

ONE THOUSAND PUNGENT POINTS

Poignant sayings to provoke godly thoughts

THE BOOK PUBLICATION

by Given O. Blakely

1000 PUNGENT POINTS

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PUNGENT POINT #1 - "If what is above you does not control you, what is around you will." (An aphorism taught to me by my mother nearly 70 years ago).

PUNGENT POINT #2 – How right can it be to choose to focus on temporal things – things that will pass away – when God has revealed things pertaining to eternal life (1 John 5:13), an eternal inheritance (Heb 9:15), an eternal weight of glory (2 Cor 4:17), an eternal purpose (Eph 3:11), a King who is eternal (1 Tim 1:17), eternal glory (2 Tim 2:10). Judge for yourself!

PUNGENT POINT #3 – If we are admonished to "add" certain graces in the energy of our faith, and given the promise that if we do these things we will never fall, what possible reason can be adduced for failing to add them? (1 Pet 1:5-19).

PUNGENT POINT #4 – If we are "changed" by the Holy Spirit from one increasing stage of glory to another as we behold the glory of the Lord, no one can really afford to have their attention diverted to something else (2 Cor 3:18).

PUNGENT POINT #5 – If John wrote his first epistle in order that believers know they "have eternal life," then we ought to conclude that is a necessary bit of knowledge (1 John 5:13).

PUNGENT POINT #6 – My departed father, Fred O. Blakely, used to say when detecting an obviously self-centered person, "That person lives in a little world, all by himself." – Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #7 – A dead church is one in which the God cannot be found, for He is "not the God of the dead" (Matt 22:32).

PUNGENT POINT #8 – It is possible that the absence of spiritual understanding is owing to God pouring out the spirit of deep sleep upon the people, and drying up the understanding of their teachers (Isa 29:10; Acts 28:18-27).

PUNGENT POINT #9 – "The total absence of humor in the Bible is one of the most singular things in all literature."-- Alfred North Whitehead NOTE: What some people view as Bible humor is actually Divine derision or sarcasm, i.e. Psa 2:4; 37:23; Psa 52:6

PUNGENT POINT #10 – If there is such a circumstance as Divine silence teaching us, somewhere there has to be an exceedingly large set of commentaries on that reference in the Revelation to "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour" (Rev 8:1). – Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #11 – David referred to "ONE THING" that dominated his thinking (Psa 27:4). Jesus said to Mary, "ONE THING is needful" (Lk 10:42). Paul said he was driven by "ONE THING" (Phil 3:13). What is the "one thing" that has the priority in your

life?

PUNGENT POINT #12 – The Spirit says that if men do not receive the love of the truth, that they may be saved, God WILL send them strong delusion that will consummate in them being damned (2 Thess 2:10-11). This may very well account for many otherwise confusing circumstances.

PUNGENT POINT #13 – If faith is the victory that overcomes the world, why are many professing Christians confused when some of their peers fall away, being overcome by the world? (1 John 5:4-5).

PUNGENT POINT #14 – Now that Jesus has come, the lineage of Adam has been written off. That is what mandates the necessity of a new birth. Those who desire to be saved must get into the lineage of Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #15 – If it is going to burn up in the final conflagration (2 Pet 3:10-12), how important can it really be?

PUNGENT POINT #16 – In Christ, and when it is for righteousness sake, sufferings are your employees. They are working "FOR" you (2 Cor 4:17).

PUNGENT POINT #17 – I am a follower of Jesus and do not define either spiritual life or doctrine by sectarian names. I do not condone such names in any way -- any of them. I receive all who are holding to Christ by faith, and living in concert with that faith. Names and appellations that are not honored in heaven, and will not transfer to it, ought no to be honored while we are on our way there.

PUNGENT POINT #18 – Institutionalization smothers spiritual life, for it is built upon a foundation that is wholly of human origin, and therefore depends upon routine, not life. – Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #19 – A man should only have as much formal education as he can handle without it inhibiting his faith. Every person does not have the same capacity for erudition as defined by the world.

PUNGENT POINT #20 – Scholastic credentials do not qualify a man to minister in the name of the Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #21 – Men are not free to critique the Word of God as though it contained errors. The Word of God is to be believed, not critiqued.

PUNGENT POINT #22 – The work of the church is not to make society better, or to resolve the many problems of humanity. It is the pillar and ground of the truth, and as such, must major on it.

PUNGENT POINT #23 – There are still some churches bearing a resemblance to "the church of the Laodiceans" – Jesus is on the outside, asking if there is anyone there who

hears Him, and will open the door Him.

PUNGENT POINT #24 – God has required us to set our affection on things above, and not on things on the earth (Col 3:1-2). Our affection for those "things" must be as real and genuine as the "things" themselves.

PUNGENT POINT #25 – The "I can't do it" syndrome is evidence of unbelief. The cry of faith is, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil 4:13).–

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PUNGENT POINT #26 – If the way that leads to life has a "strait" gate and is a "narrow" way (Matt 7:13-14), what can really be said about ways that accommodate the flesh and concede to convenience?

PUNGENT POINT #27 – If our affection is to be set on things above (Col 3:2), then how right is it to be dominated by a desire for the things of this world?

PUNGENT POINT #28 – If we come into Christ "clean" (1 Pet 1:22), and a means has been provided to maintain that cleanliness (1 John 1:7,9), then how can there be a satisfactory explanation for continued defilement in professing Christians?

PUNGENT POINT #29 – Maybe one of the reasons it is difficult to distinguish some professing Christians from the world, is that there really is no distinction there.

PUNGENT POINT #30 – What a person chooses to talk about forms a kind of index to their person. "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matt 12:37)

PUNGENT POINT #31 – God has highly exalted Christ Jesus, giving Him a name that is really above every other name. He has also decreed that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" Phil 2:9). That cannot be said of any other name.

PUNGENT POINT #32 – Every knee will bow to the exalted Jesus, and every tongue will confess His name. If you do it before you leave the world, you will get credit for it.–

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PUNGENT POINT #33 – Sin has an enslaving quality about it, making those who commit it a slave to it. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (John 8:34, NIV). That is a servitude from which men must be delivered – and Jesus can do it!.

PUNGENT POINT #34 – The ignorance of God's Word puts men at a decided disadvantage.

PUNGENT POINT #35 – If it is really essential for men to be born again, that necessity confirms that, so far as man's identity with God is concerned, he is totally lacking in natural potential.

PUNGENT POINT #36 – For those in Christ Jesus, being able to deny self is not a sign of advancement. Rather, this is the point where we commence being a disciple of Jesus.– Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #37 – If those in Christ are warned to beware lest an evil heart of unbelief be found in them, and they depart from the living God (Heb 3:12), then the possibility of those in Christ departing from God is not open to debate. – Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #38 – The means through which we partake of the Divine nature are the promises of God, not the commandments (2 Pet 1:4). That is a matter of revelation.

PUNGENT POINT #39 – There is a sense in which the salvation of God makes you noncombustible.

PUNGENT POINT #40 – It is not likely that God would magnify His Word above all His name (Psa 138:2), then leave it in the hands of men to corrupt and distort. There is a cohesion in His Word that men cannot destroy. That is involved in Jesus' poignant saying, "the Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).

PUNGENT POINT #41 – Salvation is for you, but you are not its center, and your life is not to be lived as though you were.

PUNGENT POINT #42 – No person can be saved without a love for the truth. Those who refuse to receive such a love will be sent delusion they cannot reject (2 Thess 2:10-12).

PUNGENT POINT #43 – Those in Christ are to do good to all men, especially to the household of faith (Gal 6:10). These are some of the "good works God has ordained for His people to walk in (Eph 2:10), and they are accomplished by those who live by faith and walk in the Spirit.

PUNGENT POINT #44 – When sin is normalized in the church, Jesus has been reproached, the Spirit quenched, the Word of God blasphemed, and the God of the new creation demeaned.

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #45 – Whatever a person may think about holiness, without it "no man shall see the Lord" (Heb 12:14). We are not to spend our time explaining the absence of holiness, but see to it that we are, in fact, holy (1 Pet 1:15-16).– Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #46 – Faith never disobeys, hope does not despair, and love never fails. Where there is a departure from these realities, unbelief has reared its ugly head.

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PUNGENT POINT #47 – When those who have complained about the way God treated them stand before Him, what will they say if He is displeased about the way they treated Him?

PUNGENT POINT #48 – The Greek word translated "power" (dunamis) is NOT the

word from which "dynamite" comes. It is more properly the word from which "dynamo" is derived. Dynamite blows things apart. A dynamo harnesses power for productivity.

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PUNGENT POINT #49 – There are novel and curious questions for which the Scriptures do NOT offer answers. The approach to such things is straightforward: "But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife" (2 Tim 2:23, NKJV).

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #50 – Faith is the eye of the soul by which we can see "Him who is invisible" (Heb 11:27), and the hand of the soul by which we can "lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim 6:12).

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #51 – If you are in Christ Jesus, God called you (1 Cor 1:9), God saved you (Tit 3:4-5), and God keeps you (1 Pet 1:5). Give Him thanks!

PUNGENT POINT #52 – By its very nature, the unity of the saints of God must be theocentric. It is the result of the Spirit's work – "the unity of the Spirit" (Eph 4:3), and is experienced through faith – "the unity of the faith" (Eph 4:13). It is based upon the transaction of being "joined unto the Lord," and being "one spirit" with Him (1 Cor 6:17).

PUNGENT POINT #53 – Some of the evidences of "the unity of the Spirit" and "the unity of faith" include "one mind and one mouth" (Rom 15:6), "one heart" and "one soul" (Acts 4:32), "one spirit" (Phil 1:27), and having "the same care one for another" (1 Cor 12:25)

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PUNGENT POINT #54 – One of the consistent traits of the wicked is, "God is not in all his thoughts" (Psa 10:4).

PUNGENT POINT #55 – The Gospel is a "more sure word of prophecy," being a message of what has already been accomplished. If you will "pay attention" to it (NIV), God will see to it that the day will "dawn," and "the Daystar [will] rise in your heart" – i.e. you will come to understand its implications, and it will make sense to you (2 Pet 1:19).

PUNGENT POINT #56 – There are two kinds of people in the world: those to whom God has given the ability to comprehend, and those who have not been vouchsafed that ability. That is what Jesus said (Matt 13:11).

PUNGENT POINT #57 – God causes it to rain on one city, and not on another – on one piece of ground, and not on another (Amos 4:7). He has His way in the storm (Nah 1:3), doing according to His will "among the inhabitants of the earth" (Dan 4:35). Thus it is written that He works all things together for the good of those who love Him, and are called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28).

PUNGENT POINT #58 – The Savior is fully "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 1:24).

Trust Him, and live for Him!

PUNGENT POINT #59 – If eternal life is knowing "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent" (John 17:3), then those who do not know God, in the intended sense of that statement, do not have eternal life. That is a fearful state in which to find oneself!

PUNGENT POINT #60 – If it is possible to have "boldness in the day of judgment," then men ought to pursue the acquisition of that benefit. It will necessarily be preceded by this condition: "because as He is, so are we in the world" (1 John 4:17).

PUNGENT POINT #61 – It is possible that the enormous division that exists in the nominal church is owing to a Divine judgment, much like that which occurred in "a plain in the land of Shinar." There the people aspired to make a name for themselves – and God responded to their ambition by scattering them "upon the face of all the earth." (Gen 11:1-9)

PUNGENT POINT #62 – Referring to the church, which is Christ's body, there really is only "one body" (Eph 4:4). It is, however, presently in a scattered condition, and is not thoroughly identifiable by a visible and unique collection of people claiming to be "the one true church."

PUNGENT POINT #63 – If God's "exceeding great and precious promises" are the appointed means of the saints being "partakers of the Divine nature" (2 Pet 1:4), then we are obliged to speak of them.

PUNGENT POINT #64 – If it is true that "the Word of God" works effectively in those who believe (1 Thess 2:13), then at least two things must be done. First, the Word must be affirmed, and second, it must be believed. God Himself will take it from there.

PUNGENT POINT #65 – Where is your gaze, or attention fixed, and on what are you looking? Is it on "things which are seen," or "things which are not seen?" (2 Cor 4:18).

PUNGENT POINT #66 – When Jesus raised Lazarus, he had been dead for four days, repulsive with a noxious odor. He raised the son of the widow of Nain, dead for a while, but not as repugnant as Lazarus. He raised Jairus' daughter, who had just died, and retained some of her youthful attractiveness. Yet, all three had this in common: they were dead! It is also so with sinners.

PUNGENT POINT #67 – God declares that He PUTS things in the hearts of people, including the following: (1) to be able to teach—Ex 35:34. (2) wisdom—1 Kgs 10:24. (3) His Law—Jer 31:33; Heb 10:16. (4) His fear—Jer 32:40. (5) To fulfill His will by agreeing with inimical powers—Rev 17:17. Now, there's something to think about!— Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #68 – If we are "changed" by the Spirit of God as we look upon "the glory of the Lord," then those who are not changed have not been looking (2 Cor 3:18).

PUNGENT POINT #69 – If, in the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, we are actually "made partakers of Christ," then some of His traits will be found in us (Heb 3:14).

PUNGENT POINT #70 – If it is the will of God for us to give thanks "IN everything," as well as "FOR all things" (Eph 5:20), then how ought we to view unthankfulness?

PUNGENT POINT #71 – Paul asks this arresting question: "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not)" (Col 2:20-21). How do those who must be guided by rules answer that question?

PUNGENT POINT #72 – On the merit-scale, perfect obedience to all commandments ranks zero, even though it is necessary. Jesus said, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). What of you? Do you do only what it is your duty to do?

PUNGENT POINT #73 – If the people of God were to avail themselves of the ministry of The Comforter (John 14:16; Acts 9:31), the Unction (1 John 2:20,27), and the directing and nourishing Word of God (Lk 4:4; 1 Pet 2:2), the majority of religious professionals would be out of work overnight.

PUNGENT POINT #74 – There is no place for charlatans, religious marketeers, and carnal word-merchants in the Kingdom of God. Consequently God has made no place for them in the body of Christ, which is "the church." Jesus is the exclusive Head from whom all valid direction comes, and the Word is the appointed means of sustenance.

PUNGENT POINT #75 – If a person wants wisdom, help, and direction from above, he must first want it strong enough to seek it fervently, consistently, and without doubt. Until that occurs, it is all out of reach.

PUNGENT POINT #76 – Perpetual spiritual infancy is a sign of obstinacy and hardheartedness. Nothing, absolutely nothing, about salvation or the faith that appropriates it encourages the maintenance of such a state.

PUNGENT POINT #77 – There is a satisfaction-quotient in salvation that all realize who knowingly and thankfully possess it. Saints are satisfied "with the goodness" of God's house (Psa 65:4). Until that satisfaction is realized, men will be shut up to inconsistency and discontentment.

PUNGENT POINT #78 – Abundance is characteristic of salvation. Spiritual life itself is abundant (John 10:10). God is able to do abundantly more than we ask or think (Eph 3:20). Grace is abundant with faith and love (1 Tim 1:14). The Holy Spirit has been shed on believers "abundantly" (Tit 3:7-8). We have been begotten according to His abundant mercy (1 Pet 1:3). Oh, the blight, sparseness!

PUNGENT POINT #79 – Where the flock of God is not being fed, the mandate of the King is being ignored, spiritual advance is less likely to occur (if not impossible), and a gaping door has been opened for the wicked one. No religious program or activity can compensate for failing to "feed the flock of God."

PUNGENT POINT #80 – After painting a vivid picture of "Babylon the Great," that great spiritual whore that poses as the church (Rev 17:1-9; 18:1-3), the word was issued, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev 18:4). No believer can afford to ignore those words.

PUNGENT POINT #81 – If God has "made every nation of men," and "determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live, in order that they "would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him" (Acts 17:27, NIV), then what valid reason can be given for not doing so?

PUNGENT POINT #82 – One of the doctrinal conclusions of apostles' teaching is, "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will he hardeneth" (Rom 9:18). Is that really something to argue about, or is it something that should be believed?

PUNGENT POINT #83 – Jesus said, "And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him." (John 14:21, NKJV). And again, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him" (John 14:23). And yet again, "For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God" (John 16:27). Does that really sound like unconditional love?

PUNGENT POINT #84 – Man cannot change his own character. He "must be born again" for that to occur. This being true, the aphorism that says "Sow a habit, reap a character" is a lie. It is a saying easily be accepted by the heathen. It is even a Buddhist proverb. It has no place in the Christian manner of thought or expression – even though it is common in many purported Christian recovery systems.

