

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" 1 Corinthians 14:8

KJV

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The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls..." Jeremiah 6:16

Sounding Out The Faith

January 2018

The Pearl of Great Price Offers a "Rich" Life!

God formed the church for His honor and glory, as well as to have a place to commune with man. He called her "a pearl of great price". As an institution in our world, a New Testament church has a lot to offer. Why else would God build her and preserve her until His return? (Matthew 16:18) The New Testament church is God's earthly expression of His love for mankind and His desire to have sweet fellowship with man like He did back in the garden before man sinned. The Lord's New Testament churches have many wonderful qualities. They are the only places you can find the fruit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance all rolled into one. We will look at some of the wonderful qualities in the Lord's churches here.

A local New Testament church offers people who genuinely care about you. "Look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others." (Philippians 2:4) A local church offers a place where you can safely ask for prayers and help concerning your own shortcomings. James 5:16 says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed..." Notice it doesn't say confess your "sins", but your "faults". We confide in one another, pray for each other, and love another, in a local body. We will gladly include you if the Lord adds you.

A local New Testament church offers people who give of themselves to others. In Acts 20:35, Jesus states, "...It is more blessed to give than to receive." Even the most selfish, self serving person can feel the glow that comes from giving of themselves either from helping or giving a gift. This glow is a vestige from having been made in the image and likeness of God. It will be pronounced in a saved individual, but given the full expression in the local, church member who is striving to please the Lord. All the world benefits from the selfless giving of the local, faithful, church member, and most especially the people surrounding him or her.

A local, New Testament church offers people who take care of each other. Local church members should want to be Christ-like and to make it known that the Lord's local, New Testament church is alive and well. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:35) This is yet another way God has given us to "confirm the Word" in these post-miracle days, so that the world around us can see the love of Christ in us and know that we are "the real thing". A way that people will believe the Word and be saved. To be part of such a one-minded, local group is a true honor.

A local, New Testament church offers the love of God. Christ, as the ultimate example of loving the brethren, gave His life for them. John 15:13 says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for friends." Christ laid down His life for His New Testament church. (Acts 20:28) The members of each local body should do the same for one another. Do you know someone who would lay down their life, or stand in harm's way to shield you? Look to the faithful members of a local, New Testament church.

A local, New Testament church offers people who honor and prefer each other. This even applies to the church members who, on the surface, may not seem to get along. Imagine being in a sea of strangers and spotting another church member. You will run to each other! "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;" (Romans 12:10) Even though a faithful church member may disagree with another member, they will prefer that member over anyone else in the world, and defend that brother to others. Everyone needs a brother to stick by them in this world today.

A local, New Testament church offers comfort. Where is hope in this world? It is found in the Word of God at the hands of a local, Scriptural, New Testament church. The Lord's churches, being the pillar and

ground of the truth, (1 Timothy 3:15) know all things that are Christ's. All earthly things that are truth, spin out from her. The comfort of the Word will only be taught in a local, New Testament church. Our hope lies in Jesus Christ and His return to come get us. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:18)

Local, New Testament church members are just sinners, saved by grace, striving to please the Lord. They also can get caught up in their own lives and struggles. Satan tries to keep the Lord's, local, New Testament church members very, very busy. He also tries to appeal to each one's sin nature so they will stumble and fall. Only through prayer and study can a member remain faithful and be used of God. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Romans 7:22-23)

The local, New Testament church is God's earthly expression of Himself. Her duty is to reflect in every way the outstanding personality of God, which she can do only by staying in His Word. By staying in the Word, each member can bear the fruit of the Spirit of God and offer all that He commands to the world around. If you have been born again by the Spirit of God, you are invited to be a part of this divine mission in the world in the local, New Testament church in your area and to have a "rich" life.

**"Who, when he had found
one pearl of great price,
went and sold all that he had,
and bought it."**

Matthew 13:46

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A Baptist Without Lineage, Doctrine, & Practice is NO BAPTIST AT ALL!

The Scriptures state in Luke 6:43-44, "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes."

