to God, and he is talking about the spiritual realm as he was in Ephesians 2:2?

Also, on the word clouds. Could one compare these clouds (1st.Thess.5) with the cloud mentioned in Hebrews 12:1? Thanks

Answer: I don't think there is any mystical sense attached to the word "air" or "clouds." His only point, in my estimation, is that Christians are gathered unto the Lord one-by-one as they die. The Lord meets them in the air (spiritual realm) where they are unseen to eye of man (beyond the cloudy veil of this material realm), and are thus reunited with their loved ones that have gone on before. That's all I think he intends by the passage and words! Blessings.

Question: I know you are a very busy and I thank you for your info. I'm just trying to learn the preterist view in order to share it with others when they question me, because this school makes more sense than any other that I have studied.

Why is it that when some things are fulfilled they are no longer valid... example: old covenant customs, statues, etc., yet Jesus gave the apostles the Great Commission in the last days of the old covenant and said he would be with them until the end of the old covenant, and Paul says it was fulfilled in the last days of the old covenant. Why would this still be valid to us today if it was fulfilled in the last days? (mission accomplished) How can we continue to fulfill the commission when it was already fulfilled? When did Jer.31:31-34 come into effect? It says that God would put His law within them and they shall not teach again each man his neighbor or his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know Him. I can't see this being fulfilled after we get to heaven. Thanks and have patience with me ha

I know Jesus fulfilled the law, and it became obsolete. I was wondering why when some things are fulfilled they are no longer valid, yet, when other things were fulfilled they are still valid. I hope you can understand what I am trying to ask.

Answer: I suppose the answer lies in the intent with which things are instituted. The Old Testament laws and rituals were provisional in nature and were intended to point out our fallenness, our need for a blood sacrifice to obtain atonement, and thus prepare us to receive Christ. On the other hand, the charge to share the gospel with our fellow man will last as long as earth and mankind remain. Paul told Timothy to teach others who were capable of teaching others (II Tim. 2:2). The charge to appoint elders has the like object in view; viz, to instruct men in righteousness and salvation. So, some things pass because they were intended only to serve a provisional need or purpose, others remain because they are timeless. Blessings,

Question: Dear Kurt, Several years ago I read a lesson in a Bible study that I would like a preterist's comment on. I posted this lesson on a couple of discussion boards but never got a response. I will present it below in an abbreviated form. Thanks,

1. Why did God create the earth? Isaiah 45:18 "...He formed it to be inhabited..."
2. With what type of people did He want the earth to be inhabited? Genesis 1:27, 28 "God created man in his own image" and said to Adam and Eve "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." Also Proverbs 2:21 and Psalm 37:29
3. Does God change His stated purpose? Isaiah 55:11 Gist of verse, 'No, it shall be accomplished.'
4. Did Jesus indicate that the earth would continue to be inhabited? Matthew 5:5; 6:9, 10 Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." / "Our Father, ... Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Comment:

Have these words at anytime come true since Jesus said them? Would Jesus instruct us to pray for God's will to be done on earth if there were no expectation that this prayer would be answered?

5. When will the meek inherit the earth? Psalm 37:9-11 "For the wicked shall be cut off; but those who wait for Yahweh shall possess the land [earth, KJV]. Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look well at his place, he will not be there. But the meek shall possess the land [earth, KJV], and delight themselves in abundant prosperity." Comment: Has there ever been a time since these words were recorded that no wicked people were alive on earth? So these words must still have a future application.

Answer: You seem to be asking when, if ever, will the meek inherit the earth so as to be the *only* people in it. I do not feel that is the intent of the saying or passage. Rather, I see it as a general principle active at all times, in all generations. The wicked and lawless flourish briefly then die suddenly and their children after them similarly take no root, but the righteous and meek obtain the blessing of God and their seed after them. Thus, the wicked are cut off, but the meek inherit the land. There is no suggestion that there will ever be a time when the earth is free of evil, since man's fallen nature means that we are naturally alienated from God and disposed to evil. Hope that helps.

Question: Kurt, in your view, what is the "beloved city" of Rev 20:9? Thinking. Thx.

Answer: The "beloved city" is the church. The battle of God & Magog is the persecution under Nero and the Jews. They Jews and Romans, including others nations of the Roman Empire, lay siege to the church ("surround the beloved city") in the persecution under Nero, but God delivers them in the judgments of AD 66-70, including the destruction of Jerusalem and Roman civil wars.

Question: Who are the Martyrs of vs 4? Still thinking. Thx.