PUNGENT POINT #85 – If the soul and the spirit are identical, then how is it that the Word of God divides them, and can distinguish between them (Heb 4:12)? No version of Scripture omits this perspective, which means it is so plain, even the linguists cannot deny it – even though some theologians do.

PUNGENT POINT #86 – What if an angel posted heaven's assessment of congregations on their buildings? Some postings could be, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev 2:4). "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Rev 3:1). "Thou art lukewarm" (Rev 3:16). "You have kept My word, and not denied My name" (Rev 3:8). There's something to think about.

PUNGENT POINT #87 – When Jesus comes, He will do so "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess 1:8). What, then, can be said in defense of not knowing God or not

obeying the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you are deficient in either area, determine immediately to correct that situation before it is too late.

PUNGENT POINT #88 – If Jesus says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27), then who is the person who dares to call himself a Christian who cannot detect the Shepherd's voice and refuses to follow Him? It is best to be classified with those who hear Christ's voice and follow Him before we all stand before His judgment seat.

PUNGENT POINT #89 – If the Lord "is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 1:24), then exactly how do men explaining falling, even doing it casually as though little more is involved than making a mistake? What would stop the Lord from doing what He is able to do? That is a question every serious person must address.

PUNGENT POINT #90 – If, in the end, it will be affirmed, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and HIS WIFE HATH MADE HERSELF READY" (Rev 19:7), how tolerant should we really be of a lack of readiness? Is there really such a thing as someone who is NOT ready being eternally with Jesus, where He is?

PUNGENT POINT #91 – If "We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:2-3, NASB), then what can really be said of those who are not purifying themselves, cleansing themselves of all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1)?

PUNGENT POINT #92 – If, in the end, you are cast into hell, will it really make any difference what seemingly good things you may have done, or how well you have conducted yourself in a religious institution? Pondering your eternal destiny is worthy of your extended consideration

PUNGENT POINT #93 – If men really do "live by every word of God" (Lk 4:4), then how can anyone remain alive unto God (Rom 6:11), who does not regularly ingest the Word of God?

PUNGENT POINT #94 – In the Divine economy, has God really given people a license to speak of things concerning which they know nothing? Are they free to philosophize about things that have been revealed? Is not one of the marks of a false prophet that he speaks evil of things he does not know, and affirms what he does not understand (1 Tim 1:7; Jude 1:10)?

PUNGENT POINT #95 – There is no inspired record of any commission to "start" or "plant churches," and no example of someone who set out to do this. Where the Gospel was preached, believed, and obeyed, however, believers came together and "churches," or holy assemblies were formed. These were also "confirmed," or "strengthened" and

"established" by men of God (Acts 15:41; 16:5).

PUNGENT POINT #96 – As the "body" of Christ, the members are considered assembled and ministering to one another. The Corinthian church was told, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor 12:27). They also "came together" (1 Cor 11:17-18,20,33; 14:23,26). The Thessalonians comforted themselves "together," and edified one another (1 Thess 5:11).

PUNGENT POINT #97 – If those in Christ are to "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God," and if they are to set their affection "on things above, and not on the earth" (Col 3:1-2), then can anyone successfully defend worldly preferences and a penchant for the things of this world?

PUNGENT POINT #98 – If there were actually people who followed Jesus for three days, listening to His Word, and finally having "nothing to eat" (Matt 15:32; Mk 8:2), exactly how do you explain a 10-15 minute sermon, or a brief once-in-a-week assembly? Is that really something with which Jesus is identified?

PUNGENT POINT #99 – If those in Christ are described as looking at "the things which are not seen" (2 Cor 4:18), and we are admonished to "seek those things which are above," setting our affection on them (Col 3:1-2), then it is evidence of a questionable state when anyone asks, "What things?"

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PUNGENT POINT #100 – There is such a thing as "another Jesus," "another Spirit," and "another gospel" (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6). To those who do not have ears to hear (Prov 20:12; Matt 13:9), it is impossible to make the distinction between these fraudulent representations and the real Jesus, Spirit, and gospel – and yet, the distinction must be made.

PUNGENT POINT #101 – We are admonished to, in our faith, add virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. "If these things be in you, and abound," it is clearly stated that it will not be possible to be barren, unfruitful, or to fall (2 Pet 1:5-10).

PUNGENT POINT #102 – In order to pass safely through this world, one must have the "one thing" mentality: like David – "one thing have I desired" (Psa 27:4); like Jesus admonished Martha to be – "one thing is needful" (Lk 10:42); and like Paul – "this one thing I do" (Phil 3:13-14). A divided heart and mind will keep a person on the broad road that leads to destruction.

PUNGENT POINT #103 – If it is true that Jesus has been exalted to "give repentance" (Acts 5:31), and if repentance is "granted" (Acts 11:18), and if God is said to "give them repentance" (2 Tim 2:25), then where there is genuine repentance, the Lord has worked.

PUNGENT POINT #104 – If the Spirit convicts men of sin because men do not believe on Christ (John 16:9), then the paramount sin from which all transgression flows is

unbelief. All unbelievers, we are told, "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev 21:8).

PUNGENT POINT #105 – There is such a thing as the soul being satiated with spiritual fatness, and God's people being satisfied with His goodness (Jer 31:14). The "SQ factor" (satisfaction quotient) determines the extent to which a person is willing to go to be at last with the Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #106 – There are some things that must be purchased from the Lord if men are to recover from the dreadful plight of lukewarmness. They include true gold that has been tried in the fire, white raiment that will clothe one adequately, and eye salve that enables one to see the truth (Rev 3:18). Something has to be forfeited to get these benefits.

PUNGENT POINT #107 – As indicated in the parable of the sower, if a truckload of seed had been dumped on the wayside, it would only have produced a flock of fat birds (Matt 13:4,19).

PUNGENT POINT #108 – Technically, in the end, everyone will get precisely what they wanted. Those who faithfully and consistently wanted to dwell with the Lord will do so, and be thoroughly satisfied. Those who did not want God will have an eternal no-God environment, but will be in torment. Right now, all people are culturing themselves for a specific eternal destiny.

PUNGENT POINT #109 – Israel's deliverance from Egypt commenced on the night of the Passover, and concluded when they entered into the land of Canaan. Even so, deliverance from sin, the world, and the devil commences when we are baptized into Christ, and concludes when we are at last where Jesus is in glory.

PUNGENT POINT #110 – There is such a thing as a form of godliness that rejects the power of godliness. Solemnly we told to "turn away" from those who have embraced such a thing. Oh, the blight of powerless religion!

PUNGENT POINT #111 – It is one thing for Job to seek to understand why such troublesome things had happened to him – a man who had no Scriptures, lived before the Law, and when few prophets existed. It is quite another for confusion to exist after the revelation of God's Son and salvation – a time in which men are reconciled to God, have access to God, and have been given the Spirit of God.

PUNGENT POINT #112 – No one can afford to wrong in what they think about God. The knowledge of God is imperative if men are to be saved. All who do not know the Lord will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power" (2 Thess 1:8-9). In view of this sobering reality, opinions concerning God must give way to a real knowledge of Him.

PUNGENT POINT #113 – If the salvation of God has "breadth, and length, and depth,

and height," then what can really be said for shallow views of matters pertaining to life and godliness?

PUNGENT POINT #114 – The resurrection of the dead and standing in the presence of the glorified Christ will not change anyone's character. If a person is to be born again, regenerated, or re-created in Christ Jesus, it must take place in this world, before one dies.

PUNGENT POINT #115 – Jesus said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15). That shines a blinding ray of light upon the health and wealth nonsense that is being preached in the name of Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #116 – It is written, "profane and idle babblings . . . will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer" (2 Tim 2:16-17, NKJV). That is to be compared with "the word of His grace which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

PUNGENT POINT #117 – Heaven does not take lightly what men think and say about Jesus – and neither should we. There is, after all, "another Jesus" (2 Cor 11:4), and "false Christs" (Matt 24:24). Make sure you are right about the Son of the living God!

PUNGENT POINT #118 – The value of a personal view, particularly as it relates to the things of God, is to be measured by the proximity, or closeness, of the one holding it to Jesus, who Himself is the Truth.

PUNGENT POINT #119 – It is not possible to walk in darkness and know where you are going (John 11:10; 12:35; 1 John 2:11). Just that surely, it is not possible to walk in the light and stumble (John 11:9).

PUNGENT POINT #120 – Although it has some arresting implications, it is not possible to walk in the Spirit and fulfill the lusts of the flesh. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal 5:16).

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PUNGENT POINT #121 – If "the flesh" profits nothing (John 6:63), has nothing good dwelling in it (Rom 7:18), and those "in the flesh" cannot please God (Rom 8:8), then God's people are obliged not to philosophize about "the flesh."

PUNGENT POINT #122 – If the person who believes that "Jesus is the Son of God" is "he who overcomes the world" (1 John 5:5), what can be said of the person who is overcome by the world?

PUNGENT POINT #123 – Jesus Christ has been given by God as "Head over all things to [for-NIV] the church" (Eph 1:22). That is, His Headship over all is for the benefit of His body, which is the church. He is over everyone that can advantage us, and everyone that is against us. He can marshal angelic hosts for us, and hold back the wicked hosts

who are against us.

PUNGENT POINT #124 – For those in Christ Jesus, there is more going on behind the scenes than they can possibly think. In summation, God is working all things together for their good. Appearance does not testify to everything, and is often misleading.

PUNGENT POINT #125 – Jesus asked an arresting question, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt 16:26). Like it or not, there are things in this world that you must forfeit your soul to obtain.

PUNGENT POINT #126 – Aggressively pursue holiness, for without it no man will see the Lord (Heb 12:14). The reason for this demand is stated by God: "for I am holy" (1 Pet 1:15-16). There is no acceptable reason for being unholy. Even our bodies are to be presented as "holy" unto the Lord (Rom 12:1). An unholy person or church is a reproach to Christ, and a testimony of enslavement to the devil.

PUNGENT POINT #127 – If it is true that we are "complete in Christ," then nothing that is truly essential can be obtained from anyone or anything else.

PUNGENT POINT #128 – Through Isaiah God asked the people, "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy?" (Isa 55:2). It is necessary to address those matters before you die or Jesus comes.

PUNGENT POINT #129 – Time is the great tester of one's faith and commitment to the Lord. If men do not stand the test of time, they will not have a pleasant eternity.

PUNGENT POINT #130 – For God's stewards, there is coming a time when they will be required to return what they have been given – and more must be returned than was given (Matt 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27).

PUNGENT POINT #131 – A person has to forget God in order to sin. There is a sanctifying impact the knowledge of God has upon the soul, and an alienating affect that is wrought by an ignorance or forgetting of God.

PUNGENT POINT #132 – God expects churches to be mature, having grown up into Christ in all things (Eph 4:15), having the same mind and the same judgment (1 Cor 1:10), and together becoming a "perfect man"(Eph 4:13). All of the resources required for this maturity are in Christ Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #133 – There are some people God prefers. They are referred to as His children (1 John 3:10), beloved (Col 3:12), His household (Eph 2:19), the apple of His eye (Zech 2:8), and His own peculiar people (1 Pet 2:9). Make it your aim to be in that number.

PUNGENT POINT #134 – Jesus came into the world undetected and incognito the first time (John 1:10). He will NOT do so the second time. He will come in all of His own glory, the glory of the Father, and the glory of the holy angels (Luke 9:26). It is not

possible for the display of such marvelous glory to be hidden.

PUNGENT POINT #135 – There is a coming time when the saints of God will no longer share their oil, and it will be too late for those who are not prepared to meet the Lord. That is the time that will require the saints to cease any sharing of what they have with the unprepared (Matt 25:8-9).

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PUNGENT POINT #136 – There are some churches, particularly lukewarm ones, that have shut Jesus out. Today He stands knocking on their door, asking if there is a single person in them that hears His voice. If such a person is there, the Savior bids them to open the door, and tells him he will sup together with Him (Rev 3:20).

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PUNGENT POINT #137 – If eternal life is knowing God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John 17:3), then one's theology, or "the knowledge of God," cannot be wrong.

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PUNGENT POINT #138 – Trials, or difficulties, are times when one's faith is being tested. Faith can stand the tests of such trials, for it is the victory that overcomes the world. However, where faith is not present, adversity is a time for falling.

PUNGENT POINT #139 – The more a person philosophizes about religious matters, the less God's Word is consulted, and the more human opinion is valued.

PUNGENT POINT #140 – One of the things from which the children of God are delivered is "aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers" (1 Pet 1:18, NKJV). Human traditions that are in the area of one's religion rank high in this matter. They involve an approach to life that does not enhance one's identity with God. No one is obligated to maintain such traditions.

PUNGENT POINT #141 – If foolish and unlearned questions are to be avoided (2 Tim 2:23), together with foolish questions, genealogies, and contentions and strivings about the Law (Tit 3:9), then such things have no place in religious discussion.

PUNGENT POINT #142 – If "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev 19:10), then prophecies that have nothing to do with Jesus are not to be treated as though they are worthy of being heard or discussed.

PUNGENT POINT #143 – Jesus affirmed that the Scriptures fundamentally testify of Him (John 5:39). They are not primarily a message about health, wealth, the family, diet for the body, or anything else that has an association only with this world.

PUNGENT POINT #144 – If it is true that elders, bishops, or those who have "the rule" over us, feed the flock of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2), speak the word of God (Heb 13:7), take care of God's household (1 Tim 3:5), build up the saints (Eph 4:11-12), and provide a sterling example of a faith that can be followed (Heb 13:7), then there are a lot of imposters in the professed church.

PUNGENT POINT #145 – An unholy church is a reproach to Jesus Christ, an enemy of God, a defiling blotch on the religious landscape, and a cohort of the devil. There is no place in heaven for such a monstrosity, and it is to be given no favorable status among those who live by faith. But, oh the glory that is brought to our Lord by one that is holy!

PUNGENT POINT #146 – A desire to be a friend of the world makes one "the enemy of God." James wrote to certain pretenders, "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4). Why desire friendship with the world, when being "the friend of God" is possible?

PUNGENT POINT #147 – If those who add virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity are told, "For if these things be in you, AND ABOUND, they MAKE you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "ye shall NEVER fall" (2 Pet 1:5-10), then we need no further explanation for barren and fallen "Christians."

PUNGENT POINT #148 – John wrote his first epistle that those in Christ "may know ye have eternal life" (1 John 5:13). That being true, let no person professing to be in Christ learn to live without such wonderful knowledge.

PUNGENT POINT #149 – The fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily, and this is according to God's good pleasure (Col 1:19; 2:9). This being true, any and every thing we require from God will come to us through Jesus Christ alone.

PUNGENT POINT #150 – What your heart says is important – particularly in response to God Himself. David said, "When thou saidst, Seek ye My face; MY HEART said unto Thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek" (Psa 27:8). What does your heart say?

PUNGENT POINT #151 – If every temptation comes with a "way of escape," that we may be able to bear it (1 Cor 10:13), then missing or ignoring that provision cannot be innocent.

PUNGENT POINT #152 – Whatever must be discarded when you leave the body in death, must not be held tightly while you remain in it. That includes sectarian identities, riches, the praises of men, and other fleshly preferences.

PUNGENT POINT #153 – Jesus has been "highly exalted, and given a name which is above every name" (Phil 2:9). It is never right for any personality to be honored more than Him, or preferred above Him.

PUNGENT POINT #154 – When Jesus affirmed, "without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5), it goes without saying that men should never attempt to do anything without Him – and that even includes eating and drinking (1 Cor 10:31).

PUNGENT POINT #155 – If you are not a willing servant of Christ now (Col 3:24), and

do not walk in fellowship with Him now (1 Cor 1:9), why would you want to spend eternity with Him?

PUNGENT POINT #156 – There is a satisfaction in Christ Jesus that cannot be equaled by any other experience.

PUNGENT POINT #157 – The salvation of God has height, depth, length, and breadth (Eph 3:18). There is nothing essential to pleasing God and being accepted by Him that is not fully and adequately addressed in it. It provides food for thought, satisfaction for the heart, and sustenance for the soul.

PUNGENT POINT #158 – If no outside influence can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:35-39), then it is wise, safe, and delightful to abide in His love (John 15:10).