We have churches of the Lord that have lineage, doctrine, and practice that are watering down the doctrines of the Lord for the sake of fellowship. The Scriptures say in I John 1:6-7, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." If a church or group of churches compromise the doctrines of Christ, are they walking in light or darkness? What does the Bible say in I Corinthians 5:6, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" A little compromise of Christ's doctrine "once delivered to the saints", (Jude 3) doesn't bring fellowship. Walking in the light of God's Word brings fellowship, first and most importantly, with God and then with our brethren in sister churches.

True churches of the Lord that have the lineage, must remain faithful in doctrine and practice to remain the Lord's. Revelation chapters 2 and 3 are clear about compromising on the doctrines of Christ to each local, body of Christ. If a church compromises truth, the Lord warned the churches in Asia that if they didn't repent, He would remove the Holy Spirit from His office work in the church as Comforter. A body without a spirit is dead, and so is one of the Lord's churches when the Holy Spirit is removed. We may not know when God chooses to remove the Spirit because of error, but we can know when we should not be participating in their error. II John is very clear that if we continue with those that abide "not in the doctrine of Christ", we become a partaker of their evil deeds. This is a warning to the Lord's churches that we should not have fellowship with those that compromise the doctrines of Christ or those that are of the house of the devil. (II Corinthians 6:14-18)

Many of the Lord's churches today are being drawn away with false doctrine. Churches have been fooled into thinking that twice married preachers being ordained is somehow less important than teaching works for salvation. Although baptism fulfils "righteousness" after someone is saved, (Matthew 3:15-17) it is a picture of the burial and resurrection part of the Gospel. If it is perverted, the Gospel is perverted also. However, the Scriptures are very clear by Old Testament example, Leviticus 21:7, 14, the priests were not to marry a woman that was divorced because he was to be "holy unto his God". Likewise, in the New Testament, our rule of faith and practice with the Psalm books, a bishop was to be a husband of "one" wife. (I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9) So if the Scriptures teach a pastor is not to be twice married, but a church uses a twice married man as a bishop, and for baptism, or other works of a pastor, is it Scriptural? NO!

These are not our doctrines, or even the churches' doctrines. They are Christ's doctrines. (Matthew 28:20; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 2:41-47; I Timothy 4:6) Going against this doctrine of Christ fills up the Lord's churches with unscriptural baptism and puts the church in danger of losing her candlestick, as well as the individual who is baptized cannot have bridal relationship with an unscriptural administrator.

Let's consider another false doctrine that has crept into the Lord's churches. Many of the Lord's churches have began to practice using wine (fermented) in the Lord's supper, or, fellowshiping with churches that do use wine (fermented) in the Lord's supper. Can a church of the Lord go into error after she is organized? Yes, and God gives a space for repentance as with the churches in Revelation. But let's consider a church that has been organized with using fermented wine for the Lord's supper. Will God recognize this known error in the organizing of a church? No! Go back to the Scripture in Luke. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Either the Scriptures teach using "fruit of the vine", juice, for the Lord's supper, or it teaches to use fermented wine. God is not double-minded. His truths are clear and there is no variability in God. (James 1:8, 17)

The Scriptures throughout the Old Testament in example for us, and the New Testament as our rule of faith and practice are consistent that God's people should not drink alcoholic beverages. He was clear in His instructions to His New Testament church when He was on the earth, as well as in the epistles to the sister churches that were established later. He always used the term "fruit of the vine", or that which the vine produces. The vine never produces alcohol. (Leviticus 10:9; Proverbs 20:1; Proverbs 31:4; Isaiah 28:7; Matthew 26:26-29; I Corinthians 11:23-26; I Corinthians 11:23-26; Revelation 1:4-6) Therefore, for one of the Lord's churches to fellowship with a church that uses fermented wine, or one that has no origin because it was corrupt by being organized with doctrinal error, brings us to see that they are not walking in the light, but in darkness.

The last two issues of this paper have clearly shown historical and Biblical truths showing that the Southern Baptist Convention was and is unscriptural in its origin. Again, Luke 6:43-44, "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes." Therefore, if the Southern Baptist Convention was unscriptural in its origin, and it was, then it cannot bring forth anything that is Scriptural. Thus, those that have come out of or been produced by the Southern Baptist Convention and its churches, are corrupt also.