Answer: The martyrs are those who died under Nero. That is one of the oddities of the way the chapter is composed. The martyrs are displayed

even before the persecution that causes their deaths is even described. Chronologically, the beast/dragon are loosed first, then the martyrs die, go to Paradise/heaven, the beast/dragon are then destroyed, followed, finally, by the general resurrection.

Most people assume that the binding of the dragon and reign of the saints are simultaneous, but I think this wrong. The binding of the dragon precedes the reign of the martyrs. The dragon/beast are mentioned as being bound in the bottomless in chapter 11 and 17. But the loosing is in chapter 13 when the persecution under Nero begins. This is what John portrays in Rev. 20 by the battle of God & Magog. Thus, the 1000-year binding precedes the saints 1000-year reign. The dragon/beast are loosed; the martyrs die, go to hades where they reign 1000 yrs. pending the resurrection from Hades in AD 70.

Question: OK. Or another way, there was a space of relative quiet (thousand year binding of Satan) between the persecution and the second coming. When I think of binding Satan I think of Job and the permission God gave. The binding is like preventing. Did the persecution subside following Nero's suicide? Do you see the fire coming down coordinate with the second coming? Still thinking. Thx.

Answer: Actually, the binding followed the persecution under Stephen (AD 34-38). The "1000-years" thus ran from AD 38 to AD 64 when Nero began his persecution. The dragon/beast went down to the pit/tartarus in defeat when the persecution over Stephen collapsed. Similar language occurs in Ezekiel, where various nations are described as going down to the pit at God's judgment by the Babylonians, Persians, etc. The dragon/beast received a mortal wound to the head when the persecution collapsed. It "healed" when Nero renewed the persecution 26 years later. Two 1000-year periods therefore emerge from the text; both symbols for Hades. The dragon went there (symbolically) in defeat when the persecution over Stephen fell apart; the martyrs went there actually when Nero put them to death. See Rev. 17 where the beast is described as "about to" ascend out of the pit. This signified the persecution was about to begin and marks the point when the dragon was also loosed.

Question: Dear Kurt, A few challenging thoughts for your pondering generated from your latest newsletter:

1) Re: Are the Jews still God's chosen people? They all never were -- only the remnant, the by-faith seed of Abraham, the Israel within Israel were (Rom. 9:6, 8, 27; 11:5).

Answer: I agree that true Israel has always been a spiritual people identified by the obedience of faith. However, it is also true that national Israel held a provisional place in God's economy for purposes of bringing Christ into the world. It is the latter notion that I address in the article, viz., whether national Israel still occupies some special place in the divine economy.

2) The "free gift" -- it was never "free" for God or for us, even Jesus said to "count the cost." That phrase is a mistranslation. The word "free" is not in the original Greek (Rom. 5:15, 16, 18; 6:23; Rev. 22:17). It was wrongly added by the translators.

Answer: Agreed, the gift requires response on our part, and that includes being faithful even unto martyrdom. However, I note that Paul says we are "justified freely" by his grace (Rom. 3:24). Thus, the idea that justification is a gift is clearly scriptural, even though there is a cost to us. The cost is inherent in choosing and living faithfully, but it does not purchase our redemption. The blood of Christ alone does that, and it was the gift of God.

3) You seem to contradict yourself re: the law: p-4 "But the law of Moses is now abrogated and annulled . . . the law has been annulled by Christ." p-6 "The moral laws of God are timeless . . . they apply now." p-10 "Today, moral law still exists." ALL THE LAW OR ONLY PART OF IT ???

Answer: The contradiction is only apparent. Moral law has always existed and always will. The moral law antedated Moses and is essentially timeless. Moses merely codified it; he did not create or decree it. The moral law survives the abrogation of the Mosaic law. It was wrong to commit adultery in the Patriarchal age, it was wrong under Moses and it is wrong now.

Also p-6 "the addition of grace." p-10 "Law and grace are not mutually exclusive. They have always existed together . . . but the addition of Grace. Under the Mosaic economy grace did not exist." WHICH IS IT ???