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PUNGENT POINT #159 – God works ALL things together for good to them that love Him and are called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28). With that in mind, we can be found "giving thanks always for ALL things" (Eph 5:20), as well as giving thanks "in EVERYTHING" (1 Thess 5:18).

PUNGENT POINT #160 – Salvation is depicted as God having shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This knowledge is described as a "treasure" (2 Cor 4:6-7). Is that how you view it?

PUNGENT POINT #161 – Those in Christ are reminded that their bodies are "the members of Christ" (1 Cor 6:15), Fornication, therefore, is not only unlawful, it does not make sense.

PUNGENT POINT #162 – Just as surely as sin is ultimately traced back to Adam, so righteousness is traced back to Christ (Rom 5:19).

PUNGENT POINT #163 – Men cannot make Jesus their Lord. God has already made Him Lord (Acts 2:36). There is no man or angel over whom Jesus Christ is not presently the Lord. He is in truth, "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36). Some know it, and some do not. But that does not alter the fact.

PUNGENT POINT #164 – Satan can and does tempt (Matt 4:3; 1 Cor 7:5; 1 Thess 3:5), but he cannot make a person sin. In order to induce Eve to sin, he first had to bring her to want to do what God had forbidden. Resisting the devil (James 4:7) is refusing to do what he tempts you to do, and grace empowers you to do it (Tit 2:11-12).

PUNGENT POINT #165 – Faith is "obtained," and is "precious" (2 Pet 1:1), and those who possess it and are faithful, will keep it (1 Tim 6:12). The salvation of God is calculated to produce that result.

PUNGENT POINT #166 – Jesus Christ "once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust,

that He might BRING us to God" (1 Pet 3:18). As the Captain of their salvation, He is also "BRINGING many sons to glory" (Heb 2:10). There is no other person, or any humanly devised plan, that can accomplish these things.

PUNGENT POINT #167 – There is no resource required for salvation or sanctification, that is not found in Christ Jesus. He who has Jesus has everything that pertains to life and godliness. He who lacks Jesus lacks everything needful to please God.

PUNGENT POINT #168 – If Jesus has been exalted to give repentance (Acts 5:31), and He will not turn away anyone who comes to Him (John 6:37), then we may expect that those coming ones will be able to repent, even though it may appear impossible.

PUNGENT POINT #169 – The glorious confirmation of the presence of the Holy Spirit is when, from within, living waters pour out like a refreshing river (John 7:38-39)

PUNGENT POINT #170 – A prophet "speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort" (1 Cor 14:3, NIV). That is one of the reasons Paul said, "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but RATHER that ye may prophesy" (1 Cor 14:1).

PUNGENT POINT #171 – Faith distinguishes men before God (Heb 11:2,6,39). The works of those who gave "obtained" faith distinguish them among men (Matt 5:16).

PUNGENT POINT #172 – The power of God is not given to people who have not been begotten by Him, or to plans and methods that were not authored by Him.

PUNGENT POINT #173 – There is no such thing as a temptation that is not "common to man" (1 Cor 10:13). The provisions for dealing with temptation are also common and available to those who are in Christ Jesus. They include armor (Eph 6:10-18), weapons (2 Cor 10:4-5), grace (Tit 2:11-12), access to God (Eph 3:12; Heb 4:15-16) – and a way of escape (1 Cor 10:13).

PUNGENT POINT #174 – When immorality is found in the church, it is something that should induce mourning. That is NOT the kind of circumstance that calls for being puffed up or proud because of other supposed advancements (1 Cor 5:1-2).

PUNGENT POINT #175 – There is not a mere activity available to men that can successfully offset unbelief, failing to grow up into Christ in all things, or not seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness – not even a hearty praise service.

PUNGENT POINT #176 – There is such a sufficiency in Christ that when He is seen as He really is, all efforts to obtain spiritual resources from other origins will be forthrightly and gladly abandoned.

PUNGENT POINT #177 – No one will forsake all to follow Christ (Lk 14:33) until they

have seen how thoroughly adequate and sufficient He is. He must be seen as infinitely larger than the circumference of our personal lives and desires.

PUNGENT POINT #178 – Jesus is set to please God first, do His will, and speak His words. He is bringing you to God, interceding for you to God, and preparing you to stand with Him before God. It is only within that context that He will choose to advantage you.

PUNGENT POINT #179 – Until being clothed with immortality is a fundamental quest (Rom 2:7; 2 Cor 5:1-5; 2 Tim 1:10), sin is inevitable, and will rule the life of an individual.

PUNGENT POINT #180 – To be forever with the Lord, a person must break out of the lineage of Adam, and come into the lineage of Jesus (Rom 5:15-19). That is, he must be born again, created anew.

PUNGENT POINT #181 – If we are truly "changed" from glory to glory as we are beholding "the glory of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:18), then a fundamentally unchanged people have not been looking to Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #182 – The illumination (Heb 10:32) of the heart is described as God shining into our hearts to "give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6). This being true, one's knowledge of God is directly proportionate to their perception of Christ.

PUNGENT POINT #183 – I suppose one might postulate that someone Jesus vomited out of His mouth could at last be forever with the Lord (Rev 3:16). However, it does not appear wise to bank on that happening.

PUNGENT POINT #184 – If the Jewish tree has, in fact, been cut down and removed, then there is no hope for Christians, for they have been grafted into that very tree, and made partakers of its root and fatness (Rom 11:17,21).

PUNGENT POINT #185 – If, as the Preterists affirm, the world has already passed away, and the heavens and the earth "which are now" have already been burned up" (2 Pet 3:10-13), then why are so many people anchored to this world? Doesn't the "lust" associated with the world pass with it (1 John 2:17)?

PUNGENT POINT #186 – If we are made "partakers of the Divine nature" through God's "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet 1:4), then it is needful for the people of God to hear them proclaimed, and for them to spend time in cogitating upon them.

PUNGENT POINT #185 – As our inner man increases in strength, and we are looking at the things that cannot be seen, the most grievous afflictions will appear light and momentary (2 Cor 4:16-18).

PUNGENT POINT #186 – It is possible for our afflictions to actually be our employees, "working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor 17). That is, the impact of glory is of greater significance than the weight of affliction.

PUNGENT POINT #187 – In Christ, we have not been made for this world, but to inhabit a house from heaven, and be clothed with immortality (2 Cor 5:1-5). That is everyone living by faith is a stranger and a pilgrim in this world (Heb 13:14; 1 Pet 2:11).
-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #188 – If we escape "the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 2:20), then those who are overcome by the world have either abandoned such knowledge, or never had it in the first place.

PUNGENT POINT #189 – If men of this world do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, what would lead anyone believe that a Christian would do so? (Matt 5:15-16).

PUNGENT POINT #190 – Every person who lacks virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity is described as being "blind and cannot see afar off" (2 Pet 1:5-9). How far can you see?

PUNGENT POINT #191 – If "every man" who has hope in Christ – that when He shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory – purifies himself, even as Christ is pure, then impure people are lacking in this sanctifying hope.

PUNGENT POINT #192 – Isaiah spoke of the Lord going before the people, and behind them as a "rearward," "rearward," or "rear guard" (Isa 52:12; 58:8. NKJV). Another place the Lord said. He would go before them as "the Breaker" (Mic 2:13). With an arrangement like this, progress can be made.

PUNGENT POINT #193 – The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit "that we are the children of God" (Rom 8:16). That is a very effective witness, ministering strength and solace to those who are fighting the good fight of faith.

PUNGENT POINT #194 – Following a period of prolonged persecution, the Lord gave the early churches "rest," and they "walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, WERE MULTIPLIED" (Acts 9:31). Apparently, no work shops were required!

PUNGENT POINT #195 – Can God curse what He has created in a state of goodness? Yes, He can! There is the creation itself (Rom 8:20-21), mankind (Gen 3:16-17), and Israel (Mal 2:2) – not to mention the devil (Matt 25:42), and the angels that left their first estate (Jude 1:6). It is wrong to build a theology that violates revelation – seriously wrong!

PUNGENT POINT #196 – God can "command a blessing," causing it to supercede everything else. This is particularly promised where brethren are dwelling together in

unity (Pss 133:1-3). If there is contention among brethren, we ought not be surprised if there is no commanded blessing. Instead, there will be "confusion and every evil work" (James 3:16).

PUNGENT POINT #197 – Ezekiel once saw 25 men at the door of the temple, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east – and "they worshiped the sun toward the East" (Ezek 8:16). Such a posture is still found in the vicinity of the Lord's dwelling – people with their back toward the Lord's dwelling place, while they worship a strange God.

PUNGENT POINT #198 – A Jesus who does not deliver from the guilt and power of sin (Col 2:13; Heb 9:14), is not the true Jesus – it is "another Jesus" (2 Cor 11:4).

PUNGENT POINT #199 – Whoever believes on Jesus Christ will be neither ashamed nor confounded (Rom 9:33; Rom 10:11; 1 Pet 2:6). It is not possible for this word to be successfully contradicted.

PUNGENT POINT #200 – Morally speaking, a person can be absolutely pure, clean, and without spot. It all depends on how seriously they take this matter of confessing their sin to the God who is "faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

PUNGENT POINT #201 – When God reveals more, it is wrong to settle for less. When "a greater" has come, it is wrong to remain seated at the feet of the inferior teacher (Matt 11:11; 12:41,42).

PUNGENT POINT #202 – No one said of Jesus, "This is Baal, Ashteroth, Diana or Allah." Nor, indeed, did they liken Him to any of His contemporaries. Those who took Him seriously said He was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets – none of which remained in this world (Matt 16:13-14). No man ever spoke or worked like Jesus!

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PUNGENT POINT #203 – It is interesting that people confine themselves to saying "God is love" (1 John 4:8,16), rarely affirming that "God is righteous" (Ex 9:27; 2 Chron 12:6; Psa 129:4; 145:17; Lam 1:18; Dan 9:14). Actually, God's love is within the framework of His righteousness, which necessitated the death of Christ (Rom 1:17; 3:21,26; 2 Pet 1:1).

PUNGENT POINT #204 – These days we are hearing the gospel of health, the gospel of wealth, the gospel of the family, the gospel of worldly success, and the gospel of answered dreams – but they are all powerless. Only the Gospel of Christ is appropriately called "the power of God unto salvation – that is salvation from its initiation to its culmination" (Rom 1:16).

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PUNGENT POINT #205 – For those in Christ, forgiveness is promised to those who confess their sins – IF they sin (1 John 1:9; 2:1). This confession is preceded by repentance (Lk 24:47), and it is to be understood that repentance includes the

abandonment of the transgression committed. I do not know how the reality of repentance could otherwise be established.

PUNGENT POINT #206 – The secret to overcoming sin is to react properly to temptation. This is accomplished by obtaining helping grace. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4:15-16). Do that, and win will not erupt.

PUNGENT POINT #207 – If it is true that spiritual growth is realized by means of constant repentance and the confession of sins, then the slanderous report circulated about Paul would have to be true: "Let us do evil, that good may come" (Rom 3:8). In such a case, the more you sin, the more opportunity to repent. I trust no one will swallow such an absurd postulate.

PUNGENT POINT #208 – If the concept of hermeneutics – the science of interpretation – is valid, what need is there for the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:29,27), enlightenment, (Eph 1:18; Heb 6:4), illumination (Heb 10:32), the opening of the eyes of the understanding (Eph 1:18), and the Lord giving understanding (2 Tim 2:7)
?

PUNGENT POINT #209 – It is written that the Lord "opened" Lydia's heart so she could respond to word of truth that had been communicated to her (Acts 16:14). That kind of work is still integral to the obtaining of salvation.

PUNGENT POINT #210 – Young people who profess identity with Jesus are to be an example of the believers, and are to give no occasion for anyone to look down on their youth because of foolishness and immaturity (1 Tim 4:12). Unless they are unusually insightful and discerning of the things of God, they are not intended to be spiritual leaders – of anyone.

PUNGENT POINT #211 – When Paul was a boy, he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the most understanding and prodigious of all Jewish teachers (Acts 22:3). I wonder who would have charge of teaching a boy of his caliber in our time?

PUNGENT POINT #212 – If it is true that those who desire to be rich "fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim 6:9), what exactly is the source of statements like, "God wants you to be rich?"

PUNGENT POINT #213 – In some circles there is much discussion concerning the comparison of inductive and deductive preaching. It seems to me that we are living in a time that calls for productive preaching.

PUNGENT POINT #214 – The fact that Jesus is "the Captain" of our salvation (Heb 2:10) suggests there is a militant aspect to salvation. Indeed, in His death Jesus "destroyed" the devil (Heb 2:14), and plundered "principalities and powers" (Col 2:15).

There is also the fact of God, being "for us," defending us against those who are "against us." (Rom 8:31).

PUNGENT POINT #215 – The weapons of our warfare are "mighty through God," enabling us to throw down strongholds of thought (2 Cor 10:4-5). Together with the helmet of "salvation" (Eph 6:17), and the peace of God that keeps our "hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:7), there are adequate resources to keep our minds from being corrupted (2 Cor 11:3).

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PUNGENT POINT #216 – Jesus is presently the one Mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5), a "merciful and faithful High Priest" (Heb 2:17), He who is alive to make intercession for us (Heb 7:25), and He who is our teacher as the appointed Expositor of God (1 John 5:20). These are essential ministries. It is not possible to get so close to God that you do not need Jesus.

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #217 – Jesus has been appointed to effectively teach us to put off our former manner of life, "the old man which is corrupt," be renewed in the spirit of our mind, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph 4:20-24). The only way to come short of these objectives is to ignore the Teacher.

PUNGENT POINT #218 – Jesus said "every branch IN ME that beareth not fruit He [the Father] takes away" (John 15:2). He also affirmed, "If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:6). Only a fool thinks that is not true.

PUNGENT POINT #219 – The grace of God that brings salvation to us, effectively teaches "us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (Titus 2:12, NIV). If this is not being done by you, in some way, the grace of God has been frustrated (Gal 2:21).

PUNGENT POINT #220 – If we are not filled with care, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known unto God, the promise is that the peace of God will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phil 4:6-7). That is the truth of the matter.

PUNGENT POINT #221 – Jesus called the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Door, the Vine, a great High Priest, Mediator, the First, the Last, the Apostle, the Author and Finisher, the Bread of life, the Captain of our salvation, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God – to name a few. But He is never referred to as "the Answer." He was sent to fulfill God's will, not mere human desire.

PUNGENT POINT #222 – Having taken up His life again, Jesus returned to heaven. That is where the real work is being done. It is from there that He intercedes, mediates, rules, feeds, and cares for the church.

PUNGENT POINT #223 – After exhorting believers to “seek those things which are above,” and “set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth,” the irrefutable logic of such requirements is stated: “FOR ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col 3:1-3). That, dear reader, is the norm.

PUNGENT POINT #224 – No person can make Christ their Lord. God Almighty has already “made that same Jesus . . . both Lord and Christ,” (Acts 2:36) – and He “IS Lord of all” (Acts 10:36). If men do not fall upon this appointed Stone, thereby being “broken,” the Stone will fall on them and grind them to powder, from which no recovery can be made (Matt 21:44).

PUNGENT POINT #225 – Being fully submitted to Christ is not a goal for the believer. It is rather is an entrance requirement. One cannot be a disciple unless all has been forsaken, and all competing influences are not allowed to have the priority (Lk 14:26,27,33).

PUNGENT POINT #226 – Where He is not quenched or grieved, the Holy Spirit will work good things in those to whom He has been given – things God has ordained must be worked.

PUNGENT POINT #227 – If it is true that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord” (Heb 12:12), then let there be a moratorium on all explanations of and excuses for a lack of holiness. Let all professing Christians get to the business of perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1).

PUNGENT POINT #228 – If we are not looking for the appearing of the Lord Jesus, His coming will catch us unawares. Nothing good is promised to those who are found in such a state (Lk 12:48; Mk 13:35).

PUNGENT POINT #229 – The Scriptures affirm the he that commits sin transgresses the Law (1 John 3:4), is “of the devil” (1 John 3:8), and whoever does not do righteousness is not of God” (1 John 3:10). That being true, it is an wrong to attempt to explain sin in a believer. Such explanations are as unacceptable as those of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:12-13), Cain (Gen 4:9), and king Saul (1 Sam 15:15).

PUNGENT POINT #230 – It is not possible for a person who does not hunger and thirst for righteousness to be filled with it. A compelling desire to be righteous always precedes becoming righteous (Matt 5:6; Matt 6:33).

