

Expository Files

Editors: Jon W. Quinn, Warren E. Berkley



Expository Files, Jan. 2010 – Beginning at 17th year of continuous publication

Front Page

Warren E. Berkley

We Are 17!

This is the January, 2010 issue of Expository Files (17.1), meaning we are beginning our 17th year of publication.

Among those who hold beliefs in common with us, we were probably the first electronic magazine. With rare exception, we have published on time every month for 17 years. We thank God.

Back “in those days of old,” we distributed the magazine in very primitive ways (remember DOS, CompuServe, MarksList and GarysList?). That’s when we started. A couple of weeks ago we set up an Expository Files Facebook account – and before the end of that day, we had over 100 friends, now at almost 200.

I think of other contrasts like – *your editors had no thoughts of being grandparents 17 years ago; laptops and wireless networks were unborn; websites were just beginning to emerge.* In 1995 Jon and I conducted a class at the Florida College lectures (with Mark Copeland) on the subject of **spreading the gospel through the information superhighway!**

When Jon set up the Facebook account he noted: “We have really been pleased with the response over the years, and have been surprised at some of the places EF has gone. For example, a monk in a monastery in the Mediterranean wrote Warren about adding EF to the monastery’s electronic archives. EF has appeared in many forums through the years. It was on AOL during the early

days. Several websites have come and gone (most recently Geocities which closed its doors) and presently can be found at three locations. By far, the busiest is at Bible.ca which is run by Steve Rudd. Steve knows how to use the search engines to attract traffic, and EF typically gets over 100,000 hits a month at that site. Our other sites have far fewer hits than that, but still do fine.”

Thanks is due to God first, that we have a message worthy of such wide distribution. Thanks to our wives, writers and readers. We continue, now, our 17th year.

Living Under Christ’s Authority

Matt. 28:18-20

Warren E. Berkley

“Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”

Matthew chapter 28 begins with an event that lies at the center of our faith in Jesus Christ and our hope for His return. The angel reports to the women who came to the tomb, “He is not here; for He is risen.” The risen Lord did not immediately ascend, however. The eleven apostles reported to Him at the appointed place and worshipped Him. Then He spoke these words to them. A study of this passage brings before us some basic things requiring our attention and response to God: **authority, the making of disciples, baptism, teaching and obedience.** If you are not yet a Christian, your knowledge of these simple things may bring you to necessary obedience. If you are a Christian, it will be good to reflect on these words of Jesus again.

Authority brings up something so many people do not want to face: ***we need to be governed.*** This fundamental derives from two simple truths set before us on the opening pages of the Bible. One, **we were made by God** (Gen. 1:26). The Creator has the right to govern the products of His work. Thus, even before sin came, Adam and Eve needed to be governed (see Gen. 2:16). In fact, when they rebelled against their Creator, their lives changed in many dreadful ways. Two, those who have sinned can never extract themselves from their lost condition without coming back to God, with readiness to submit to His government (repent, be forgiven, start over and obey). So if you were made by

God, and you have sinned against Him, one pressing need of your life is, to submit to the government of God. Simply expressed, everybody needs to obey God.

That leads to another simple thing, expressed in these words of Jesus Christ: **God gave all authority to Him!** The risen Lord said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” Everybody needs to obey Jesus Christ. God gave Him that right; the right to govern us. This is God’s will and plan. Authority is the right to govern. Jesus has that. Our response (as creatures of God who have sinned) should be, to obey Jesus Christ.

If you do not acknowledge this, or if you are not ready to obey Jesus Christ, you need to understand your situation: **You are a lost sinner**, living apart from God and not ready for your life to end! If you believe in God and seek to live according to His will, it must be on this basis – ***submitting to the authority of Jesus Christ***. You cannot work around this. You cannot “cut through the red tape of authority.” You cannot come up with your own plan of salvation. You cannot just let a group of religious creed-writers dictate to you. You should not just do what others are doing. God gave “all authority” to His Son, Jesus Christ. Submitting to His authority is a “make or break” deal. You want to be right with God? You must come to Christ, to receive pardon and submit to His authority.