Now, we are lead to the great question that is perplexing many of the Lord's churches today. Are Bible Baptists and Fundamental Baptist Scriptural? If you look into their origin, you will find that they came out of the Convention in the 1950's. According to the Scriptures, "...a corrupt tree" can-

not "bring forth good fruit." These churches are disguising themselves and the Lord's churches are blindly going along for the sake of "getting along". They may sound good, but where did they come from?

The Lord's churches that have compromised and not repented are now going off into greater and greater error. I have seen the Lord's New Testament churches with lineage, doctrine, and practice, be moved to such compromise as upholding, promoting, and celebrating non-denominational colleges!

I have seen some of these compromising churches bringing in Protestant singing groups into their worship services.

I have seen some of these compromising churches promote Protestant literature and conferences in their worship services.

Some of these compromising churches have even sent their pastors, teachers, or other officers to be taught by these Protestants, so called Baptists.

Others are calling pastors from these unscriptural churches which means they have accepted alien immersion, and by allowing the pastor to administer baptism, are now filling their churches up with unscriptural baptism.

In Matthew 16:18-19, the Bible says, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This is a reminder to the Lord's New Testament churches that Jesus in no way is relinquishing His ownership of the authority when He gives command to His church to carry out the work in the kingdom. The Lord's churches are not free to do as they please or even as they think they should do. The Lord has given clear cut instructions in His Word on how we are to carry out His work here on the earth.

Remember again, Matthew 28:20 says, "...whatsoever I have commanded you..." This is not our work, or even the local church's work, it is the work of Christ that He accomplishes through His local churches. He will not accomplish His work in multiple different ways because He does not change. (Hebrews 13:8) He is a God of order. (I Corinthians 14:33)

In II Corinthians 2:17 the Bible says, "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." If one of the Lord's churches with lineage, doctrine, and practice, begins to compromise the doctrines of Christ they are "corrupting" the Word of God. Jesus purchased His church with His blood, Acts 20:28. The Lord's churches do not belong to us, each local body belongs to Christ. He is the Head. (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18) He is to have the pre-eminence.

To see the Lord's churches compromising and going into error by fellowshiping with unscriptural churches shows us that Jesus is coming soon. (II Thessalonians 2:3; I Timothy 4:1-2) I Thessalonians 2:4 says that "...we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel..." If we pervert the doctrines of Christ, we are betraying the trust that the Lord gave to us to be faithful to His truth!

“A Declaration of Those Things Most Surely Believed Among Us”

“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightiest know the certainly of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.” Acts 1:1-4



True faith is founded solely on the grace and mercy of God. All service to God takes place only through His divine direction. This foundational principal distinguishes the Lord’s New Testament churches from the churches of Cain so prevalent in the world today. (John 1:14; John 15:1-5; Romans 5:1; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5)

The Bible is the sole and complete authority for faith and practice. God inspired the Bible as it was originally penned, and the 66 books are inerrant and unchanging. (Psalm 19:7-11; Psalm 119:89, 160; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21)

There are three separate persons of the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They are equal and function as One. (Genesis 1:26; Matthew 28:19; John 14:8-9, 16-17; John 17:11; Acts 5:3-4; II Corinthians 13:14; I John 5:7-8)

God created man and everything on the earth, and continue to keep things running in an orderly fashion. (Genesis 1:1; Job 38:4-7; Psalm 33:6-9; Isaiah 48:3; Mark 4:39; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:1-4; Revelation 4:11)

Jesus Christ was all man and all God, born of a virgin. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; John 11:35; Philippians 2:5-7; Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 4:15)

All who trust in Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul are eternally secure and will never perish. Once born again, a person will never be born again a second time. (Job 19:25-27; John 3:36; John 5:24; John 10:27-30; Romans 8:35-39; Ephesians 1:12-14; I Peter 1:3-5)

The Holy Spirit is the Divine Overseer on behalf of Jesus Christ in all His churches. He enlightens, comforts, and gives understanding to New Testament church members. (Luke 24:49; John 14:16-17; Acts 1:4-6; Acts 5:1-4; Acts 8:12, 15-17; Acts 10:19-20; Acts 13:1-4; Acts 16:6-7; I Corinthians 2:9-10; Ephesians 1:17-19; Revelation 2:5)