PUNGENT POINT #231 – If God positioned all men in both time and place in order that they might seek the Lord (Acts 17:26,27), and has shown the work of the Law written in their heart, activating their conscience (Rom 2:15), then there is no acceptable excuse for any man or woman not seeking the Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #232 – The Spirit has affirmed that if we walk in the light as Jesus is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son

cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). The absence of these things confirms the person is walking in darkness.

PUNGENT POINT #233 – “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15). That being true, those who “mind earthly things” (Phil 3:19), have betrayed their alienation from God.

PUNGENT POINT #234 – It is never wrong to edify the saints, and it is never right to sow seeds of discord among brethren.

PUNGENT POINT #235 – Ultimately, edification is not determined by who speaks, but by what is spoken. No member of the body of Christ is affirmed by Scripture to be unsuitable to edify the saints in assembly. In fact, it is quite the opposite (1 Cor 14:12; 14:26; Eph 4:16; 1 Thess 5:11).

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PUNGENT POINT #236 – Jesus Christ is “the blessed and only Potentate,” or “Sovereign” (NASB) – 1 Tim 6:15. This being true, He is in competition with no one. Every personality in heaven, in the earth, and under the earth, is subject to Him (Phil 2:10) – whether they know it or not. Angelic powers know this (Heb 1:6; 1 Pet 3:22), and the hosts of darkness as well (Lk 4:34). Only those on earth have question about this.

PUNGENT POINT #237 – . Hope is faith in its forward posture. If those in Christ are “saved by hope” (Rom 8:24), then those who have “no hope” are lost (Eph 2:12).

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PUNGENT POINT #238 – When men make more of human duty than of the Person of Jesus, they betray their ignorance of the Mighty Savior, who is the Captain of our salvation (Heb 2:10), and is bringing the sons of God to glory (Heb 2:10).

PUNGENT POINT #239 – No person who submits to God through the Lord Jesus Christ (James 4:7), lives by faith (Heb 10:38), and walks in the Spirit (Gal 5:16,25), will be found deficient in doing or being willing. This is because “it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Phil 2:13).

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PUNGENT POINT #240 – To be “alive unto God” is to experience holy reciprocity – the ability to respond to, and survive in, the presence of the Lord. There is a response to the heavenly environs; like a fish lives in water, birds navigate in the heavens, and men survive and thrive in the earth’s atmosphere. The acid test of whether a person is alive unto God is whether or not they thrive in His presence.

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PUNGENT POINT #241 – The Word of God never contradicts the purpose of God, and the purpose of God is never in conflict with His Person.

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PUNGENT POINT #242 – When it comes to the body of Christ, there are no secondclass members. Every member has a place and that place is said to be expressed in the assembly of the saints (1 Cor 12:2,18; 14:26).

PUNGENT POINT #243 – God Himself has “set the members every one of them in the

body, as it hath pleased him" (1 Cor 12:18). It is the business of every member of Christ's body to recognize these placements, and to submit to them (1 Pet 5:5).

PUNGENT POINT #244 – If Jesus is “the Author and Finisher of our faith” (Heb 12:2), then faith can neither be initiated nor brought to its intended culmination without Him.

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PUNGENT POINT #245 – Jesus being “the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the last” (Rev 1:11), and “the Beginning and the End” (Rev 21:6), any activity in which He cannot be found will not be sanctioned by God, and thus cannot be offered to Him.

PUNGENT POINT #246 – One of the biggest hindrances to the spiritual growth and advance of the people of God is the misplaced emphases on institutionalism and recruitment.

PUNGENT POINT #247 – There is no Divinely sanctioned activity for the church of the Living God that does not require the ongoing presence and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ – both of which have been revealed.

PUNGENT POINT #248 – In Christ Jesus you have access to God with confidence (Eph 3:12). There is a sense in which you can come as often as you want, stay as long as you want, and get as much as you want. Many people do not stay long enough to get much, Be among those who linger long, and come away more satisfied.

PUNGENT POINT #249 – Time is a great tester of one's faith. It is of such duration that some only “believe for a while” (Lk 8:13). Some stand the test of time and are more conformed to the image of God's Son. How about you?

PUNGENT POINT #250 – The race from earth to glory is not to be run out of a sense of mere obligation, but to obtain the prize (1 Cor 9:24; Heb 12:1-2).

PUNGENT POINT #251 – Those in Christ live their lives upon earth in comportment with their primary citizenship, which is held in heaven (Phil 3:20-21).

PUNGENT POINT #252 – If it is true that “they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal 5:24), then precisely what identity do those professing Christians have who are living after the flesh (Rom 8:13)?

PUNGENT POINT #253 – Men are not to philosophize about the truth, or seek to confirm its validity, but are rather to believe and know the truth (1 Tim 4:3) and obey the truth (Ga; 3:2; 5:7).

PUNGENT POINT #254 – If the world loves us, it is a sign we are of the world. Jesus said, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” (John 15:19).

PUNGENT POINT #255 – The power of God unto salvation is not found in personal testimony. It is not to be discovered in apologetics. God has not placed such power in

earthly friendships. The power that effects salvation is not in human reasoning. It is not in the exposure of false religion. It is rather exclusively associated with “the Gospel of Christ” (Rom 1:16).

PUNGENT POINT #256 – In salvation God does not merely correct human flaws by enforcing a system of laws and commandments. Among other things, salvation consists of the thorough deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, and the imputation of a righteousness that is just as real as the sin Jesus was made to be (2 Cor 5:21). Furthermore, God is righteous in the doing of these things (Rom 3:26).

PUNGENT POINT #257 – It is not possible to neglect God’s great salvation, and yet participate in the realization of its intended end – to be forever with the Lord (Heb 2:3; 1 Thess 4:17).

PUNGENT POINT #258 – There is no such thing as a salvation from God that leaves a person unchanged, or essentially the same as he was before.

PUNGENT POINT #259 – Professing Christians who remain in a state of spiritual ignorance contradict the prophecies concerning the New Covenant – i.e. “I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people . . . all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest.” (Heb 8:10-11)

PUNGENT POINT #260 – Scripture provides a brief but precise description of those who are in Christ Jesus. “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil 3:3). That is “doing” at its highest level.

PUNGENT POINT #261 – If, based upon the comparatively sparse revelation given to him, Abraham “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb 11:10), how may those who have been baptized into Christ be described?

PUNGENT POINT #262 – What is the answer to the question, “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein” (Rom 6:2)? Or, is that a question that is meant to be answered? Is it not rather a statement of the total unreasonableness of continuing to sin?

PUNGENT POINT #263 – The adequacy of Jesus is for all the members of His household (Eph 1:3; Col 2:3; 3:10).

PUNGENT POINT #264 – Before one engages in spiritual warfare, it is good to make sure God Himself is committed to such an engagement, and the weaponry He has supplied, is intended to be used for such a conflict.

PUNGENT POINT #264 – The Scriptures preeminently relate to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus affirmed they testified of Him (John 5:39). An angel told John that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10). Acceptance by God hinges on

believing “the record that God gave of His Son” (1 John 5:10). At some point men must become occupied with Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #265 – A human view of Scripture is not synonymous with the Scripture itself. No person can build a false doctrine or a sect with Scripture. They must use a man’s view of Scripture to do such things.

PUNGENT POINT #266 – What a person chooses to argue about reveals a lot about who and what he is.

PUNGENT POINT #267 – In matters pertaining to religion, what people affirm, or declare, is critical. That is, their fundamental or core message is a key consideration – and it must be perfectly in synch with the primary message of God. Everything they explain in their teaching will relate to their core message.

PUNGENT POINT #268 – Jesus is primarily a Savior from the guilt and power of sin. Until a person’s objective is to be delivered from the dominance of sin and be accepted by God in a pure and unsullied state, there really will be no reason to flee to Jesus for refuge, or to make Him their primary consideration.

PUNGENT POINT #269 – Jesus first relates to God, then to men. He is God’s Son (1 John 5:5), God’s Christ (Lk 2:26), and God’s Servant (Isa 42:1). Until He is seen in the primary capacity of doing the will of God, salvation will not be seen properly.

PUNGENT POINT #270 – There are times when the saints must say, “The will of the Lord be done,” even though it may appear to contradict what they momentarily think is best (Acts 21:11-14).

PUNGENT POINT #271 – Considering what we will experience AFTER we die, AFTER the resurrection of the dead, and AFTER the day of judgment, will assist us in thinking more soberly.

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PUNGENT POINT #272 – Our perspective of what God is actually accomplishing through Christ Jesus will have a great deal to do with our theology (how we think about God) and our religion (what we do about it).

PUNGENT POINT #273 – An “eternal purpose” (Eph 3:11) cannot major on things that are seen, or things that are done in this world. The “world to come” is pivotal in such a purpose (Matt 12:32; Luke 10:29-30; Heb 2:5; 6:5).

PUNGENT POINT #274 – To be “ever with the Lord” there (1 Thess 4:17), requires a constant “fellowship” with Him here (1 Cor 1:9).

PUNGENT POINT #275 – If, in the end, the Lord says to a person, “Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,” is there a person of

sound mind who thinks it makes any difference what that person accomplished on earth? Such a person has lived in vain, and their life has been pointless. (Matt 25:41)

PUNGENT POINT #276 – To think demeaning or condescending thoughts of God or Christ is dangerous beyond imagination.

PUNGENT POINT #277 – No person is free to be wrong about God or His Son. If eternal life is knowing God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John 17:L3), this ought to be self-evident.

PUNGENT POINT #278 – If a person does not want God's approval enough to change their conduct and manner of thinking, they do not want it strong enough.

PUNGENT POINT #278 – If it is true that "whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5:1, NKJV), then believing that Jesus is the Christ is not a simplistic or merely intellectual matter.

PUNGENT POINT #279 – If it is true that the person who overcomes the world is "he who believes Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (1 John 5:5), then the person who is overcome by the world cannot, at the time he is overcome, be properly called a "believer."

PUNGENT POINT #280 – The shield of faith really does quench "all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Eph 6:16). It simply is not possible that this is an overstatement, or that there is some temptation faith cannot neutralize.

PUNGENT POINT #281 – When the heart is "purified by faith" (Acts 15:9), it is no longer "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer 17:9). Now the Holy Spirit is sent into it (Gal 4:6), the love of God is shed abroad in it (Rom 5:5), Christ dwells there (Eph 3:17), and it is kept by the peace of God (Phil 4:7). How about your heart?

PUNGENT POINT #282 – If a person WANTS to be a friend of this world, God's word declares he is, by reason of that desire, THE enemy of God (James 4:4). That consideration is dreadful enough to be concerned when any affinity is formed with the world.

PUNGENT POINT #283 – There is nothing that God requires of a person that is not supplied in Christ Jesus (Eph 1:3; Col 2:3; 2 Pet 1:3).

PUNGENT POINT #284 – "All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" are hidden in Christ (Col 2:3). It is a serious error in judgment to seek them elsewhere.

PUNGENT POINT #285 – An appropriate description of those who are in Christ Jesus is, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col 3:3). Blessed is the person who has some understanding of what is entailed in such a marvelous circumstance.

PUNGENT POINT #286 – A person who does not run the race set before them while looking unto Jesus will eventually drop out of it (Heb 12:1-2).

PUNGENT POINT #287 – In Christ "full assurance" is realized in three dimensions. (1) "The full assurance of faith" (Heb 10:22). (2) "The full assurance of understanding" (Col 2:2). (3) "The full assurance of hope" (Heb 6:11).

PUNGENT POINT #288 – Abraham was “fully persuaded that, what [God] had promised, He was able also to perform” (Rom 4:21). How is your persuasion factor?

PUNGENT POINT #289 – Before there was the Law, a Bible, a known prophet, or a record or word about anyone being raised from the dead, Abraham believed, and acted upon the fact, that God could raise Isaac from the dead (Heb 11:17-19). What should be said of our generation?

PUNGENT POINT #290 – No one is able to fully disclose the precarious position a person is in who has experienced many blessings from God, yet has yielded no fruit to Him (Heb 6:7-8).

PUNGENT POINT #291 – Believing that “God is” (Heb 11:6) involves more than intellectually acknowledging His existence. It includes being persuaded that God is everything He said He is, and does everything He declares Himself to have done, and is presently doing.

PUNGENT POINT #291 – If we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren (1 John 3:14), then those who do not love Christ’s brethren (Heb 2:11) have no evidence that they are dead to sin and alive to God (Rom 6:11); or that they have been delivered from darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son (Col 1:13).

PUNGENT POINT #292 – If others know that we are Christ’s disciples because we have love one to another (John 13:35), then what will they know about us if we do not have love one for another?

PUNGENT POINT #293 – If you had a goldmine in your basement, where would you be when the disciples of the Lord came together into one place? (1 Cor 11:29; 14:23)

PUNGENT POINT #294 – Those whose company you prefer testify to the kind of person you are.

PUNGENT POINT #295 – Spiritual food has to be ingested and digested to nourish the soul and enlighten the eyes. If it just enters your ears, it will not help you. That is like sticking a carrot in your ear and expecting to absorb its nutrients by doing so.

PUNGENT POINT #296 – If a person is not willing to go out of his way, and even be inconvenienced to obtain the Word of God, he is not likely to get much of it.

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PUNGENT POINT #297 – The church has no adversaries that are not subject to Jesus in a very real sense. A word from the exalted Christ, or even the pointing of His finger, and their harassment will cease.

PUNGENT POINT #298 – It is possible to be perfectly united, and yet be totally wrong. The would-be builders of the tower of Babel can testify to that (Gen 11:6).

PUNGENT POINT #299 – There is no known limit to what a believing person can receive from God.

PUNGENT POINT #300 – Having access to God is wonderful (Eph 2:18) – having access to Him “with confidence” is even more wonderful (Eph 3:12).

PUNGENT POINT #301 – It is possible to speak truth, yet be wrong in saying it. An example is the woman with the spirit of divination Paul confronted in Philippi. She said, “These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation” (Acts 16:17). She said what was correct, yet vexed Paul, and he commanded the evil spirit to come out of her. She spoke no more.

PUNGENT POINT #302 – If Jesus is able to keep us from falling, then it makes perfect sense that God has called into fellowship with Him (Jude 1:24; 1 Cor 1:9). It also is clear that whatever puts us at a distance from Him is lethal, and must be avoided at all cost.

PUNGENT POINT #303 – If Jesus “died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again (2 Cor 5:15), then self-centeredness must not be found in us.

PUNGENT POINT #304 – If it is really the Lord who “adds to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47), then it is important that reports concerning those who have been saved be in synch with the Lord’s addition.

PUNGENT POINT #305 – If the gate is narrow, and the way difficult that leads to life (Matt 7:14), precisely what do men mean by “seeker friendly?”

PUNGENT POINT #306 – If the Gospel; is “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom 1:16), then what is the rationale of attracting people by various forms of entertainment?

PUNGENT POINT #307 – If Jesus is the “One Mediator between God and man,” then there are no essential spiritual resources that are available anywhere else.

PUNGENT POINT #308 – If Abraham’s faith is an example of the kind of faith God honors (Rom 4:3,12,16 ; Gal 3:7-9), then that kind of faith should be prominent in the professing church – else how can believers be called “the children of Abraham”?

PUNGENT POINT #309 – Those who do not receive the love of the truth cannot be saved, and it is inevitable that God will send them strong delusion (2 Thess 2:10-12). Their only hope is to be removed from that category by receiving the love of the truth.

PUNGENT POINT #309 – The faith of the church in Rome was “spoken of throughout the world” (Rom 1:8). Paul had heard of the Colossian’s “faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love” they had “to all the saints” (Col 1:4). Consider what kind of report has been given of the church with which you are identified.

PUNGENT POINT #310 – If there are really “things that accompany salvation” (Heb 6:9), then we should rejoice when they are found, and lament when they are not.

PUNGENT POINT #311 – If there are characteristics that can be added in our faith – things that guarantee we shall never fall (2 Pet 1:5-10) – then how right is it to speculate about whether or not men can fall from grace? Let men get to the business of adding those required traits? – virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity.

PUNGENT POINT #312 – If the Lord Jesus came to make people rich, then the rich young ruler would surely have had the edge over the poorer Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

PUNGENT POINT #313 – Considering the ultimate outcome of things, it is actually better to suffer for doing what is right, than to do so “for evil doing” (1 Pet 3:17).