Disciples become disciples in just this way, by being taught and submitting to the authority of Jesus Christ. Jesus told His apostles to “go . . . and make disciples of all the nations.” This is not the “make” that would be force. God has never wanted robotic servitude. How did the apostles of Christ “make” disciples? They did this through teaching. To discover this for yourself, do some reading through the book of Acts. The book of Acts tells us about the apostles doing the work Jesus commanded them to do. They told their audiences about the problem of sin (Acts 2:23; 7:51). That indictment was quickly followed by teaching sinners about the remedy: There is salvation in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). What is all of this? **Teaching to make disciples!**

This is confirmed by the meaning of the word. A disciple is “one taught.” So the Risen Lord was given “all authority” by God. One of His first commandments was, to tell His apostles to “go” to people of all nations and teach them, in the hope of good response: becoming disciples. To become a Christian and be a Christian, learning is required. Not learning just anything. But learning about Jesus Christ – who He is, what He provides and how to be saved, then live in obedience to His authority.

Baptizing was a part of the teaching these men were commanded to give. Like authority, many in the modern religious world do not hold baptism to be important. It has become, in many places, a ceremony to celebrate salvation already received. The role of baptism in someone's denomination or tradition is not the critical matter. Remember, God gave all authority to Jesus Christ. What He says is all we need to know on the subject. All you need to know, you can read in the New Testament! See what Jesus said about baptism, for example, in Mark 16:16 – “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.” Jesus makes baptism essential, as a response of faith to Him, thus applying the benefit of His blood. While there is symbolism in baptism, it is not just optional ceremonial symbolism. Jesus, in His orders to His men in Matthew 28, was not talking options, preferences or ceremonial choices by denominational “authorities.” He said, “baptize them.” Jesus told the apostles to baptize the people they taught, upon their response (see examples all through the book of Acts). You may believe in God, accept what the New Testament says about Christ and consider yourself a Christian by virtue of your good conduct. But, have you been baptized?

Teaching doesn't stop once a person has submitted to Christ's authority initially in baptism. **Those baptized must be taught:** “...teaching them...” The letters (or epistles) of the New Testament are written to Christians, to supply the instruction from Christ they need. Husbands and wives need instruction (Eph. 5:22-33), as well as parents and children (Eph. 6:1-4). Families need instruction about taking care of their poor (1 Tim. 5). Elders, deacons and preachers need to know their duties (1, 2 Tim., Titus). Every individual Christian needs to know Christ in attitude (Phil. 2:1-5), and wear the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17). And when Christians come together to work as a local church, there is a pattern for their work (see Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 12-14; 1 Cor. 16:1,2; Phil. 3:17). As a Christian, are you careful to abide in the doctrine of Christ? “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, does not have God!” (2 Jno. 9).

“Observe All Things,” Jesus said. His apostles were to go and make disciples (through teaching), baptize those who responded and then teach the new Christians to “observe all things.” So when you realize you are guilty of sin, come to Christ to be baptized and saved by His blood, then follow the instructions given through the apostles, **you are living under the government of God (the authority of Christ), and you are doing what this says: *observing all things.*** Jesus promised to be with these men as they carried out these orders. They did, and thus we have the New Testament. Have you read it? Are you living under the authority of Christ?

“Baptizing” and “teaching” are participles that are dependent on the action of the verb, “make disciples” – i.e., they explain how disciples are made. (From The Gospel of Matthew, Ken Chumbley, referencing *The Christian System*, 211, by Campbell.)

“A Man with a Nature Like Ours”

Jacob Hudgins

“Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months”(James 5:17)

We are often intimidated by Bible characters. They seem too good, too holy, too self-controlled for us. Their deeds seem superhuman, their perspective too great. Yet as James encourages us to effective, fervent praying, he reminds us of a man who prayed this way—and that *“Elijah was a man with a nature like ours”*(James 5:17), yet did amazing things through prayer. Elijah was a regular guy—a mere man, like us—yet he shows us what people and us can do when we pray in faith.

Regular people like us can pray earnestly. This is the kind of prayer James is encouraging: *“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much”*(James 5:16). The reason God granted Elijah’s prayer was not because He had another interesting chapter to add to the Bible, or because He owed Elijah a special favor. He was a regular guy—yet when regular, righteous people pray earnestly, God acts! “Earnestly” is not to be overlooked—it describes a spirit of continual, energetic, enthusiastic, faith-based praying. It is not easily dissuaded, nor does it forget what is asked. It sees prayer as more than a throwaway, last-chance attempt at getting what we need. Elijah was no superhuman—just a man—yet he prayed earnestly, and received what he requested.

