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## THE BIBLE AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

by Mark Legendre

There is a lot of controversy about the issue of "capital punishment" in the news lately. The Bible clearly speaks on this subject. In Genesis 9:6 we read "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." Not only does this scripture justify capital punishment, but it also tells us why God says it should be done: because the blood of a person made in the image of God has been shed! Some people will quote the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" that is found at Exodus 20:13 and say this is a prohibition against killing anyone in the form of capital punishment. A literal translation of Exodus 20:13 says "Thou shalt do no murder." Capital punishment is NOT MURDER; it is the carrying out of the "justice of God and the vengeance of God in the world today." Under the Law of Moses the death penalty was carried out for a number of reasons that are listed at Exodus 21:12-17. Today under the Gospel Age, the death penalty is again justified by the scriptures. Read Romans 13:1-4 and 1st Peter 2:13-14 to see that this is so. It is interesting to notice that even Jesus recognized Pilate's authority to put him to death, but said that his authority to do so was "given him from above." (Jn. 19: 10-11) Anyone who truly believes the Bible must admit that capital punishment is authorized by the scriptures. And the death penalty is a "deterrent to crime" because a murderer has been taken off the streets.

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## "FALLING FROM GRACE!"

by Mark Legendre

The following statement appears in a tract entitled "The Baptist Faith and Message": "All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

There are a number of problems with this statement. First of all, in Galatians 5:4 the inspired Apostle Paul makes the following statement: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; YE ARE FALLEN FROM GRACE." Paul clearly says that a Christian can fall from Grace; the Baptist church says that you can't. Who are you going to believe? Furthermore, in Galatians 1:6 Paul says that you can be "removed from the grace of Christ unto another gospel." If the Baptist church is correct in what they teach, then it must be ok to follow another gospel other than the gospel of Christ. And yet still be saved. The truth is that if you "follow a perverted gospel, you will be removed

from the grace of Christ." The perverted gospel that Paul is speaking of is the combining of the the Law of Moses with the gospel of Christ. This is exactly what the Baptist church does when they bring such items as "tithing & instrumental music" from the Law of Moses and join these things to the gospel of Christ. Paul says that when you do this you will be "removed from the grace of Christ or fallen from grace."

There are many passages of scripture in the Bible that clearly teach that a Christian can indeed "fall from grace and lose his salvation" in spite of what the Baptist church says to the contrary. In 2 Peter 2:20-22 Peter clearly teaches that it is possible for a child of God to go back into the world and lose his or her salvation. Listen to what he says: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, then, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." It sounds to me like Peter believes that a Christian can lose his or her salvation by going back into the world. Otherwise what Peter says here makes no sense at all.

The Baptist church commonly was that if a person "falls from grace, then that proves they were never in grace in the first place." My answer to that is "how could you fall from a place that you were never at?"

This tract quotes from 1 Peter 1:5 where Peter says that we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" and say that this proves that a Christian cannot loose their salvation. This scripture does not say that at all. What it does say is that as long as we are "faithful to God" that we are "kept by the power of God." There is no doubt in my mind that faithful Christians go to Heaven when they die; I believe that with all my heart. That is my hope! But what happens if that child of God becomes unfaithful to God? The Baptist church says that they will still go to Heaven. "THE BIBLE SAYS THAT THEY WILL BE LOST!"

According to Jude 24 "God is able to keep us from falling." I believe that. But how does God do that? The answer is found in 2 Peter 1:5-11 where Peter says that we must "add to our faith" and then lists a number of qualities that we must "add to our faith." And then he says in verse 10 "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for IF YOU DO THESE THINGS, YE SHALL NEVER FALL." My question is this, what if you don't do these things, are you still saved? The Baptist church says yes; THE BIBLE SAYS NO!

My friends, if you will obey the gospel of Christ and continue to be faithful to Him afterwards, then you will indeed go to Heaven when you die! But if you are not faithful to God, you will indeed BE LOST FOREVER!