PUNGENT POINT #314 – Those who do not know why they have been called by God, what is the reason for hope, and what is the exceeding greatness of the Divine power directed toward them are at a decided disadvantage (Eph 1:15-19).

PUNGENT POINT #315 – If Jesus died for us in order that we might live for Him who died for us and rose again, then all who are not actually living for Him are out of the will of God (2 Cor 5:15).

PUNGENT POINT #316 – Even if men do not “make” Jesus their “Lord,” as men put it, He is still their Lord. Their times are in His hand, He can cause them to live or die at will, and will determine their eternal destiny – whether men want it that way or not (Acts 2:36).

PUNGENT POINT #317 – Jesus is the "Good Shepherd." If you follow Him, He will bring you safely to glory (John 10:11,14; Heb 2:10).

PUNGENT POINT #318 – Salvation is calculated to enable you to be in this world as Jesus was while here, and therefore have boldness in the day of judgment (1 John 4:17).

PUNGENT POINT #319 – “The whole armor of God” is thoroughly effective in confronting temptation and the “evil day”– when Satan’s assaults are more vigorous. However, if it is not “put on,” it will bring no advantage for the individual. (Eph 6:10-18)

PUNGENT POINT #319 – “The whole armor of God” is thoroughly effective in confronting temptation and the “evil day”– when Satan’s assaults are more vigorous. However, if it is not “put on,” it will bring no advantage for the individual. (Eph 6:10-18)

PUNGENT POINT #320 – If you want to be a friend of the world, that very desire makes you the enemy of God. That is a sure “no-win” situation. (James 4:4)

PUNGENT POINT #321 – The time of temptation is, by that very circumstance, a “time

of need.” It is at that time – when you are being tempted – that you can obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need. That grace is not for recovery from sin, but for abstaining from sinful desires. (Heb 4:15-16; 1 Pet 2:11)

PUNGENT POINT #322 – It is not possible for a person or power outside of you to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. You can, however, leave your “first love,” which you must resolve not to do (Rom 8:39; Rev 2:4).

PUNGENT POINT #323 – Anything, outside of matters pertaining to life and godliness, that calls for the involvement of your mind is potentially dangerous.

PUNGENT POINT #324 – God will use you to bring His blessing to others – but only if you are in the position to be used.

PUNGENT POINT #325 – Contentment, which frees one from enslavement to covetousness, is based upon a Divine commitment: “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” The persuasion of this enables the individual to boldly say, “The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” (Heb 13:5-6).

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PUNGENT POINT #326 – Either a person “shows” his faith by his “works,” or his works constitute a denial of God (James 2:18; Tit 1:16).

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PUNGENT POINT #327 – Those who live by faith know that God will recompense sin, and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. This proves to be a powerful incentive to live in a godly manner (Heb 10:30).

PUNGENT POINT #328 – In delineating some of the prophesied attributes of the Savior, it is written that He said, “I will put My trust in Him” (Heb 2:11-13). Those in whose hearts Christ is dwelling by faith (Eph 3:17) echo those same words.

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PUNGENT POINT #329 – When the laws of God are written on the heart and mind (Heb 8:10; 10:16), they do not condemn. If they are only written on stone, they do condemn (2 Cor 3:7-9).

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PUNGENT POINT #330 – A person who does not WANT to live godly, cannot possibly BE godly (2 Tim 3:12).

PUNGENT POINT #331 – The New Covenant is called “the ministration of the Spirit,” or “the ministry of the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:8, NIV). As such it is associated with life (2 Cor 3:6), distinguishing it from the Old Covenant, which was “the ministration of death” (2 Cor 3:7).

PUNGENT POINT #332 – Only God can raise a person from death in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1).

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PUNGENT POINT #333 – The hallmark of the New Covenant is that in Christ the individual is changed – changed from darkness to light (Eph 5:8), from being enemies of God to being reconciled to Him (Rom 5:10), and being turned from the power of Satan

unto God (Acts 26:18).

PUNGENT POINT #334 – If, in Christ Jesus, our sins have been separated from as far as the east is from the west (Psa 103:12), they can never be united to us again, for east and west cannot be joined together. You can have northeast, southwest, and northwest and southeast, but who ever heard or eastwest?

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #335 – Putting on Christ (Gal 3:27), putting on the whole armor of God (Rom 13:12; Eph 6:10-18), putting on the new man (Eph 4:23; Col 3:10), and putting on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering (Col 3:12), are not options. They are essentials, and are to be so regarded.

PUNGENT POINT #336 – When God Almighty says, “Be ye holy,” that is precisely what He means. An unholy people, regardless of their profession, cannot be called the people of God (1 Pet 1:15,16).

PUNGENT POINT #337 – It is by Jesus that we “believe in God” – the God who raised Jesus up from the dead, and gave Him glory: that our faith and hope might be in God” (1 Pet 1:21). To live without faith and hope being in God contradicts the purpose of God, making life pointless and vain.

PUNGENT POINT #338 – No temptation is unique to any individual. All temptations are common, and come with a Divinely supplied way of escape. Those are the facts in the case. (1 Cor 10:13)

PUNGENT POINT #339 – There are some churches that only have a small percentage of people whose lives are not “defiled” before God. Only they are promised they will walk with the Lord in white. (Rev 3:4)

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PUNGENT POINT #340 – "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and He that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). The person who ingests Jesus will realize lasting satisfaction. In that condition, he will never seek satisfaction elsewhere.

PUNGENT POINT #341 – The person to whom Jesus says, “Neither do I condemn thee, is the person who can receive His word, “Go and sin no more.” (John 8:11)

PUNGENT POINT #342 – There is such a thing as “a good conscience” – one that has been “purged from dead works” by the grace of God (Heb 9:14). In fact, this is the objective of “the commandment” (1 Tim 1:5).

PUNGENT POINT #343 – The person who has Jesus’ commandments, and retains them is the person who loves Jesus. The Lord promised that such people would be loved by God, and by Himself as well. He will also make Himself known to such precious souls. (John 14:21)

PUNGENT POINT #345 – Jesus is precious to those who believe – precious because of the results of such faith, and the unspeakable benefits and blessings that flow from such believing (1 Pet 2:7).

PUNGENT POINT #346 – How glorious is the spiritual weaponry that has been supplied to those in Christ Jesus. There is no imagination, high thought that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, or aberrant thought that cannot be thrown down by them (2 Cor 10:4-5).

PUNGENT POINT #347 – God is not looking for a reason to condemn anyone. If He was, we would all be condemned. (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9)

PUNGENT POINT #348 – It is ever true that no labor in the Lord is in vain (1 Cor 15:58). In due season we will reap, if we faint not (Gal 6:9).

PUNGENT POINT #349 – The weakest saint, if they will continue to look to Jesus, will be made to stand, and will not long remain in a weakened state (Rom 14:4).

PUNGENT POINT #350 – Salvation involves a continual change, conforming the individual to the image of Christ. This change is wrought by the Holy Spirit of God, and if He is not quenched, the work will surely be done (2 Cor 3:18; 1 Thess 5:19).

PUNGENT POINT #351 – In Christ we are “created unto good works,” or “to do good works” (Eph 2:10, NIV). There is no valid excuse for such works not being found in those who are in Christ Jesus. They are the evidence of genuine conversion.

PUNGENT POINT #352 – It is affirmed to the saints, "For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor 3:21-23).

PUNGENT POINT #353 – The unwavering promise of God to those who are in Christ Jesus is, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor 6:17-18)

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #354 – Faith will persuade you that no outside influence, however powerful it may appear, is able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. (Rom 8:38-39)

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #355 – Hope is the firm and stable anchor of the soul. Those who maintain the rejoicing of that hope will not drift away from God. (Heb 3:6; 6:19)

PUNGENT POINT #356 – In view of the revealed statement, “If God be for us, who can be against us” (Rom 8:31), it seems to me that it is imperative that a person know whether God is for him or not.

PUNGENT POINT #357 – The following words are certainly conducive to profound and extended consideration: “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.” (Rom 11:36) Other versions read “from Him” for “of Him” (NASB/NIV/NRSV, etc).

PUNGENT POINT #358 – It is written, “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us” (1 John 5:14). In view of that, knowing what God wants brings a certain advantage to the one who knowingly prays in concert with that will. The fact that confidence is possible confirms that knowing what God wants is also possible.

PUNGENT POINT #359 – O, the blessing of being persuaded that “one thing is needful” (Lk 10:42), that it is possible to correctly desire one thing preeminently (Psa 27:4), and primarily to get “one thing” done (Phil 3:13-14).

PUNGENT POINT #360 – If it is true the Savior is One who can “keep you from falling” (Jude 1:23), and “make” a believer “stand” (Rom 14:4), then there is no valid excuse for falling or failing to “stand fast.”

PUNGENT POINT #361 – When godliness and contentment are joined together, true and great gain is realized. (1 Tim 6:6).

PUNGENT POINT #362 – The righteousness of God is even more significant than the love of God. That is why God could not justify men unless it was righteous to do so. That is precisely why the Gospel announces “HIS righteousness for the remission of sins,” declaring that He is both the “JUST and the Justifier of Him that believes in Jesus” (Rom 3:25-26).

PUNGENT POINT #363 – If God has “wrought,” Prepared,” or “made” us in order to be clothed with a resurrection body described as “an house not made with hands, eternal; in the heavens,” then we best be preparing to occupy that house. (2 Cor 5:1-5)

PUNGENT POINT #358 – If it is true that, in the end, when the time comes for the church to be married to Christ, she will have “made herself ready,” then those who are not engaged in preparations for that time are not, in that condition, part of the church. (Rev 19:7)

PUNGENT POINT #359 – If “they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts,” then those who are not engaged in that crucifixion cannot have any confidence that they belong to Christ, or that He will, in fact, bring them to glory (Gal 5:24; Heb 2:10).

PUNGENT POINT #360 – Jesus is making intercession for those who are coming to God through Him – He is ensuring that such souls are saved “to the uttermost.” Make sure you are such a person, and Jesus will underwrite your efforts.

PUNGENT POINT #361 – If Jesus is dwelling in your heart by faith (Eph 3:17), and if you have been “joined unto the Lord” (1 Cor 6:17), and if you are abiding in Him (1 John 2:27-28), then Jesus is your Advocate with the Father, and is the covering sacrifice for your sins (1 John 2:1-2).

PUNGENT POINT #362 – There is a way to walk, or live, that results in the forgiveness of sins and having fellowship with one another. "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." (1 John 1:7)

PUNGENT POINT #363 – It is possible to live in such a manner as to guarantee you will “have boldness in the day of judgment.” (1 John 4:17)

PUNGENT POINT #364 – Pain is bad, and pleasure is good. But pain is not the worse thing, and pleasure is not the best thing.

, learned from my mother

PUNGENT POINT #365 – In Scripture no church was ever commended for having a lot of members, and no church was rebuked for being numerically small. In fact, we have no idea of the size of any congregation in Scripture, saving for the one at Jerusalem, and possibly in Antioch of Syria.

PUNGENT POINT #366 – There is no Scriptural record of any church ever being told “the great commission,” being admonished to “win others,” or influence their community. Yet they did! Perhaps they really had something that is missing today.

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #367 – We have a clear record of spiritual gifts being given to the church (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12: 1-7; Eph 4:7-11; 1 Pet 4:10-11), yet there is no clear statement that says they have now all been removed. This, like all gifts, is something managed by God Himself.

PUNGENT POINT #368 – It is wrong for a person who sows sparingly to expect to reap bountifully (2 Cor 9:6).

PUNGENT POINT #369 – There is a religious heritage that makes very little of faith, placing the greater stress upon works. This view underestimates the power of faith, as well as the nature of the works that God requires (Heb 11:6; Eph 2:10).

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PUNGENT POINT #370 – Unless we are speaking of those who die in infancy, it is not possible to go to heaven without wanting to go there (Phil 1:23).

SPECIAL PUNGENT POINT

We rejoice in the “everlasting consolation and good hope” that burns brightly, even in the midst of dark clouds and sorrow: “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and SORROW AND SIGHING SHALL FLEE AWAY.” (Isa 35:10).

PUNGENT POINT #371 – Suffering for righteousness' sake presumes a personal preference for righteousness. (Matt 5:10; 1 Pet 3:14).

PUNGENT POINT #372 – There are those who only “believe for a while,” who, in the time of trouble and temptation, fall away. Each person is charged with the responsibility of not being found in that category. (Luke 8:13)

PUNGENT POINT #373 – Both times and seasons belong to God, and are in His power. No man can produce or manage either of them. (Acts 1:7)

PUNGENT POINT #374 – There is such a thing as an “evil day” – a time when a special initiative is launched against us by our adversary the devil. We have been given a panoply of armor to enable us to stand in such a day. (Eph 6:13)

PUNGENT POINT #375 – If you choose to reason with the devil, you will lose every time, just as surely as Eve did (2 Cor 11:3). Thoughts that are hurled at you by him are to be thrown down (2 Cor 10:3-4).

PUNGENT POINT #376 – It is possible to have a thought that did not originate with you, and that did not flow from your desire. These are called “fiery darts,” or “flaming arrows” that are hurled at us by the devil. We have been given a “shield” that can quell such thoughts (Eph 6:16).

PUNGENT POINT #377 – Everything about man has been corrupted because of sin: the intellect, emotion, will, and body. In the entire natural, or human, makeup of man, nothing truly “good” can be found (Rom 7:18). That is precisely what necessitates the new birth (John 3:7).

PUNGENT POINT #378 – Sin cannot be educated out of a person. It must be forgiven by God, and the conscience purged, or cleansed.

PUNGENT POINT #379 – An appetite for sin is the manifestation of a corrupt heart, while a hunger and thirst for righteousness reveals a blessed state.

PUNGENT POINT #380 – Men who profess to be “Christians” who have learned to live comfortably with division, have also learned to live without Jesus, for He is not divided (1 Cor 1:10-13).

PUNGENT POINT #381 – As confirmed in Moses, it is possible to “see Him who is invisible” – but not with natural eyes (Heb 11:27).

PUNGENT POINT #382 – Whatever is highly valued – the preeminent desires, preferences, and priorities of a person – dominates the heart: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt 6:21). -- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #383 – The world cannot take from you what it did not give to you – unless you consent to being worldly. (John 16:22).

PUNGENT POINT #384 – When a person actually chooses the one thing that is truly “needful,” Jesus will see to it that it will not be taken from him. (Lk 10:42)

PUNGENT POINT #385 – Instead of arguing with our brethren, we ought to lay down our lives for them (1 John 3:16).

PUNGENT POINT #386 – A person must determine if the message he has chosen to emphasize is the word that God wants delivered to the people.

PUNGENT POINT #387 – When the promises of God are perceived as “exceeding great and precious,” they are within our reach (2 Pet 1:4).

PUNGENT POINT #388 – It is wrong to be “carnally minded” (Rom 8:6), “mind earthly things” (Phil 3:19), or set your affection “on things on the earth” (Col 3:2). However, it is never wrong to seek “the things that are above” (Col 3:1), desire a “heavenly” country (Heb 11:6), or be “spiritually minded” (Rom 8:6).

PUNGENT POINT #389 – The revealed means by which we become “partakers of the Divine nature” are the “exceeding great and precious promises,” not commandments (2 Pet 1:4).

PUNGENT POINT #390 – There is no need for anyone to attempt to explain why they do not “love the brethren.” It has already been revealed, “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death” (1 John 3:14).

PUNGENT POINT #391 – The current condition of church youth does not justify the staggering investment of time and money that has been made in them. The investment in the youth of the church has probably required more time, effort, and money than any other religious expenditure. The results confirm that the investment has not been done wisely, and has in some way been skewed away from the Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #392 – The mythical “church of tomorrow” is not the focus of Christ’s intercession, the Holy Spirit’s ministry, or the power of God – it is the church of today, which is being seriously neglected by religious leaders in favor of what some call “the church of tomorrow.”

PUNGENT POINT #393 – Jesus is the One building His church (Matt 16:18). He nourishes and cherishes the church (Eph 5:29), shepherding it (Heb 13:20), and teaching it (Eph 4:21). This is the only approved building plan for the church.

PUNGENT POINT #394 – It has been revealed that the church is being “built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph 2:22). This being true, it seems to me that more interest should be found in experiencing the presence of God merely having large bodies of people in the same place at the same time (1 Cor 14:25).