Regular people like us can pray in the will of God. The amazing thing about Elijah’s prayer was that it was simply a prayer for God to fulfill His word. God had warned that if His people were wicked, *“I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze”*(Lev 26:19). Elijah prayed for drought to fulfill God’s purpose—to break the stubborn will of God’s wicked people. Why would God not answer a prayer like this—which is His express will? We too can pray that more be saved (1 Tim 2:4-5), that Christians be holy (1 Thess 4:3-4), and that truth grow and be accepted (2 Thess 3:1)—and know that we are praying exactly God’s will!

Regular people like us can see prayer answered. Elijah prayed for drought—“*and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months*”. Elijah prayed for it to rain again—“*and he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit*” (James 5:17-18). If we look by faith, we can see the working of God in answer to our prayers—although perhaps a different answer than we expect. The question is: Do we have the faith to pray, truly believing that God will alter the world—making a drought—simply because we earnestly ask Him? And when He does, do we have the humility to acknowledge it is not us who did it, but the Lord? The world may have said this was an ancient “El Niño,” but Christians know the truth—that God was answering a faithful man’s prayer. How many more seemingly natural ways has God answered prayer for faithful people in our world?

Do we have the courage and faith to pray like Elijah—an earnest prayer, centered on God’s will, laced with faith that God will act? He was no superman—and we can be like him if we have faith like him!

The Faith That Saved Noah

Hebrews 11:7

By Jon W. Quinn

“By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.” (Hebrews 11:7).

The building of the ark that saved Noah was an accomplishment made possible “by faith”. The above reference is recorded not for those who lived in Noah's day, but for us. Why did the Holy Spirit, in the New Testament Scriptures, call our attention way back to Noah and the other faithful men and women of long ago?

Because the characteristics of the faith that saved Noah are the same as what our faith needs to have today. It was not "faith alone" but an obedient faith. None of the many examples of faith listed in Hebrews 11 were examples of faith alone. None of them! But let us focus on Noah, and his faith. We will indeed see the parallels we are meant to see, and be granted a better understanding of what our faith needs to be.

Faith and the Future

To Noah, what God said was going to happen was real, though as yet unseen. A thing is not necessarily “unreal” just because it is “unseen” - in fact, the most important parts of reality are unseen. Love and hate are both powerful motivators, and while the effects of both can be seen, no one can see love or hate itself. In fact, everything we see is only temporary. To be eternal, something must be “unseen” or not physical in nature, such as the inner self; the soul (Cf. 2 Corinthians 4:18).

“Blind faith” is accepting that something as true without having seen it or evidence of it at all. On the other hand, “faith” is our acceptance and response to something we have not seen, but we have seen evidence that causes us to accept it as true. Our faith in God is based on evidence, but it is still faith because we have not seen God Himself. (Hebrews 11:1).

Noah had the faith to accept as real a future happening that had never happened before! Why did he believe something was going to happen that had never happened before? Did he have evidence that it would? Yes! He served the true and living God and the creator of all things. When God told Noah of His decision, Noah believed it based upon who he knew God to be.

It is a dangerous thing to think that something will not happen because it has never happened before. That mentality worked against the people of Noah's day who dismissed the idea of the flood to come. Today, people are making the same mistake in not preparing themselves for the Lord's return and the final day of this physical realm (see 2 Peter 3:1-9). Much better to accept that if God says a thing will happen, then it will, even if it has never happened before. Faith does this (Genesis 7:11-12; 23-24).

Faith Actively Responds to the Future

It is a mistake to believe in God but to postpone responding to His promises and warnings. This especially true considering that the most important things are unseen and eternal, and we put everything in serious jeopardy by such neglect. When disaster strikes, the severity of the effect is increased because we have a tendency to respond too late. America could have been more ready for Pearl Harbor, or hurricane Katrina, or the World Trade Center terrorist actions. This kind of late reaction seems far too typical of us.

But saving faith calls for decisive action in the present - (James 2:14-26). If we delay our response to the Lord and His promises and warnings until His

coming is upon us, then it will become simply impossible to “catch up”. We will be lost.