Miraculous spiritual gifts were done away when the Bible was completed and only three Spiritual gifts

remain: faith, hope, and love. (I Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:7-14; II Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:23-25; Revelation 22:18-19)

Man was created in the image of God and lived in innocence until he chose to fall from his sinless state, after which he confessed his sin to God. All mankind are now sinners and need to confess their sin to God. (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:23-25; Genesis 3:6-8, 12-13; I Timothy 2:13-14; Romans 3:10, 23; Romans 5:12, 19; I Corinthians 15:22; Romans 10:9-10)

The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was designed by the Trinity to pay the eternal debt of sin for all mankind. (Isaiah 53:6, 11; John 10:28-30; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:9; Hebrews 9:28; I Peter 3:18; I John 4:10)

“Whosoever” (all mankind, church member or not) has been presented with the choice to accept His sacrifice and salvation. (Psalm 19:1-3; John 3:16; John 4:13-14; Acts 2:21; Titus 2:11)

The crowning event of the Gentile Age on earth will be the return of Jesus Christ in the clouds, commonly referred to as the “rapture”. The seven year tribulation on the earth will follow, coinciding with the judgment of the saved in Heaven and the Heavenly marriage of the Lamb to His bride, the church. (Genesis 7:1, 16; Genesis 19:22; Daniel 12:2; Romans 5:9; I Corinthians 15:51-53; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Thessalonians 5:9; II Thessalonians 2:6-7; Revelation 19:7-9, 14)

The bodily return of Jesus Christ to the earth will be public, followed by His millennial reign, during which Satan will be bound in Hell. Following the millennial is the resurrection and judgment of the unrighteous, to be cast into the eternal Lake of Fire, an event which grieves God to the core. (Zechariah 14:4; Matthew 24:27; Luke 17:24; Acts 1:10-11; Revelation 20:2-6; Jeremiah 23:5; Daniel 12:2; Matthew 13:49-50; II Peter 3:9; Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 21:8)

Satan is a fallen angel and is the enemy of God and man. He is the prince and power of this world, and his eternal destiny is the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:13-19; Matthew 25:41; Luke 10:18; II Corinthians 4:4; II Corinthians 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:11-12, 16; Revelation 20:10)

All humans to ever walk the earth are depraved sinners, beginning with Adam after the fall, all the way to the last baby born during Christ’s millennial reign. Humans are saved only by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and the prerequisites of salvation are repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 64:6; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Luke 13:1-5; John 3:16-18; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9)

The Holy Spirit convicts, regenerates, seals, secures, and indwells every believer. (Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 4:30; John 16:7-9; I Corinthians 6:19-20; Titus 3:5; I John 4:13)

God deals with believers as His children. He chastises the disobedient and rewards the obedient child. (Deuteronomy 8:5-6; Psalm 7:4; Hebrews 12:6-11)

Jesus Christ established His church during His personal ministry on earth. His church is always a local, visible, assembly of Scripturally baptized believers meeting together in covenant relationship to carry out the great commission. (Matthew 4:18-22; Matthew 18:15-18)

Each church is an independent, self-governing body, and no other church has any power over her. (Acts 13:1-3; Galatians 1:2; II Thessalonians 1:10; Revelation 1:20)

She is not to be confused with the family of God, composed of all the saved. (John 3:3; Romans 8:14; Ephesians 3:14-15)

Jesus Christ gave the great commission to His local, New Testament church only and He promised that she would never go out of existence. (Matthew 16:18-19; Ephesians 3:21)

There are two and only two divine ordinances in the Lord’s churches: baptism and the Lord’s supper.