PUNGENT POINT #395 – When God is loved, His commandments are not grievous to

the human spirit, and therefore they are kept, or retained by the one loving Him (1 John 5:3)

PUNGENT POINT #396 – The credit for salvation in its entirety, from beginning to end, goes to the Lord. As it is written, “Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” (Rev 7:10). “And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God” (Rev 19:1).

PUNGENT POINT #397 – The work that God requires men to do involves them in the greater work that He is doing.

PUNGENT POINT #398 – It is God who “justifies the ungodly” (Rom 4:5), and that is a very real work with observable results.

PUNGENT POINT #399 – If it is God who works in us “both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil 2:13), then God is to be given glory for godly willingness and holy doing.

PUNGENT POINT #400 – There are things that can only be done in Christ (Eph 2:10), through grace (1 Cor 15:10), and by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).

PUNGENT POINT #401 – By nature, man is not able to receive the things of the Spirit of God. His intellect is not sufficient, his nature is recalcitrant, and his heart corrupt. The required capabilities come through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:14).

PUNGENT POINT #402 – There is a protocol required in approaching God – and it is an absolute requirement. It involves coming with a true heart, the full assurance of faith, hearts that have been sprinkled from an evil conscience, and bodies that have been washed with pure water (Heb 10:22). If you do not know what that means, then make it your business to gain that knowledge.

PUNGENT POINT #403 – There is no justifiable reason for failing to seek the Lord – doing so until He is found. This is true whether the Gospel has been heard or not (Acts 17:26-27).

PUNGENT POINT #404 – All Satan has to do to keep a person out of heaven is to convince him he does not have to act upon the truth of the Gospel.

PUNGENT POINT #405 – The promises of God, particularly as they regard God’s favorable identity with us, provide the proper incentive to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1).

PUNGENT POINT #406 – Sometimes, when the Word of God cannot be remembered, it is not because it has been forgotten, but because Satan has taken it away (Luke 8:12).

PUNGENT POINT #407 – All of the promises of God – all of His commitments to those who believe on the Son – are compressed into a single statement: "And this is THE promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life." (1 John 2:25)

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PUNGENT POINT #408 – Ultimately, there is no place of safety outside of the Person of Jesus Christ . No one who is not in Him, and abiding in Him, is safe (John 10:28-09; 15:1-7).

PUNGENT POINT #409 – As long as we are in this world, every spiritual benefit is held "by faith"– i.q. (Acts 15:9; 26:18; Rom 3:22; 5:1; Gal 5:5; Eph 3:17; 1 Pet 1:5). This being the case, salvation is only as sure as one's faith.

PUNGENT POINT #410 – It is WHILE we are beholding the glory of the Lord that the Spirit changes us into the very image of the One whose glory we are beholding. If there is no beholding – no extended consideration of Jesus – there will be no change (2 Cor 3:18). No humanly devised program can work this required "change."

PUNGENT POINT #411 – God does not work everything together for the good of everyone. He only does so for those who "love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28).

PUNGENT POINT #412 – Jesus said that a person who has His commandments and retains them is the one who loves Him. To such a person Jesus promises that His Father will love him, Jesus Himself will love him, He will manifest Himself to him, and His Father and Himself will make their abode in that person (John 14:21,23).

PUNGENT POINT #413 – When Jesus said "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33), He did not mean the one refusing to forsake everything MIGHT not be His disciple. Such a person CANNOT be His disciple – i.e. will not be taught or led, refreshed or encouraged, by Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #414 – The promise of Jesus still holds: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). It only remains for men to take His word seriously.

PUNGENT POINT #415 – Comprehending the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, and knowing the love of Christ, which passes beyond the boundary of human knowledge, is still requisite to the revealed purpose of God: being "filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph 4:16-18).

PUNGENT POINT #416 – In view of the requirement to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ," any professing Christian failing to do so is in eternal jeopardy (2 Pet 3:18).

PUNGENT POINT #417 – If John faithfully wrote so believers would “know” they “have eternal life” (1 John 5:13), it is neither innocent nor wise to be without such knowledge.

PUNGENT POINT #418 – If everything “pertaining to life and godliness” has been given to us by God, “through the knowledge of Him that hath called us,” then every person in Christ can excel in both living and godliness (2 Pet 1:3).

PUNGENT POINT #419 – Jesus said, “And why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). The person who does not do what Jesus says is obliged to answer that question now, and will certainly answer it on the day of judgment. Disobedient people will ultimately find out that there is no satisfactorily answer to that question.

PUNGENT POINT #420 – “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor 1:10). This is not a suggestion..

PUNGENT POINT #421 – The promise of being “ever” the Lord (1 Thess 4:17) does not mean anything to a person who spends no time with Him here – and God had called us into the fellowship of His Son (1 Cor 1:30).

PUNGENT POINT #422 – Paul admonished the Corinthians to conduct their assemblies in an orderly and edifying manner, with due regard for matters regarding authority, “because of the angels” (1 Cor 11:10). That means the angels are in some way present in such assemblies. I wonder how they must report them to the Father when they return.

-- Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #423 – If it is true that no one can effectively lay anything to the charge of God’s elect (Rom 8:33), how are we to regard those who speak disparagingly or critically of saints God has commended – like Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, and others?

PUNGENT POINT #424 – No person can willingly and safely continue in a state in which he is lacking wisdom and spiritual understanding. (Col 1:9).

PUNGENT POINT #425 – If one place has no real advantage over another, then why did Jesus oftentimes” resort to the Garden of Gethsemane, or “often met there with His disciples”? (John 18:2, NKJV).

PUNGENT POINT #426 – Jesus preferred to be with His 12 disciples. That is one reason why He chose them (Mk 3:14). He took them with Him everywhere He went–i.e. Mk 8:10,34; 10:46; John 6:3; 1:54). He desired to eat His last Passover with them (Lk 22:15). He revealed the mysteries of the Kingdom to them (Matt 13:11). Only four of them heard the Olivet discourse (Mk 13:3-37).

PUNGENT POINT #427 – At the time when Jesus was born, the world was taxing, but God was giving (Lk 2:1-5).

PUNGENT POINT #428 – Bearing our cross, among other things, has to do with submitting to, and not drawing back from, the repercussions that result from living godly (Luke 9:23).

PUNGENT POINT #429 – By submitting ourselves to one another in the fear of the Lord, and doing what we have been given to do, by the operation of God many wonderful things are set in motion that will be of great benefit and profit to all (Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 4:11).

PUNGENT POINT #430 – “Comfort” is the result of a proper assessment of a given situation, then bringing the Word of God to bear upon it. (1 Thess 5:11)

PUNGENT POINT #431 – Each area of life is like water that the Lord bids us to come walk to Him on. Peter was not complimented because he actually walked part of the way (Matt 14:28-29).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #432 – Eternal life at its apex, reigning with Christ, hinges on our participation in suffering with Christ (2 Tim 2:12).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #433 – Fallow ground must first be broken up in a man’s heart before the Word of God can bear lasting fruit in him (Jer 4:3; Hos 10:12).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #434 – False accusations are authored by the “accuser of the brethren” (Rev 12:10).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #435 – Fighting the good fight of faith, among many other things, involves getting past distractions (1 Tim 6:12).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #436 – Given the right circumstances, every ministry in the body of Christ becomes extremely important (1 Cor 12:12-22).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #437 – God gave Paul a great work, a great revelation, and a thorn. That is God’s manner (1 Cor 15:1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 12:1-12).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #438 – Grace enables us to overcome the tempting of the evil one, and endure the testings of the Holy One (Tit 2:11-12).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #439 – Great trials are generally infrequent. So far as the record is concerned, Job had one (Job 1-2), and Joseph had two (Gen 37:25-28; 39:1-41:44). It just may be that you have already passed through your greatest trial.

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #440 – Holiness is orientation to “the world to come.” It is getting ready for the new environment – “new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth

righteousness” (1 Pet 1:15-16; Heb 12:14; 2 Pet 3:13).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #441 – To each of the seven churches in Asia the Lord Jesus said, in effect, “I know what you are doing.” To some it proved comforting, and to others it was convicting (Rev 2:2,9,13,19; 3:1,8,15).

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #442 – If you get lost in the book of The Revelation, just go to the last two chapters, where it can be clearly seen that those in Christ win. The book is really not about the Antichrist, but is a stirring chronicle of the Triumphant Christ.

Given O. Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #443 – A worthy messenger will not permit himself to stand between the people and God (2 Cor 1:24).

PUNGENT POINT #444 – Any areas where we do not take up our cross, are areas where we remain untaught by Jesus – i.e. “Ye cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:27; Eph 4:20-21; 1 John 5:20)

PUNGENT POINT #445 – Any areas where we wrestle with pride are areas where we lack understanding. (Rom 7:18; 1 Cor 4:7; 15:10)

PUNGENT POINT #446 – As we grow in the Lord stronger temptations. or trials, will be leveled at us. (Heb 11:37; 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 12:7-8; Gen 22:1)

PUNGENT POINT #447 – As we rise on the Lord's Day. we must say to ourselves, “Today we break bread with Jesus.” (Acts 20:7)

PUNGENT POINT #448 – At some point within the experience of the children of God, grace and effort must come together. (1 Cor 15:10)

PUNGENT POINT #449 – It is possible for the child of God to perceive human weakness as a qualifier for grace instead of a handicap. (2 Cor 12:9-10)

PUNGENT POINT #450 – Bearing our cross has to do with submitting to, and not drawing back from, or falling beneath the weight of, the repercussions that result from living godly every day (Luke 9:23).

PUNGENT POINT #451 – By submitting ourselves one to another in the fear of God and doing what we have been given to do, by the operation of God, many wonderful things are set in motion that will be of great benefit and profit to all. (Eph 5:21; 1 Pet 4:11)

PUNGENT POINT #452 – Comfort often involves the proper assessment of a case, and bringing the Word of God to bear on a situation. (2 Cor 1:4)

PUNGENT POINT #453 – Comfort overthrows the power of circumstance. (2 Cor 1:4)

PUNGENT POINT #454 – Do not let your obedience be spotty (I Tim. 6:14).

PUNGENT POINT #455 – Each area of our life is like water that the Lord bids us come

walk to Him on. Peter was not complimented because he walked part way. (Matt 14:23-32)

PUNGENT POINT #456 – Reigning with Christ, or sitting with Him in His throne (Rev 3:21) in the world to come, hinges on our participation in suffering with Him (2 Tim 2:12).

PUNGENT POINT #457 – Truth must grow in the soil of grace and peace. (2 Pet 1:2)

PUNGENT POINT #458 – False accusations are authored by the accuser of the brethren. (Rev 12:10)

PUNGENT POINT #459 – Fighting the good fight of faith, among other things, involves getting past the distractions. (1 Tim 6:12)

PUNGENT POINT #460 – Given the right set of circumstances, every ministry in the body (of Christ) becomes extremely important (1 Cor 12:23-24).

PUNGENT POINT #461 – God gave Paul a great work, a great revelation, and a thorn. That's God's manner. (2 Cor 12:1-11).

PUNGENT POINT #462 – God is not a prophet, He is the God of the Prophets. (Acts 3:18; Rom 1:1)

PUNGENT POINT #463 – Grace enables us overcome tempting from the evil one and testing from the Holy One. (Rom 5:2; 1 Pet 5:12)

PUNGENT POINT #464 – Great and significant trials are generally infrequent. So far as the record is concerned, Abraham had two (waiting for the birth of Isaac, and the command to offer up Isaac), Job had one (which trial is recorded in a lengthy book), and Joseph had two (enduring the hatred of his brothers, and his abuse in Egypt). Of course a growing and effective faith has a lot to do with this. However, it just may be that you have passed through your greatest trial.

PUNGENT POINT #465 – Holiness is orientation to the world to come. It is getting ready for the new and eternal environment. (1 Thess 2:13; Heb 12:14)

PUNGENT POINT #466 – I Know Thy Works: To each of the seven churches in Asia the Lord Jesus said, in effect: "I know what you're doing." To some it was comforting, to others it was convicting (cf. Rev. 2:2; 2:9; 2:13; 2:19; 3:1; 3:8; 3:15),

PUNGENT POINT #467 – If there is anything that shouldn't be in our heart and persons, God sees it. And yet: through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, uncomely things can be purged, and we shall be presented faultless before Him. (Heb 4:13; Jude 1:24)

PUNGENT POINT #468 – Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John

15:10). John wrote, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). If there is one commandment in the Bible that chafes against you, to that degree, you do not love God.

PUNGENT POINT #469 – If you get lost in the book of Revelation, just go to the last two chapters, where it can be clearly seen that those who are with Christ win, and all who are against them lose.. Everything in that book is related to, and leads to, that appointed conclusion. (Rev 21 & 22)

PUNGENT POINT #470 – Living in this world neutralizes the vision of God. Great diligence must therefore be put forth to combat this neutralization. (Tit 1:11-12; Heb 11:13; 1 Pet 2:11; 1 John 2:15)

PUNGENT POINT #471 – My business is to pass through the waters of trouble (cf. Isa. 43:2). God's business is to keep them from overflowing me – and I trust Him to do so. (Heb 13:6)

PUNGENT POINT #472 – "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom 7:12). It is KNOWING that it is good that contributes to a valid evaluation of oneself (Rom 7:16).

PUNGENT POINT #473 – Our "former lusts" (1 Pet, 1:14) are fostered by an ignorance of God and of Christ (John 17:3; 2 Pet 2:20).

PUNGENT POINT #474 – Speaking as a man, our glorification will be a blessing to God, for we will no longer require a way of escape from our temptations (1 Cor 10:13). In fact, for the believer, who has lives unto Christ (2 Cor 5:15), death is the final escape.

PUNGENT POINT #475 – If you are a believer, our Lord has not thrust you into the sea of life without Divine assistance. (Heb 13:5)

PUNGENT POINT #476 – Our Lord's estimation of giving heed to the more sure word of prophecy is "well done." "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye lake heed . . (cf. 11 Pet 1:19).

PUNGENT POINT #477 – Our ultimate safety is found in being not of this world. (John 17:15-16)

PUNGENT POINT #478 – Wicked principalities and powers have been weakened to such a great extent by the death of Christ, that the Lord now lets us wrestle against with them. Before His death, resurrection, and exaltation, they were even difficult for holy angels to overcome (Dan 10:13-20; Col 2:15; 1 Pet 3:22; Eph 6:12).

PUNGENT POINT #479 –
Pygmy men have pygmy gods, small as they
Weigh they circumstance and thought, in little way

Their conceptions small remain, cannot grow
Beyond the sphere of little things, they do not know
, 1/23/67

PUNGENT POINT #480 – Repentance and conversion are postulated upon the fact that God does not change. “I am the LORD, I change not” (Mal 3:6).

PUNGENT POINT #481 – Today, among preachers, we are hearing more about inductive and deductive preaching. I personally prefer productive preaching. (1 Cor 1:21)

PUNGENT POINT #482 – Social turbulence produces wicked governments. (Rev 13:1-4)

PUNGENT POINT #483 – Sometimes God makes you cry before He talks to you (of Rev 5:1-5).

PUNGENT POINT #484 – Though Satan is not a quitter, and has extraordinary rejuvenating powers, and is able to re- group his forces alter defeat, yet he will still loose in the end, and be cast into the lake of fire.

PUNGENT POINT #485 – Tribulation is only “tribulation” (in the sense that the Scriptures speak) when we have our “first love” in possession (Rev 2:40. Then persecution is because we “live godly in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 3:12) Otherwise, what men call “persecution” falls into the class of “trouble” (Job 5:7).

PUNGENT POINT #486 – We are often retarded in our response to God, so He maneuvers situations and circumstances to provoke us to draw near to Him. (Hosea 2:14; 11:4)

PUNGENT POINT #487 – We must battle to get this view of overthrowing unseen wicked personalities. (Eph 6:12; 2 Cor 10:3-4)

PUNGENT POINT #488 – We must be zealous in aborting our ignorance. (1 Cor 14:20; Eph 5:17; 1 Pet 1:14)

PUNGENT POINT #489 – We must earnestly wrestle against this dangerous thought, or “high thing,” that God is favorably disposed to everyone except me. (2 Cor 10:5)

PUNGENT POINT #490 – We ought not expect to be complete until the end, when, by the grace of God, we shall appear with Christ in glory. (Col 3:4; 1 Pet 1:13).

PUNGENT POINT #491 – "When Jesus appears “the second time,” He will not confront His people with their sins, or deal with sin as He did the first time He came (cf. Heb 9:28).