Faith is not something we merely think about - it is a thing we do something about! Noah built an ark, obeying God in everything (Genesis 6:22). God has given other commands and instructions to us as well. Our response to these ought to be like Noah's was. We shall prepare by obeying God in everything.

Faith Grows Endurance

Righteous men and women often are on the receiving end of taunts and reproaches. But listen! Reproach for having obeyed God ought to be the least of our worries. In fact, it ought to even be a source of rejoicing! (Cf. Matthew 10:24-33; 5:10-12).

Like Noah, and like the Lord Himself, we need to patiently endure such scoffing. Noah urged the people of his day to repent as he preached God's righteousness but they refused (2 Peter 2:5). Up until the time of the flood, they just continued on as if they had nothing about which to be concerned (Matthew 24:37-39). Were those who scoffed prepared for the flood? Noah was! Will those who mock today be prepared for the Lord's return and judgment? We will be!

Faith and Obedience

Noah did not modify what God told him to do (Genesis 6:22; 15). It is very important for us to do all things “according to the pattern” as well (Hebrews 8:5).

Would Noah and his family have been saved from the flood if he had built the ark 310 cubits long? God commanded 300 cubits, but that is such a slight difference. Would it matter? Did God have to tell Noah "Do not build the ark 310 cubits long?". Noah was not concerned about such questions. He simply obeyed. God's specificity, as well as His silence, is significant and must be respected - (Hebrews 7:11-14).

Faith Saves!

The quality of faith exhibited by Noah is the only kind that saves. These examples from before Christ were written down in the Old Testament, and then the Hebrew writer refers to them in the New Testament, to show us what saving faith is all about. Concerning Noah's obedience of faith, and the destruction of the ancient world by flood, notice what Peter wrote: “who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely

through the water. Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you -- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience -- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.” (1 Peter 3:20-22).

We need a faith like Noah had as much as Noah needed it. Noah's faith was an obedient trust in God. Does our own faith have the characteristics of the faith that saved Noah?

Subservient Truth?

Matthew 16:13-14

By Allen Dvorak

The scribes and Pharisees were apparently often scandalized by the behavior of Jesus and His disciples. On one occasion, the scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus, criticizing His disciples for not washing their hands according to the tradition of the elders (Matthew 15:1-11). Jesus responded to their criticism by asking them why they transgressed the commandment of God by their tradition. The scribes and Pharisees taught that a person need not “honor his father or mother” as long as he devoted his possessions to God. In that way, he could set aside the commandment to honor his parents, thus making the commandment of no effect.

Jesus described the scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites for such behavior and told them that their worship of God was “in vain” as long as they continued to teach the doctrines of men as though they were the commandments of God (vs. 8-9).

The disciples came to Jesus later and said to him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” (vs. 12). Jesus, however, was apparently not interested in modifying His teaching to mollify the Pharisees. He responded, “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch” (vs. 13-14).

Contrary to the attitude of our present “pc” culture, truth doesn’t bend to avoid offending anyone. Those who preach the divine truth are obligated to present it in its purity and entirety regardless of who likes it or doesn’t like it.

The pages of Scripture contain many examples of individuals who presented God's truth to others even in the face of disapproval or possible persecution. Moses rebuked the people of God for their unbelief and idolatry (Exodus 16-17; 32). On more than one occasion the people complained against Moses as though he was responsible for their circumstances and even threatened to stone him and Aaron (e.g., Numbers 14:10). The courage of Moses is seen in his determination to speak to the people according to the word of the Lord.

The prophet Jeremiah lived to see the end of the southern kingdom of Judah. In fact, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the subsequent assassination of the governor appointed by the Babylonian king, those Jews left in the land came to Jeremiah and asked him to inquire of the Lord regarding the decision to flee to Egypt or remain in the land (Jeremiah 42). They claimed to be willing to allow the Lord to make the decision for them. They told Jeremiah, "Let the Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not do according to everything which the Lord your God sends us by you. Whether it is pleasing or displeasing, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God to whom we send you..." (42:5-6).

When Jeremiah brought back the word of the Lord ("stay in the land – don't go to Egypt"), it didn't fit the decision they desired and so they refused to follow the Lord's word (42:20-43:4).

