

“And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”

Acts 4:36,37. In this unique way the Holy Spirit introduces God’s Elect throughout the ages to Barnabas, whom the Holy Ghost elsewhere calls, “a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith;” to wit: “Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus (think, Joses, surnamed Barnabas) and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem; and they sent forth BARNABAS, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. FOR HE WAS A GOOD MAN, AND FULL OF THE HOLY GHOST AND OF FAITH; and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed BARNABAS to Tarsus, for to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” Acts 11:19-26.

And so it appears that this man BARNABAS became something of a sidekick of choice to the great apostle Paul. In fact, the case could be made that were it not for Barnabas, the apostle Paul’s spectacular ministry may never have gotten off the ground, because none of the disciples trusted Paul, and would not accept him into their midst, because Paul had such a grisly record of breathing out threatenings and slaughter, and persecuting, the Elect of God; to wit: *“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples; BUT THEY WERE ALL AFRAID OF HIM, AND BELIEVED NOT THAT HE WAS A DISCIPLE.”* Acts 9:26. Barnabas, in effect, vouched for Paul; and the fact that he was able to gain acceptance for Paul with the justifiably skeptical disciples, is powerful, if mute, testimony to the high esteem and utmost confidence the brethren placed in Barnabas; to wit:

“But Barnabas took him (Paul), and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.” (Acts 9:27-28)

Studying the lives of God’s Elect – through the scraps of reliable, extant historical evidence in addition to the Scriptures – is, like godliness itself, *“profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”* 1 Tim. 4:7,8. *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Rom. 15:4-6.

Augustus Montague Toplady (1740-1778, only 38 years old at death) – who is known the world over for his great hymn, *“Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee, Let the water and the blood, From thy wounded side which flowed; Be for sin the double cure, Save from wrath and make me pure.”* Toplady is also famous for his running, public theological debates with the Arminian heretic John Wesley (1703-1791, 88 years old at death).

Toplady called Wesley “*that old fox,*” and once wrote to him as follows; to wit: “*Time, Sir, has already whitened your locks; I shortly may, you shortly must, appear before that great God upon whose sovereignty your earthly ministry has been one, long, continuous assault*” (Note: Quoted from memory). The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady, (939 pages), reflects that Toplady was a magnificent champion and aggressive – maybe even pugnacious defender of the Calvinistic doctrines of grace; even to the point of personally translating from obscure Latin to English – and thereafter broadly disseminating – Jerome Zanchius’ Absolute Predestination (1516-1590, 74 years old at death).

It is refreshing to come upon such a grand defender of the faith as Toplady. For want of such faithful preaching, a black falling away from the truth of God in the earth, has descended like a dark and impenetrable cloud of gross, irreversible gloom and doom. When mankind is universally fed a diet of Arminian, God-loves-everybody, and anybody who preaches otherwise is a hatemonger to be marginalized and demonized – I say a diet of warm spit and toxic swill – the end of the world is nigh. Arminianism spells final doom. There is death in that pot. “***And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot.***” 2 Kgs. 4:40.

In addition, Bro. Toplady argued for the proposition that for the first 400 years after the ascension of Christ the churches all unanimously believed the Calvinistic doctrines of predestination, election, reprobation, etc. He wrote another paper entitled, “An Inquiry into the Judgment of the Earliest Fathers, Concerning the Points in Question (i.e., Calvinistic doctrines).” Wherein he said, “*In my letter to Dr. N. I took occasion to observe, that there is the utmost reason to believe that the main body of the Christian Church were, for the 4 FIRST CENTURIES, unanimous believers of the doctrines now termed Calvinistic.*” To which Toplady adds, “*If that proverbial remark be true, (The nearer the fountain the clearer the stream;) the testimonies, brought from these early writers, must come with weight little, if any, short of decisive.*”

Toplady says that most of what is touted as valuable information comes down to us from the so-called early church fathers is nothing but “*an infinity of rubbish.*” To wit: “*I once devoted a considerable share of time and attention to the fathers. But after a while, I desisted from this study as barren and unimproving. Some excellent things are, indeed, interspersed in their writings; but the golden grains are almost lost amidst an infinity of rubbish. If a man, says Dr. Young, was to find one pearl in an oyster of a million, it would hardly encourage him to commence the pearl and oyster business for his livelihood. So say I, of the fathers in general. A life-time would hardly suffice to read the fathers with care; and, perhaps, two life-times would scarcely enable a reader to digest them completely. I am quite of his mind, who said, One page of Augustine is a thousand of most other fathers; but one page of Paul (from the Bible) is worth a thousand of Augustine’s. There are, however, a few writings, still extant (i.e., available today), which, in point both of antiquity and value, appear to rank NEXT BELOW the inspired writings of Holy Writ.*”

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”(2 Tim. 3:16-17)

From the very earliest days of the church, letters from various leaders flowed back and forth between the churches, of differing value, levels of spirituality, usefulness, inspiration, and importance. In process of time, the choicest of these letters bubbled to the top – so to speak – having the unction of the Holy Ghost impressed upon them; and became the New Testament.