PUNGENT POINT #492 – When my mind is sterile, and after I have sought wisdom from above (James 1:5), that is the time when I go to the commentator, hand him the

shovel and show him where to dig. I realize I am part of Christ's body, and that there is a sense in which I am dependent upon receiving from the other members things the Lord has already distributed.

PUNGENT POINT #493 – When we take a backward step, let us come earnestly to the Lord's Table and reckon that this Table commemorates an everlasting covenant. (Matt 26:28; Heb 13:20)

PUNGENT POINT #494 – When you trust in the flesh, life begins to dry up. (Rom 8:8-13)

PUNGENT POINT #495 – With regard to the trying of our faith (1 Pet 1:7; 4:12; James 1:3), we must reason, “this test that I'm presently passing through came so that I might see God more clearly.”

PUNGENT POINT #496 – You become spiritually invincible when you believe the promises. (1 Pet 1:4; 1 John 5:4-5)

PUNGENT POINT #497 – You cannot blend the old and the new covenants together. Grace plus law equals law. Wherever the two covenants are mixed, there is always a gravitation to law. Grace plus grace plus nothing else equals grace. (Matt 9:16-17; Rom 3:26; Eph 2:9)

PUNGENT POINT #498 – You go up to receive from and minister to, the Lord. Like Moses, you come down in the freshness of His Presence, to minister to the people. (Ex 34:29; Eph 1:3; Heb 10:22; 1 Cor 2:1)

PUNGENT POINT #499 – Your persuasion of things which are not seen (cf. Heb. 11:1) is your righteousness. (Heb 11:1; Rom 4:5)

PUNGENT POINT #500 – That Jesus knew what was in man (John 2:24-25) must certainly have constituted a great burden for Him. God mercifully hides much of this from us.

PUNGENT POINT #501 – The Beast. “And I stood upon the sand of the sea and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon each horn a crown, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy (Rev. 13:1). The “beast” is a complex sophisticated enemy that is not easily identified – a formidable foe.

PUNGENT POINT #502 – The capacity to suffer calls for weakness as well as strength. (2 Cor 12:10)

PUNGENT POINT #503 – The difficulty that men generally have is not in understanding the text of Scripture, but rather in understanding the God revealed through Scripture. (Jer 9:24; 1 John 5:20)

PUNGENT POINT #504 – The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (1 Cor 15:26). If you perceive death to be a personal enemy, then the resurrection will be seen as a

personal victory (1 Cor 15:54-57).

PUNGENT POINT #505 – The light in which you were converted is not sufficient to grow up into Christ. Paul prays for the church that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, that they may, among other things, know what is the hope of their calling in Christ.

PUNGENT POINT #506 – “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart” (Ps. 34:18). There are times when the Lord seems like He is the farthest away, when He is actually the nearest.”

PUNGENT POINT #507 – The Lord Jesus, through His death, has removed our transgressions from us, as far as the east is from the west (Psa 103:12; Col 2:13). How far is that? Well, there is northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest – but who ever heard of eastwest or westeast?

PUNGENT POINT #508 – The record of the signs and wonders of Jesus has more convincing power than the signs and wonders themselves. (John 20:30-31)

PUNGENT POINT #509 – The singly most wonderful benefit that we have received is the forgiveness of sins. Satan however, with his great subtlety, continually attempts to persuade men that either this has not happened, or other things are greater. (Eph 1:7; Col 1:14)

PUNGENT POINT #510 – The very fact that we are able to meet together unharmed, and with profit, is evidence of Satan's binding – that is, there is a sense in which he cannot do what he wants to do. Jesus has dealt the death-blow to him (Gen 3:15; Heb 2:14).

PUNGENT POINT #511 – 'The whole natural order yields to faith. (Matt 17:20; 21:21; Luke 17:6).

PUNGENT POINT #512 – There are some who, by faith, have overcome impossible plagues of the heart. (Psa 118:4-6)

PUNGENT POINT #513 – There are times when the hope of glory shines brightly in our hearts, and there are times when we, like Jesus, must set our faces steadfastly towards Jerusalem. (Rom 15:13; Lk 9:51)

PUNGENT POINT #514 – There may be times when we seek a easy way out of troubles, and say with Abraham, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee.” (Gen 17:18)

PUNGENT POINT #515 – “There is none to help” (Psa 22:11). For those in Christ, this experience is not sanctified, because the Lord has disarmed the enemy in this area. The believer is never really helpless. As true as the assessment of there being “no helper” may seem, for the saints, it is an inaccurate perception.

PUNGENT POINT #516 – There is no new doctrine in the book of the Revelation. The book of is teeming with allusions and references to Moses, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the teachings of Jesus and the apostles. It is a book that is appropriately called “a vision” (Rev 9:17) Thirty-five times in this book John wrote, “I saw . . .” – an expression found a single time in Romans through Jude (Gal 2:14).

PUNGENT POINT #517 – There will be times when it takes every ounce of energy you have to cast you care upon the Lord, believing that He cares for you. (1 Pet 5:7)

PUNGENT POINT #518 – Though Satan is not a quitter, and has extraordinary rejuvenating powers, and is able to regroup his forces after defeat, yet he will loose in the end, and be cast into the lake of fire.

PUNGENT POINT #519 – Tribulation is only tribulation (in the sense that the Scriptures speak) when we have our first love in possession.

PUNGENT POINT #520 – You only know a truth when you are able to do it. (1 John 1:6)

PUNGENT POINT #521 – No person capable of appetite or desire will dwell forever with the Lord who did not want and prepare to do so. (Heb 11:10,16)

PUNGENT POINT #522 – The propensity of men to major on trivia and things that promote questions is not wise – in fact, such a posture is fraught with danger (2 Tim 2:23; Tit 3:9).

PUNGENT POINT #523 – There is no trial that faith cannot survive. It is always triumphant (1 John 5:4-5).

PUNGENT POINT #524 – Those who promote disputations that God Himself has not introduced have infringed upon Divine prerogatives. (Isa 40:13-14)

PUNGENT POINT #525 – Whatever is not a declared test of fellowship between God and man, cannot be a test of fellowship between man and man (Rom 14:3). If this is not so, then fellowship with men is more difficult than fellowship with God. By inference, that would make man greater than God. Such things cannot be.

PUNGENT POINT #526 – If God has provided a way of escape out of every temptation, there is no valid reason for not finding and taking it (1 Cor 10:13).

PUNGENT POINT #527 – If Jesus has, in fact, opened up a new and living way to God, then lifeless ways are, of themselves, sinful (Heb 10:20).

PUNGENT POINT #528 – Ultimately, all who are believing on the Son will be delivered from all trouble, all challenge, and all infirmity. Faith enables a person to wait patiently for that deliverance (Rev 21:2-4).

PUNGENT POINT #529 – One of the best things that can be said of any assembly of believers is that they die well (Rev 14:13).

PUNGENT POINT #530 – In one sense, fear is not sinful. It is what one does with it that determines whether a person can be called “fearful.” As it is written, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee” (Psa 56:3)

PUNGENT POINT #531 – The message that is proclaimed by those who are “laborers together with God” (1 Cor 3:9) must have its genesis with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and must have Jesus Christ as its epicenter of power. (Rom 1:16)

PUNGENT POINT #532 – Once the power of God undergirds a matter, it becomes a sure thing. (Lk 18:27; Eph 3:20)

PUNGENT POINT #533 – In the Kingdom of God, a powerless messenger is no messenger at all. If a message can be heartily embraced without the ordained changes taking place in the individual, the message is flawed. (Rom 1:16)

PUNGENT POINT #534 – One of the greatest of all transgressions is that of persecuting, maligning, making it difficult for, and not coming to the aid of those who are living by faith in Christ. (Psa 105:14-15; Zech 8:2; Matt 25:45; Acts 9:5; Rom 12:19)

PUNGENT POINT #535 – A fragmented or divided heart is a thief and a robber. Therefore the Psalmist prayed, “unite my heart to fear thy name.” (Psa 86:11)

PUNGENT POINT #536 – Paul is repeatedly presented as the “apostle,” “preacher,” “minister,” and “teacher” to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15; Rom 11:13; 1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11). Yet, on a universal scale, Gentile believers do not have a working knowledge of Paul’s writings. This suggests some form of rejection of what he was given to see.

PUNGENT POINT #537 – Key Scriptural words with which pivotal teaching is associated – i.e. “justification,” “reconciliation,” “faith,” “flesh,” “predestination,” “election,” etc – should not be replaced by supposed alternative words by the translators. (1 Cor 2:13)

PUNGENT POINT #538 – If a proposed new birth does not yield newness of life, it is spurious. (Rom 6:4; Eph 4:24; 1 Pet 1:3,23; 1 John 3:14)

PUNGENT POINT #539 – The church is “the body of Christ” (Eph 5:23; Col 1:18). This is an assembly view of the saints – an assembly in which each member contributes to the edification of the others (1 Cor 14:12,26; Eph 4:12-16; 1 Thess 5:11).

PUNGENT POINT #540 – ““But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1 Pet 1:15-16). I know of no reason why this can be called a “great commission.” Yet, I know of few who so consider it.

PUNGENT POINT #541 – Peter was inspired and serious when he testified and exhorted the people prior to them being baptized, “Save yourselves from this untoward” [perverse] “generation.” (Acts 2:40). I do not often hear that tone of urgency today.

PUNGENT POINT #542 – If Nineveh will rise up in the day of judgment and condemn the generation to whom Jesus ministered (Matt 12:41), I wonder what previous person or persons will rise up in regards to the United States of America and the professed church within it.

PUNGENT POINT #543 – For those in Christ, if it is true that “greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4), then there really is no valid excuse for a believer sinning. That is why all sin must be forthrightly and immediately confessed and forsaken.

PUNGENT POINT #544 – If we are “saved by hope,” then it is an unspeakable handicap for any person claiming identity with Christ not to be sure of their home in heaven (Rom 8:24-25; Heb 3:6; 6:11)

PUNGENT POINT #545 – There is no required wisdom or knowledge that is not accessible to those who are in Christ Jesus (Col 2:2-3).

PUNGENT POINT #546 – The fact that we are really “complete in Christ,” will, when discerned, put a lot of religious professionals out of business (Col 2:10).

PUNGENT POINT #547 – God’s will is declared to be “good, and acceptable, and perfect” (Rom 12:2). That is reason enough for men to do everything in their power to know and embrace it.

PUNGENT POINT #548 – Salvation involves man joining God in what He is doing, not God joining man in what He is doing (1 Cor 3:9).

PUNGENT POINT #549 – The “curse of the Law” is plainly stated: “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” (Gal 3:10). The curse of the Law is not poverty and sickness, as the professed Christian media moguls affirm.

PUNGENT POINT #550 – Those who are quick to say, “It is all right to be rich,” might find Jesus (Mk 10:23; Lk 6:24), Solomon (Prov 11:28; Eccl 4:8), James (James 5:1-2), and Paul (1 Tim 6:8) disagreeing with them – stating some warnings that are attached to riches. If so, it is best to know about that disagreement before the day of judgment.

PUNGENT POINT #551 – If it is true that “without” holiness, “no man shall see the Lord” (Heb 12:14), then men do well to give attention to being holy now, as they are commanded (1 Pet 1:15-16).

PUNGENT POINT #552 – The so-called “great commission” is purely a human

tradition, not a Divine utterance. The expression is thought to have originated in the second century. Yet it is now used to identify real Christians, and direct the activities of believers. It is set forth as a Divine priority, and defined as the most important work of the church. Yet, there is not a syllable in Scripture that will support these positions.

PUNGENT POINT #553 – Making all men see, or understand, the “mystery” that has been hidden since the beginning of the world (which relates to the Gospel – Eph 2:7-8), is said to be for the purpose of illuminating heavenly personalities concerning the “manifold wisdom of God” (Eph 3:9-10). It is good to keep that in mind during our earthly sojourn.

PUNGENT POINT #554 – Salvation is a gift, being provided by the grace of God, and obtained by faith (Eph 2:8-9). Nevertheless the question is posed, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him” (Heb 2:3)? The grace of God has not eliminated responsibility or stewardship.

PUNGENT POINT #555 – Some reason that once a person is a son of God, he always holds that status, and nothing can take it from him. After all of the reasoning is presented, we must consider Ishmael (son of Abraham) and Esau (son of Isaac). Both were sons, but neither maintained the status of heir. For that matter, the sons of Abraham included Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah (1 Chron 1:32) – but they did not participate in the promises given to their father.

PUNGENT POINT #556 – When human tradition is mingled with the Word of God, the product cannot be called “the word of God” (Matt 15:6; Mk 7:13).

PUNGENT POINT #557 – Now that sin has been taken away by the Lamb of God, it is a righteous thing for God to save those who believe (Rom 3:26).

PUNGENT POINT #558 – The grace of God does not obviate or diminish the righteousness of God. We are saved by grace through (Eph 2:8), and His righteous has also been declared to be “for the remission of sins” (Rom 3:25). This is why no one can condemn the person God justifies (Rom 8:33).

PUNGENT POINT #559 – When Jesus said, “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned” (John 15:6), that is precisely what He meant. It is even in the Greek!

PUNGENT POINT #560 – Any and every person who cleaves to the Lord with purpose of heart, will not be disappointed, snatched out of Jesus’ hand, or overcome by the wicked one (Acts 11:23; John 10:28-29; 1 John 5:18),

PUNGENT POINT #561 – Every person who is “added to the Lord” (Acts 5:14) is included in the statement, “. . . the Holy Spirit, which is shed on us abundantly” (Tit 3:5-6). If that abundance is not being made known, then the Spirit has been “quenched” (1 Thess 5:19).

PUNGENT POINT #562 – Since Jesus has been enthroned in heaven, there has never been a time or an age during which the grace of God did not teach men to look “for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ” (Tit 2:11-13).

PUNGENT POINT #563 – Wherever the grace of God is mentioned, it is always associated with something being done or accomplished (Rom 5:15; 1 Cor 3:10; 15:10; 2 Cor 1:12; Eph 3:2,7; Tit 2:11; Heb 2:9; 1 Pet 4:10; 5:12).

PUNGENT POINT #564 – God can make a person who trusts in Him to “stand” – even when he is unlearned in a certain area (Rom 14:4).

PUNGENT POINT #565 – In Christ we have a responsibility to be watchful, stand fast in the faith, and quit like men (1 Cor 16:13).

PUNGENT POINT #566 – Those who cease trusting in God, cease receiving redemptive benefits from Him. (1 Tim 4:10)

PUNGENT POINT #567 – Faith has its own way of reasoning (Rom 4:19; Heb 11:19).

PUNGENT POINT #568 – When we are confused about the prosperity of the wicked, going into the sanctuary of God will make matters clear (Psa 73:3-18).

PUNGENT POINT #569 – The vehicle by which we become partakers of the Divine nature are the exceeding great and precious promises of God (2 Pet 1:4). This postulates the awareness of those promises.

PUNGENT POINT #570 – Thinking that the main thing is to get people into Christ is the same as thinking the main thing is to start a race. No sports spectator goes home when the race or the game begins. Everyone knows that the main thing in a competitive arena is finishing (2 Tim 4:7).

PUNGENT POINT #571 – God does not take our faith for granted, and neither should we (Matt 17:20; 21:21; John 11:40; Rom 4:24; Col 1:23; Heb 10:37).

PUNGENT POINT #572 – Keeping the faith involves fighting to maintain it. (1 Tim 6:12; Rev 14:12).

PUNGENT POINT #573 – God’s path is said to be “in the sea” (Psa 77:19). That being true, the only way to perceive where God is going is to stay close to Him. His wake diminishes with distance. If He is moving but you are not . . . well, think it out.

PUNGENT POINT #574 – You will never be the worse for believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and living unto Him (1 Pet 2:6; 2 Cor 5:15).

PUNGENT POINT #575 – “Heavenly places,” where God has “blessed us with all

spiritual blessings” (Eph 1:3), is not too high for faith to reach (Eph 2:6).

PUNGENT POINT #576 – If “the world to come” has not been placed in the charge of angels, but rather into the hands of redeemed humanity, now represented by “the Man Christ Jesus” (Heb 5-9), then an interest in that world should begin here and now.

PUNGENT POINT #577 – If “the meek shall inherit the earth,” they ought not to be covetous of things in it now. (Psa 37:11; Matt 5:5).