One example of the integrity of Jesus in confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees has already been cited in this article. Space will not permit a recitation of all the occasions on which Jesus spoke uncomfortable truth to His detractors, the very ones in Israel who claimed to have such a love for God's truth. Even among the multitudes who followed Jesus, there were many who complained about His teaching (John 6:60-61). Their displeasure with some of the things that Jesus said was such that they "went back and walked with Him no more" (vs. 66). There is no indication that Jesus changed His message to make sure that such an "exodus" never occurred again!

The apostle Paul wrote some blunt things to the Galatians who were turning away from the gospel of Christ to another gospel (1:6-7). Paul asked his Galatian readers, "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ" (1:10). As he wrote to them about the foolishness of turning back to the Mosaic Law, he asked them, "Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" (4:16).

Unfortunately, there apparently have always been those who will preach whatever others want to hear. The story of Micaiah is quite interesting. Ahab, king of Israel, was planning to go into battle with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, against the Syrians. Four hundred prophets were consulted regarding the success of their joint venture and, to a man, they predicted victory (1 Kings 22:5-6, 12). One of the prophets, Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, even emphasized the message with a “powerpoint” presentation; he made horns of iron and said, “With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed” (vs. 11). Jehoshaphat, however, wanted to hear from a prophet of the Lord and Micaiah, son of Imlah, was summoned. As he made his way to the kings, he was encouraged by the kings’ messenger to say what all of the other prophets had said. Micaiah’s response was that he would speak whatever the Lord spoke to him (vs. 14). At first, Micaiah said the same thing as the other prophets – “Go and prosper, for the Lord will deliver it [Ramoah-Gilead – asd] into the hand of the king” (vs. 15b). Ahab wasn’t accustomed to hearing anything good about himself from Micaiah and so he demanded “nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord” (vs. 16). Micaiah then told the two kings the truth - they were headed for defeat; Ahab would be killed in battle. Ahab asked for the truth, but didn’t like it much when it was presented to him. He made arrangements for Micaiah to be put into prison with a bread and water diet until he (Ahab) returned from battle (vs. 26-28). Presumably, Micaiah remained in prison...because Ahab died in battle even as the prophet had predicted. Micaiah must have known that the truth would not be appreciated by Ahab, but he was determined to “speak whatever the Lord says to me.”

In our day, the pressure for churches to grow in number is intense. Expanding the membership is seen as so important that many preachers will craft their messages in such a way as to avoid offending anyone, particularly prospective members. Don’t talk about divorce. Make discipleship sound like a casual weekend hobby. Be careful about being explicit concerning the sanctity of human life. Vagueness regarding individual responsibility for sin helps membership drives. Emphasize faith and say as little as possible about water baptism for the remission of sins. We need numbers!

The truth must be presented in love, but it must be presented in its purity. God uses His truth to weed out those who are not willing to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Genuine disciples love His truth and are determined to apply it to their lives regardless of the changes it demands.

Born Again Into The Kingdom by H.E. Phillips

The church is the people who are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). The kingdom includes only those who are "delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13). One enters the kingdom by the birth of water and of the Spirit and not by a physical birth (John 3:5).

Among religious people it is almost universally accepted that one must be "born again" in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. It is the means by which one gets into the kingdom of God. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and acknowledged him to be a great teacher from God. Jesus came directly to the point by saying unto him, "...Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). That is explicit! He further said, "...Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (vs. 5). This language is plain and to the point. The word "Except" is used in both verses and it allows no alternative if one enters into the kingdom of God. He **MUST** be "born again" or "born of water and the Spirit" in order to **SEE** or **ENTER** into the kingdom of God.

The context of John 3:3-13 shows that Jesus was speaking of entering the kingdom of God upon this earth, and Nicodemus so understood that. He did not understand the nature of the birth of water and the Spirit, but he understood that Jesus was talking about entering the kingdom here upon earth while man lives. Jesus distinguished this from a physical birth and that is what confused Nicodemus.

One must be born again to enter the kingdom. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. 1:23).

The inspired John said that Jesus came to his own and they received him not, but as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God. "...Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will

of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). Jesus spoke of ONE birth, not two. One birth of water and the Spirit, not a physical birth.