Answer: I see your point. Perhaps it would have less confusing and more correct to say that the Mosaic law did not provide for man's ultimate atonement, than to say there was no "grace" under the old law. Paul says that grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (II Tim. 1:9). As I understand the apostle, he is saying that during former ages God overlooked the sins of men based upon the blood of Christ that would one day be shed. Adam, Noah, and the Patriarchs all lived under law (the moral law), all were guilty as sinners, but all found grace with God. This was equally true during the period of the Mosaic law. God has always devised means for those that seek him to find grace. Thus, while the law of Moses did not provide a means of atonement (the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins), grace was prospectively applied to the faithful remnant based upon the work Christ would do upon the cross. They died righteous men and went to Paradise to wait for the actual shedding of Christ's blood and the resurrection. They were deemed righteous even though they died under the law of Moses -- a system that did not provide man's atonement - based upon the blood of Christ, although it was not yet shed. However, the point I was trying to make to the questioner is that law and grace are not mutually exclusive. They can and do exist together. We live under law today (the moral law) but we find grace in Christ for our failings where we repent and confess our faults before God. We are not saved by the subtraction of law, but the addition of grace. When a judge acquits a man of crime, he does not take away the law; rather he adds a judicial decrees of justification; he adds grace, not takes away law.

Thanks for calling my misstatement to my attention. It is good to know someone is paying attention!



Meanwhile, the church was sleeping...

Obama czar sees transgender school goals in reach

Organization founded by Jennings behind Maine plan

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President Obama's 'safe schools' czar, Kevin Jennings, sees his transgender plans for public and private schools within reach in a move developing in the state of Maine.

A hearing is scheduled next week on a proposal before the Maine Human Rights Commission to make allowances statewide for 'transgender' students. An organization founded by Jennings is behind the effort, according to a new report.

The plan essentially would instruct schools to allow boys who say they are transgender to use girls' facilities, such as restrooms and locker rooms, and vice versa.

Mass Resistance, a Massachusetts organization that works to counteract the advance of homosexual activism, has documented in a new report that the Jennings-launched "Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network" "has played a key role in the nightmare plan to transgenderize restrooms in Maine's schools."

The report cites a reference from the Bangor Daily News that described GLSEN as a partner in the push to end biology-based restrooms.

The newspaper report said representatives from several "gay and lesbian" groups were involved in a Dec. 15 workshop with the Human Rights Commission on the guidelines.

"One of them was Peter Rees of the Downeast Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network [GLSEN] based in Ellsworth," the report said. "Rees said people who oppose rights for

transgender students – such as allowing them to use locker rooms with people who are biologically of the opposite sex — fear something 'that just isn't borne out in reality.'"

The Mass Resistance report noted Rees said, "What do they think is going to happen? That boy who is identifying as a girl is not going to be displaying herself in a girls' locker room. She's going to be acting as much like a girl as possible and being very modest."

But Mass Resistance wondered just what that means.

"'She' – meaning a boy – will be 'acting ... like a girl ... and being very modest.' *But wait! We thought we weren't supposed to stereotype on the basis of gender!?* How confusing!" the Mass Resistance report said.

The organization also cited a 2008 report to the governor in Maine from the "LGBT Youth Commission," which cited GLSEN as an authoritative source on "what needs to be done in the schools."

"Maine's 2005 anti-discrimination law – covering the essentially *undefined* revolutionary concepts 'sexual orientation' and 'gender identity or expression' – has opened the door to the horror of boys using girls' restrooms and locker rooms (and vice versa), and playing on opposite-sex sports teams, in schools," Mass Resistance said.

The report also cited an incident in which a GLSEN-Boston board member talked to a classroom of third-graders about a student transitioning to "become a woman."

"Safe Schools Czar' Jennings was one of the masterminds of this insanity being foisted upon young children across the country," the Mass Resistance report said. "He founded GLSEN shortly after his participation in the 1987 gay march on Washington. He apparently also participated in the 1993 gay march on the capitol, which was the first big event to push 'gender identity' non-discrimination alongside 'gay and lesbian rights' demands."

Last May, WND broke the news of Jennings' federal appointment to oversee "safety" in the nation's public schools after he had boasted of using the theme to promote homosexuality and other alternative sexual lifestyles to students.