Others that did not make the cut – so to speak – nevertheless had varying degrees of applicability to the felt needs of all kinds – spiritual and practical – of the churches. These are what are called the writings of the fathers, and put like this by Toplady; to wit: *“The chief of these are the remains of Barnabas, Clemens of Rome, Ignacious, and Polycarp.”* Here the scrappy, bellicose nature of Toplady when contending for the faith under attack BY THE LYING ARMINIANS, comes to the fore; to wit: *“A few citations,”* says Toplady, *“from these venerable divines and martyrs,”* – (i.e., these four: Barnabas, Clemens, Ignacious, and Polycarp) – *“will serve to EVINCE THE FALSEHOOD OF LIMBORCH’S ASSERTION, where he tells us, that, ‘prior to the rise of St. Augustine (354-430, 76 years old at death), the primitive churches knew LITTLE OR NOTHING ABOUT PREDESTINATION.’”*

(Here, Beloved, is another bald-faced lie of the scum known historically as Arminians. Phillip van LIMBORCH (1633-1712, 79 years old at death), was a leading Dutch theologian, and, *“next to Jacob Arminius himself, Limborch was the most distinguished of the Arminian theologians,”* according to Strong & McClintock’s religious encyclopedia. Thus you see how the debate raged in the 18th Century – the days of Toplady and Wesley – between the Calvinists and the lying Arminians. Generally, the Calvinists alleging and proving that the early church fathers of the FIRST CENTURY THROUGH THE FOURTH CENTURY were ALL Calvinistic; and the lying Arminians like Phillip van Limborch ALLEGING ONLY – WITH ZERO PROOF – that NONE were Calvinistic.

Toplady: *“From the fragment of an epistle retrieved by the learned archbishop Usher, and generally admitted to be the authentic work of Barnabas, I select the following passages:*

(Remember that Barnabas was one of the early church fathers whose credentials as such are doubted by none. It is PROBABLE that he was one of the seventy disciples chosen by Christ Himself in **Luke chapter 10** to go forth preaching two by two. It is CERTAIN, that, a few years after our Lord’s ascension, Barnabas was expressly fixed upon by the Holy Ghost to be, as Paul and others, to be a kind of preacher at large; to wit: *“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas...and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.”* Acts 13:1-4. Can anyone doubt that Barnabas was, and is, worthy to be classified as an early church father and companion with Paul in the ministry of Jesus Christ? Indeed, Barnabas was called an apostle in at least one place in the Holy Bible; to wit: *“And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the APOSTLES, BARNABAS and PAUL, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.”* Acts 14:12-15.)

Now consider this additional remarkable passage from the writings of Barnabas: *“When Christ chose his own Apostles who were to preach his gospel, he chose them when they were wickedder than all wickedness itself; to demonstrate that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; and thereby to show the absolute freeness of divine grace.”* You see that Barnabas was hardly startled at the doctrine of reprobation.

Further, Barnabas also “*represented the incarnation and death of Christ to have been designed for filling up the measure of Jewish iniquity.*” His words are these: “*Therefore did the Son of God come in the flesh, to this very end, that he might finish and bring to perfection the sins of those who had persecuted the prophets unto death. For this reason [i.e., this was one reason for which] he suffered.*”

To which Toplady adds these words: “*If a modern Calvinist was to express himself in this manner, what a hideous outcry would be raised, as if heaven and earth were falling.*” I.e., Christ was predestinated to die – murdered at the hands of the Jews exactly as it happened in the fullness of time; and their horrendous sins in murdering the Son of God were predestinated also, to fill up the Jewish cup of iniquity; to wit:

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” (Acts 2:22-24)

According to this truly apostolic writer, free will has nothing to do in the affairs of spiritual and future salvation. Speaking of God’s true Israel, he asks, “*But from whence is it, that they come to consider and understand these things? We, who consider his commandments aright, speak as the Lord willeth us to speak.*” (“*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*” Phil. 2:13. “*Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; WHICH IS CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY.*” Col. 1:26,27.) Beloved, this is probably Paul’s closest fellow-laborer. They traveled, preached, studied, prayed, suffered – even made tents together – so that they could pay expenses without charging or taking a salary from the churches; to wit:

“And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought; for by their occupation they were tentmakers.” (Acts 18:3)

***“Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?”
(1 Cor. 9:6)***

“For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail; for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.” (1 Thes. 2:9)

“Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.” (2 Thes. 3:8)

It’s not very likely that Barnabas would abandon Paul’s solid-gold Calvinistic doctrines for the sloppy Agape warm spit of the Arminians. Did Christ shed His blood in vain? The early church fathers say, No; to wit: “*The essential dignity of Christ, as Sovereign Lord, will not permit us to believe that it was possible for him to suffer and SHED HIS BLOOD IN VAIN, or for those who are not, God’s Elect.*”

Beloved, the whole world is today engulfed in rabid, militant Arminianism. Not only do they believe their soul-damning lies themselves (God loves everybody; Christ died for everybody; and man is a free moral agent), but they will destroy those preaching otherwise; and are doomed.

I love you. Amen.