Other expressions in the New Testament help us understand the significance of the birth of water and the Spirit into the kingdom of God. The germ of life is in the seed. Jesus said, "...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). Peter said, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Pet. 1:23). The seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11). "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). Paul said to the Corinthians, "...I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15).

There are parallel passages to John 3:3-5 which make the meaning clear. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26). That statement is equal to "birth of water and of the Spirit." In the New Testament there is no cleansing or sanctifying by washing of water except by baptism of a penitent believer.

Another is Titus 3:5, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The washing of regeneration is the washing of rebirth. The renewing of the Holy Spirit is the effect of the work of the Spirit through the word. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Rom. 12:2). The renewing of the mind comes from the teaching of the Spirit by the word. Stating it plainly: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). The word is the work of the Spirit which produces faith (Rom. 10:17), and baptism is the only washing of water authorized in the New Testament for cleansing anyone. "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). The new birth which inducts one into the kingdom of God is exactly the same as that which brings one to be added to the church. It all occurs in the same way and brings the individual to the same place in relation to Christ and the remission of sins (Acts 2:38,47; 16:31-34; Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:12,13). These conditions reconcile one to God through Christ in one body (Eph. 2:15,16). We get into one body by baptism as directed by one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). Since there is only one Spirit, one baptism and one body (Eph. 4:3,4), the only way to get into that one body is by baptism as directed by that one Spirit through the word of God. That equals "he that

believeth and is baptized" (Mark 16:16), and "born again of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:5).

-- *Via Searching the Scriptures, February 1992, Volume 33, Number 2*

Plan of Salvation

By Jon W. Quinn

Plan #1

Announced by the apostles, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to new believers in Christ who asked what they must do:

Acts 2:36-38

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -- this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

(Acts 2:36-38).

Plan #2

On the back page of a tract, sinner were urged to pray this prayer to be saved. This prayer is not found in the Bible; nor were alien sinners commanded to pray for their forgiveness.

The Sinner's Prayer:

"O' Lord, I accept that I am a sinner and that Jesus died for my sins. I now accept Him into my heart as Lord and Savior asking for your mercy and forgiveness in His name. Amen."

The editors of Expository Files are happy with plan #1 and thankful to the God of all grace for it. We cannot recommend Plan #2 at all, but will change our minds when this prayer can be shown to us in the Bible.

**King Rehoboam's Seventeen Years
By Jon W. Quinn**

Expository Files is entering its seventeenth year of existence. For this Warren and I are grateful. Without the encouragement of our readers as well as the help from those who have written I am sure it would not have lasted this long.

Seventeen years in some ways is not very long, but in other ways it is. Joseph, son of Jacob, was sold into slavery by his own brothers when he was seventeen. He would no longer be a young man when he saw his father again many years later.

Rehoboam, Solomon's son, reigned as king in Jerusalem for seventeen years. I guess his father, Solomon, had used up all the wise genes in the family's genetic pool because he seems to have passed none of them on to his son. In today's world, politicians often want to raise taxes. Often, it is explained how difficult, but necessary a choice it is. Also emphasized are the many services that can then be provided which guarantee to make it all worth it.

Rehoboam did not use that approach. When asked by representatives of the people for tax relief, He put it this way: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." (1 Kings 12:14).

Of course, kings are not elected officials so Rehoboam isn't worried about the next election. It would have been difficult for him to campaign successfully if there had been. "Elect Rehoboam; he will add to your heavy yoke!"

Election or not, this was definitely a bad move for Rehoboam to make. I could have told him it was going to lead to nothing good. The older counselors had advised "If you will be a servant to this people today, and will serve them and grant them their petition, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever." (1 Kings 12:7). Rehoboam rejected their counsel.

Of the twelve political districts that made up Israel, ten of them broke away from the nation and formed another. Civil war ensued between the new kingdom (which continued to be called "Israel") and Rehoboam's remaining kingdom which

began to be referred to as "Judah". The two remained separate kingdoms for a couple centuries, both kingdoms were ultimately conquered by enemies.

So, Warren and I have been publishing Expository Files for the same length of time as Rehoboam reigned. Warren and I have always wanted to be "servants of the people" by working hard to offer something beneficial. I do believe that our efforts have "served the people" and trust that our publication has spoken "good words to them". Neither Warren nor I want to be kings (we already have One), It is in the name of our King that we hope Expository Files accomplishes its purpose.