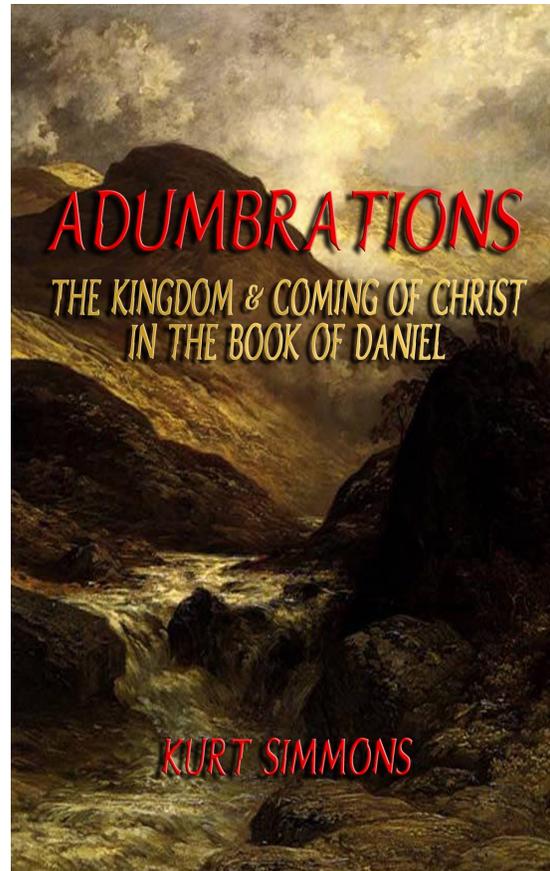
WND has reported Jennings founded the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network, his influence over a conference for teachers and children that included instruction in various homosexual acts such as "fisting," multiple efforts at the congressional level to have him removed, his responsiveness when a porn publisher asked for his help in writing a book, his financial sponsorship of radical homosexual art and his membership in the sometimes-violent radical Act Up homosexual organization.

The sexually graphic books the Jennings-founded GLSEN recommends for children also have been the subject of reports. Mass Resistance has launched a petition to have Jennings removed, as has GrassrootsNation. At the Washington Times, a series of editorials addressed worries over Jennings' influence on children.

"Teaching children sexual techniques is simply not appropriate. Unfortunately, it is part of a consistent pattern by some homosexual activists to promote underage homosexuality while pretending that their mission is simply to promote tolerance for so-called alternative lifestyles," the newspaper said.

"It is outrageous that someone involved in this scandal is being paid by the taxpayers to serve in a high-powered position at the Education Department, of all places. At some point, [Education Secretary Arne] Duncan, Mr. Jennings, Obama administration spokesmen and the president himself are going to have to start answering questions about all this. Refusing to do so won't make the issue go away."

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Ad-um-brate (ad um' brāt , ad'em brāt') 1. To give a faint shadow or resemblance of; to outline or sketch. 2. To foreshadow; prefigure. 3. To darken or conceal partially; overshadow. [L adumbrāt(us) shaded (ptp. of adumbrāre) = ad-AD + umbr(a) shade, shadow + -adtus - ate]

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Law Banning Promotion of Homosexuality Takes Effect in Lithuania

By Peter J. Smith

VILNIUS, Lithuania, March 2, 2010 (LifeSiteNews.com) – A new law banning the media and schools from promoting harmful sexual behaviors, as well as violence and suicide, to the youth took effect in Lithuania on Monday. The law also restricts the ability of homosexuals to promote same-sex unions and organize “gay pride” marches in the Baltic nation.

The Seimas, Lithuania’s parliament, passed the Law on the Protection of Minors Against the Detrimental Effect of Public Information in June 2009. The law prohibits the dissemination, in a public forum accessible to youth under 18 years, of information recognized to have a negative effect on the mental, intellectual, and moral development of youth.

A previous version of the law specifically forbade the spreading of information to youth that “agitates for homosexual, bisexual relations, or polygamy.” However, that language incensed European Union parliamentarians, who voted 349-218 in September 2009 to formally condemn Lithuania’s law as incompatible with EU prohibitions against discrimination based on sexual orientation.

In response to that international imbroglio, the Seimas voted in December to replace that language with broader stipulations forbidding individuals and organizations from “encouraging the sexual abuse of minors, sexual relations between minors and other sexual relations.”

The new language adopted by the Seimas fulfills the letter of the EU stipulations, while allowing the nation to continue protecting family values as intended under the original version.

The measure also bans “the portrayal of physical or psychological violence, displaying a dead or mutilated body, [and] information that arouses

fear or horror or that encourages self abuse or suicide.”

It also prohibits the spreading of information that “denigrates family values” or “encourages a concept of marriage and family other than stipulated in the Constitution and the Civil Code of the Republic of Lithuania.”

Since Lithuania’s civil law defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman, homosexualist campaigners would violate the law by agitating for same-sex “marriage” in public places accessible to youth. The law also would appear to empower municipal leaders to forbid “gay pride” marches – which characteristically put graphic sexual acts on display.

However, the law does not specify any serious penalties for violations. Parliamentarians had debated, but narrowly rejected an amendment that would have fined or imprisoned violators up to three years.

Fight Back! Save America for Christ!