Baptism: Scriptural baptism is the immersion in water of a previously saved individual, by the authority of Christ that comes through a Scriptural, New Testament church in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; with a Scripturally ordained pastor as administrator. (Acts 2:41-42; Acts 8:12, 36-39; Romans 6:4-5)

Lord’s supper: The Lord’s supper is a memorial restricted to the members of the local, visible body observing the ordinance. (Exodus 12:3; I Corinthians 1:2) The Scriptural elements of the supper are unfermented fruit of the vine and unleavened bread, which picture the sinless blood and body of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:17, 26-29; I Corinthians 11:23-26)

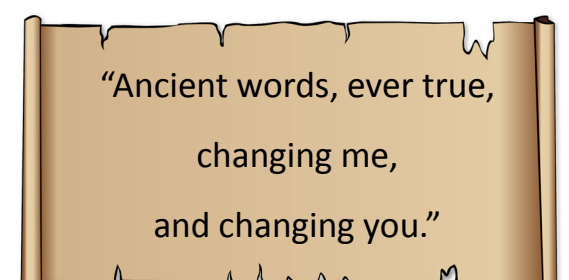
There are two ordained offices in a New Testament church that are to be filled by men: pastor and deacon. The office of pastor is the direct calling of God to a man, whereas the deacon is appointed by God through the church. The qualifications of these men are detailed in I Timothy and Titus. Following the Scriptures, to be qualified for the office, the men cannot have more than one woman in marriage as long as she lives. (Acts 6:1-6; Titus 1:5-9; I Timothy 3:1-13)

The government is to stay out of the church, meaning there will be no “state-run” or national religion. (Matthew 18:15-18; Matthew 22:16-21; I Corinthians 6:1-6)

The Lord’s people are to obey the laws of the land as long as those laws don’t interfere with the laws of the Scriptures. (Matthew 17:24-27; Acts 5:29; I Timothy 2:1-3; I Peter 2:13-16)

Jesus Christ has all authority, and He gave only what is contained in the Bible to His New Testament church. Every church doctrine is outlined in the Scriptures and is Christ’s doctrine. (Matthew 16:19; Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:13-19)

The Lord’s local, New Testament churches have never gone out of existence, and they are all alike in that all have descended directly from Jesus’ first church which He settled at Jerusalem. Jesus Christ, Himself, is the Head of His churches and they depend solely on Him for direction through His Word. (Genesis 1:24-25; Matthew 16:18; John 15:1-5; Acts 1:4-5; Acts 8:14-17; Acts 11:25-26; Acts 13:1-3)



Who is Taken, Who is Left?

II Peter 3:10 tells us, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..." This event is known as the rapture. The rapture is when the Lord returns to bring His children home. As II Peter 3:10 tells us, this event marks the beginning of the tribulation. Thus, throwing away the false doctrines of the middle or end of the week rapture. II Thessalonians 2:3-12 shows us that the day of the Lord will not come until the Holy Spirit as Comforter is taken out of the way. In Genesis 19:18-22, the angel told Lot, "I cannot do any thing..." No saved, child of God will experience one moment of the tribulation period.

The question then becomes, who is taken and who is left? Jesus provides an answer to both these questions by telling us to look back on the pattern He has given us and to look to the character of God.

In Matthew 24:36-42, Jesus, while answering questions about when He would return, tells us to go and consider the days of Noah and the flood. In Genesis 6:1-22, we see the condition that the earth was in. The wickedness of man was great and the "thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually". "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord". Noah was a child of God that was following after Him in faith. (Hebrews 11:7; II Peter 2:5) God delivered Noah and his house.

In Genesis 7:1-12, we see that Noah entered into the ark seven days before the waters of the flood came onto the earth. Noah did not experience a single bit of the judgment of God. The Lord shut them up in the ark and shielded them from the judgment of the wicked. (Genesis 7:13-16) God revealed His character to Noah and established a covenant with him. (Genesis 6:18) The character of God does not change. (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8) We can count on the character of God and His lack of variableness to know that His judgment is always just and that it is unchanging.

In Luke 17:28-32, Jesus uses the days of Lot and of Sodom and Gomorrah as an additional picture for us to look to. Sodom and Gomorrah were in the same state that the world was in the days of Noah, where evil abounded. In Genesis 18:16-33, God reveals the plan that He has to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for their sin. Abraham knew that Lot was still there. (Genesis 13:10-13) Abraham also knew the character of God, so he pleaded for God to not destroy the cities. Abraham knew that God would not destroy the righteous with the judgment of the wicked because of the pattern God started with Noah. Genesis 18:23-25, "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? ...that be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" It would be outside the character of God to destroy the righteous with the judgment of the wicked.

It would be easy to say that Noah was a righteous man because he followed after the Lord and preached righteousness. But that doesn't actually fit the way God views righteousness. Righteousness is based on the spiritual relationship that someone has with the Lord. John 3:3-7 tells us that in order to enter into the kingdom of God, one

must be born again. When an individual is born again, they become a child of God. (Romans 8:14-16) That relationship can never be undone and their soul is now right with God; making them righteous. This is further explained in I John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Through rightly dividing we know that this passage is speaking of our soul, not our flesh. The soul of a child of God cannot commit sin because God created in him a new creature and "his seed remaineth in him..." (II Corinthians 5:17; I John 3:9) A saved child of God is still very much capable of sinning in the flesh, (Romans 6:13-16; Romans 7:14-25) That's where Lot fits in.

Lot was a man that lusted after the things this world had to offer. When he was given a choice, he sought those things out. (Genesis 13:10-13) II Peter 2:7-8, tells us that God delivered "just" Lot. Without paying close attention one might read that as God delivered *only* Lot, however, that is not true. (Genesis 19:15) Lot, his wife, and his two virgin daughters were delivered.

The word "just" comes from the Greek word *dikaios*, meaning "equitable; in character or act; by implication, innocent, holy, righteous. Lot certainly was not living like a righteous person. In fact, when he tried to act righteously, he seemed as one that mocked to his family. (Genesis 19:14) He was willing to give up his virgin daughters to the wicked men of the city. (Genesis 19:8) Lot vexed his righteous soul. (II Peter 2:8) The "just" part of Lot was the new creature inside that God created in him at salvation. (II Peter 2:8)

When we step back and truly dig into what makes a person righteous, we find that there is nothing righteous about man on his own. (Romans 3:10-23; Isaiah 64:6; Ecclesiastes 7:20) When the Bible refers to someone as being righteous, it is speaking of their soul. Salvation does not come by the works of man, neither does righteousness. I John 2:12 tells us we are only "forgiven for his name's sake". (Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8-9) When a child of God does righteous work, they are not doing the work themselves, but rather God doing the work through them. (I Corinthians 3:5-7) It is God that gives the increase. When Abraham asked if God would destroy the righteous with the wicked, he was not referring to God saving only those that walked after His ways. He was speaking of those that were saved, children of God.

Regardless of how caught up in sin a child of God might be, they are still a child of God. I John 3:2 says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." All children of God will be caught up and changed when the Lord sounds that trumpet. (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:51-57)

Lot was so backslidden that he didn't really even desire to be "saved" from the wrath of God. We see in Genesis 19:15-17 that Lot lingered in the city, even after being warned of the destruction. The angels of the Lord had to lay hold of him and drag him out of the city. However, God revealed His character and made it clear in Genesis 19:18-22 that He could not "do anything till thou be come thither." God delivered a saved, child of God, though he was living a life contrary to the ways of God. God cannot and will not go outside of the pattern that He has laid forth.

**"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord,
and in the power of his might.
Put on the whole armour of God,
that ye may be able to stand
against the wiles of the devil.
For we wrestle not against flesh and blood,
but against principalities,
against powers,
against the rulers of the darkness
of this world,
against spiritual wickedness
in high places.
Wherefore take unto you the
whole armour of God,
that ye may be able
to withstand in the evil day,
and having done all,
to stand.
Stand therefore, having your loins
girt about with truth,
and having on the breastplate
of righteousness;
And your feet shod with
the preparation of the
gospel of peace;
Above all, taking the
shield of faith,
wherewith ye shall be able
to quench all the fiery darts
of the wicked.
And take the helmet of salvation,
and the sword of the Spirit,
which is the word of God:
Praying always with all prayer
and supplication in the Spirit,
and watching thereunto with all
perseverance and supplication
for all saints;
And for me, that utterance
may be given unto me,
that I may open my mouth boldly,
to make known the mystery
of the gospel,
For which I am an ambassador in bonds:
that therein I may speak boldly,
as I ought to speak."
Ephesians 6:11-20**