PUNGENT POINT #578 – If God says, “be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (conduct, 1 Pet 1:15-16) NKJV), and if the grace of God teaches us in such matters (Tit 2:11-12), and if the Holy Spirit leads us in the subduing of sinful expressions (Rom 8:13-14), there is no valid excuse men can offer for not being holy.

PUNGENT POINT #579 – If Jesus, through His intercession, is presently saving those who are coming to God through Him (Heb 7:25), then salvation is not yet complete in time, although it “is ready to be revealed” (1 Pet 1:5).

PUNGENT POINT #580 – There is a breadth, length, height, and depth to the love of Christ that is intended to be comprehended. (Eph 3:18-19).

PUNGENT POINT #581 – No external influence can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. That includes tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword (Rom 8:35), and death, life, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, and “any other creature” (Rom 8:39). Look up, saints of God! You are in a good situation!

PUNGENT POINT #582 – It is not for those who are living in the blazing glory of the New Covenant to criticize those saints who lived in spiritually primitive times – even before the Old Covenant, which had a lesser glory. (2 Cor 3:7-10)

PUNGENT POINT #583 – When the Intercessor, having put away sin, entered into heaven, the accuser of the brethren was cast out. For the saints, there was no more basis for accusation. (Rev 13:7-10)

PUNGENT POINT #584 – God is not looking for a reason to condemn people. He is forward to bless. It all depends on how people respond to His Son (John 3:18; 1 John 5:10-11).

PUNGENT POINT #585 – Jesus is said to have “died for us” (Rom 5:8; 1 Thess 5:10). It is never written that He obeyed for us – even though some teach that this is the case.

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PUNGENT POINT #586 – Those who choose to listen to Jesus rather than others, like Mary, have chosen “the good part,” and it will not be taken from them (Luke 10:42).

PUNGENT POINT #587 – At some point, a person has to decide whether he is going to live for Christ or self. There really is no such thing as a Christian who does not live for Jesus. Christ’s death did not provide for such a life (2 Cor 5:15).

PUNGENT POINT #588 – If Jesus forfeited the prerogatives of Deity in order to come to the world and save us (1 Cor 8:9; Phil 2:7-12), it is not reasonable for us to forsake all to follow Him (Lk 14:33).

PUNGENT POINT #589 – The expression “the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues,” is not in the Bible – anywhere, or in any version. Nor is “the baptism of the Holy Ghost,” “the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” The words “baptism of” are only followed by the words “John” (i.e. Matt 21:25), or “repentance” (i.e. Mk 1:4).

PUNGENT POINT #590 – Unity – real and godly unity – was the trait of the early church. They were “together” (Acts 2:44), “of one heart” (Acts 4:32), “of one soul” (Acts 4:32).

PUNGENT POINT #591 – When the day of Pentecost was fully come, the disciples “were all of one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1). It appears to have been quite a while since that circumstance has been duplicated. It seems that now professing Christians have become accustomed to divisions among them – even though the Spirit forbids them (1 Cor 1:10).

PUNGENT POINT #592 – There is a sin that leads to death, about which nothing can be done. Examples of those committing such a sin include Uzzah (2 Sam 6:3-7), Judas (Acts 1:25), Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:5,10).

PUNGENT POINT #593 – God has gone on record as saying He will have mercy whom He wants to do so, and whom He wants to, He will harden (Rom 9:15,18).

PUNGENT POINT #594 – Men are responsible for seeing to it they are not deceived (Lk 21:8; 1 Cor 6:9; 15:33; Gal 6:7).

PUNGENT POINT #595 – If Satan is stalking about, seeking WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR (1 Pet 5:8), we do well to do the best we can not to be in that category by using the resources God has supplied (Eph 1:3; 6:10-18; 2 Pet 1:3).

PUNGENT POINT #596 – If men are “called” by the Gospel, as 2 Thessalonians 2:14 affirms, then where the Gospel has not been preached, a call has not been issued, and salvation is not possible, for it is “whom He called” that are “justified” (Rom 8:30).

PUNGENT POINT #597 – The message that is proclaimed by those who are “laborers together with God” (1 Cor 3:9) must have its genesis with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and must have Jesus Christ as its epicenter of power.

PUNGENT POINT #598 – Once the power of God undergirds a matter, it becomes a sure thing. (1 Cor 2:5; 2 Cor 6:7; 2 Tim 1:8; 1 Pet 1:5).

PUNGENT POINT #599 – In the Kingdom of God, a powerless messenger is no messenger at all. If a message can be heartily embraced without the God-ordained changes taking place in the individual, the message is flawed. (Rom 1:16; 2 Cor 3:18; 4:6; 13:4)

PUNGENT POINT #600 – The individual who does not make “the things above” his absolute priority is not apt to dwell forever with the Lord. (Phil 3:19; Col 3:1-2)

PUNGENT POINT #601 – No one will seek “first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” and come short of his expectation. (Matt 6:33)

PUNGENT POINT #602 – Abraham is the living example of a person who lives by faith. Those who do not believe in the same manner as Abraham, simply have not believed (Rom 4:11-12,16).

PUNGENT POINT #603 – A person who balks at the Word of God, disobeys God, or does not act when given a command by God, is an unbeliever (Rom 11:20; Heb 3:12,19; 4:6).

PUNGENT POINT #604 – Faith runs to God, not from God (Heb 10:22).

PUNGENT POINT #605 – Everyone who is put into Christ (1 Cor 1:30), comes in with joy (1 Thess 1:6), which is integral to the Kingdom of God (Rom 14:17). The aim is to keep that joy – and salvation is at stake in the matter (Heb 3:6).

PUNGENT POINT #606 – There is no positive answer to the question, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb 2:3). It is a rhetorical question, telling us it is totally unreasonable to imagine such an escape is possible.

PUNGENT POINT #607 – No one will be “ashamed,” or put to shame, who believes on Christ, putting their trust in Him. Shame comes from NOT believing (Rom 9:33).

PUNGENT POINT #608 – Jesus has affirmed what He will do with lukewarm people – church people (Rev 3:16). Before a person leaves this world, he has to come to grips with this fact, and shape his life by it.

PUNGENT POINT #609 – If the Holy Spirit states that men are “from the beginning chosen unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,” no person should be ashamed of acknowledging this is the truth (1 Thess 2:13). Certainly it is inappropriate to attempt to explain it away.

PUNGENT POINT #610 – If there is no doctrine, or teaching, in the Bible concerning the will of man, men have no right to develop contradicting views of it. No valid

theological position can be constructed without Scripture.

PUNGENT POINT #611 – God can put things into the hearts of people. That is a matter of revelation (Ex 35:34; 36:2; 1 Kgs 10:24; 2 Chron 9:23; Ezra 7:27; Neh 2:12; 7:5; Psa 4:7; Jer 31:33; 32:40; 2 Cor 8:16; Heb 8:10; 10:16; Rev 17:17).

PUNGENT POINT #612 – It is revealed, "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth" (Rom 9:18). The Amplified Bible reads, "So then He has mercy on whomever He wills (chooses); and He hardens (makes stubborn and unyielding the heart of) whomever He wills." That reveals the real God!

PUNGENT POINT #613 – If Jesus says, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37), then men should cease to speculate on the subject, and immediately beat a path to Jesus!

PUNGENT POINT #614 – When it comes to the matter of approaching unto God, there is such a thing as proper protocol – and the protocol is a revealed one. The approach requires coming with a true heart, full assurance of faith, hearts cleansed from an evil conscience, and bodies washed with pure water (Heb 10:22). This is not a mere suggestion.

PUNGENT POINT #615 – When men initially come to Christ, it is like seeing a sign over the entrance: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev 22:17). From the inside, there is another sign over the same entrance that reads, "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph 1:4).

PUNGENT POINT #616 – Anything God requires of men can only be done with Divine assistance. In other words, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil 2:13). As Jesus Himself said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5)

PUNGENT POINT #617 – Just as surely as unbelief caused many Israelites to be forbidden to enter into Canaan, it will cause many to be forbidden to dwell with the Lord forever (Heb 3:18-4:1; Rev 21:8).

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PUNGENT POINT #618 – All of Israel got out of Egypt. All of them crossed the Red Sea. All of them ate manna. All of the drank water that sprang forth from a rock (1 Cor 10:1-4). However, all of them did not enter Canaan. Over half-a-million (603,500—Ex 38:26) of the delivered and miraculously sustained ones died in the wilderness (Ex 12:37; Num 14:29). Would anyone dare to affirm those who died were not really saved from Egypt?

PUNGENT POINT #619 – If God is able to make the weak "stand" (Rom 14:4), and keep us from falling (Jude 1:24), then there is no valid excuse for falling, or being overcome by sin. Thank God for forgiveness, but never seek to exploit God's kindness!

PUNGENT POINT #620 – If Jesus was sent to “bless” the people, then it is right to seek that blessing, and be willing to forfeit any and everything that keeps one from appropriating the blessing. (Acts 3:26).

PUNGENT POINT #621 – Saving sinners (1 Tim 1:15) involves more than removing guilt and extricating the individual from bondage to sin. Jesus not only saves FROM, He saves “TO” something. We pass from death TO life (1 John 3:14). We go from enemies TO reconciled (Rom 5:10). We leave the category of “not a people,” and BECOME “the people of God” (1 Pet 2:10), walking in “newness of life” (Rom 6:3-4).

PUNGENT POINT #622 – If there are “treasures” (Col 2:3), “fulness” (John 1:16; Eph 3:19), an “abundance” (Rom 5:17), and “riches” (Rom 2:4; Eph 1:7; Col 2:2) in Christ Jesus, then spiritual poverty cannot be rationalized, and cannot be an acceptable state in which to remain.

PUNGENT POINT #623 – If it is God’s will for His children to “grow up into Christ in all things” (Eph 4:15), then a failure to do so equates to a refusal to accept the grace that enables that growth to occur.

PUNGENT POINT #624 – The Divine affirmation is, "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor 3:21-23). That simply means you can be advantaged by all of those things. In Christ, they belong to you – all of them! They are yours for edification, strengthening, comfort, and ultimate advantage.

PUNGENT POINT #625 – If the saints have, in fact, been made “kings and priests unto God” Rev 1:6), then staggering possibilities exist for them.

PUNGENT POINT #626 – The first authority we are given to reign has been given over our bodies. We are not to allow them to sin: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof” (Rom 6:12). Our bodies are to be brought into subjection (1 Cor 9:27), and presented as a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1). Everything required to do this is obtained in Christ Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #627 – If, in their baptism, men do not have faith in “the operation of God” (Col 2:11-12), they have not really been baptized.

PUNGENT POINT #628 – Men often discuss whether or not the “pious unimmersed” are saved. But I have never heard a meaningful discussion on whether or not the impious immersed are saved. (Mark 16:6; Acts 2:38; Rom 6:4).

PUNGENT POINT #335 – Putting on Christ (Gal 3:27), putting on the whole armor of God (Rom 13:12; Eph 6:10-18), putting on the new man (Eph 4:23; Col 3:10), and putting on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering (Col 3:12), are not options. They are essentials, and are to be so regarded.

PUNGENT POINT #629 – If "hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, and

heresies" are really works of the flesh (Gal 5:20), then their presence cannot be accepted for any reason.

PUNGENT POINT #630 – If Jesus continues at the right hand of God, interceding for those who “come unto God by Him” – to “save them” – then His work has not yet been completed. (Heb 7:25)

PUNGENT POINT #631 – When Jesus comes in all of His glory, the wicked will be punished, and the righteous rewarded – simultaneously. “. . . when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; WHEN He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." (2 Thess 1:7-10)

PUNGENT POINT #632 – If Jesus came to bless people in turning them away from their iniquities, then those who have come to hate sin have, indeed, been blessed. (Acts 3:26)

PUNGENT POINT #633 – If the church is, in fact, the “body of Christ,” then an abundance of His traits and characteristics is to be found in it – else how can it possibly be HIS body? (Eph 1:22-23; 5:30; Col 1:18).

PUNGENT POINT #634 – Did the Jews kill Jesus? Peter said to a group of Jews concerning Jesus, “you have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain . . . that same Jesus whom ye crucified . . . whom ye crucified . . . ye slew and hanged on a tree” (Acts 2:23,36; 4:10; 5:30). Peter told Cornelius’ household, “He [Jesus] . . . whom they slew and hanged on a tree” (Acts 10:39). Stephen told a group of Jews, “the Just One; of whom ye have been not the betrayers and murderers” (Acts 7:52). Paul wrote, “. . . the Jews who . . . killed the Lord Jesus” (1 Thess 2:14). You be the judge.

PUNGENT POINT #635 – If we are “complete” in Christ, then no resource essential to life and godliness can be found elsewhere. (Col 2:10)

PUNGENT POINT #636 – God has placed the members of the body of Christ where He wants them: "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (1 Cor 12:18). There is no human institution that can assume the prerogative of this placement.

PUNGENT POINT #637 – The ultimate purpose of the church is to be a dwelling place for God – “a habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph 2:22). The church is not fundamentally a philanthropic institution, or a recovery institute. It has not been placed in the world to solve domestic and social issues. Any involvement in such things must only be within the context of God Himself dwelling in the church. If He is not there, the church has no legitimate purpose.

PUNGENT POINT #638 – If Jesus has been “highly exalted,” and “given . . . a name that

is above every name,” then there is nothing nor no one that is not under Him, and over whom He does not have authority – whether the subjected ones know it or not (Eph 1:21; Phil 2:9).

PUNGENT POINT #639 – There will be no battle of any kind when Jesus returns in His glory. Of the chief foe it is said, "And then shall that Wicked [one] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of HIS COMING" (20 Thess 2:8). The god of this world has already been destroyed (Heb 2:14), and adversarial powers – all of them – have already been plundered (Col 2:15). You may be sure no human power will launch an initiative against the returning Christ.

PUNGENT POINT #640 – Every temptation comes with a specially made “way of escape” (1 Cor 10:13) – regardless of the strength or duration of that temptation. If the escape is overlooked, it is only because the tempted one was obtuse, and therefore was not looking for the escape door. That condition, as well as the transgression, is to be confessed – then it will be forgiven and the person cleansed from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

PUNGENT POINT #641 – If, in this day of salvation, the Lord "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," (Eph 3:20), then those who say the age of miracles has passed are wrong – dead wrong!

PUNGENT POINT #642 – David described God as “a very present help in the time of trouble” (Psa 46:1). Paul affirmed He “is not far from every one of us” (Acts 17:27). The “apostles’ doctrine” declares that those in Christ "have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him" (Eph 3:12). Look up, child of God – Look up!

PUNGENT POINT #643 – If it is true that God “causeth us to triumph in Christ Jesus” (2 Cor 2:14), then a lot of light has been shed on unfavorable circumstances and threats.

PUNGENT POINT #644 – If Jesus spoke the truth when He said, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:27), then making a living, though necessary, is not the main thing.

PUNGENT POINT #645 – The confirmed proof that you have passed from death unto life is not whether or not you love your neighbor, but is rather your love for “the brethren” – the brethren of Christ (1 John 3:14). Such love is also the proof that you are a genuine disciple of Jesus (John 13:35). That is a matter of revelation.

PUNGENT POINT #646 – In Christ there is a blessed liberty that allows you to come to the Lord as often as you desire, stay as long as you want, and receive as much as you can hold. That is the context of the statement, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb 4:16)

PUNGENT POINT #647 – If there is an unholy church, anywhere or at any time, it can be traced to unholy causes. This is not a condition caused by God, Jesus Christ, the Holy

Spirit, the Gospel of Christ, the love of the truth, or faith and love.

PUNGENT POINT #648 – Wherever there is legitimate fruit and God-approved fruit (He is the Husbandman), there is a connection with Jesus (John 15:1-5).

PUNGENT POINT #649 – False teaching, which never represents itself as “false,” has a penetrating and eroding effect on those who subject their ears and their minds to it, causing them to err (2 Tim 2:17-18).

PUNGENT POINT #650 – The grace of God is always presented within the context of something being done, or accomplished – i.e. Lk 2:40; Acts 11:23; Rom 5:15; 1 Cor 1:4-5; 3:10; 15:10; Tit 2:11, etc.

PUNGENT POINT #651 – If the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, while living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, then where those traits are not found, the people have not been teachable. (Tit 2:11-12).

PUNGENT POINT #652 – If the victory that overcomes the world is faith, and if the overcomer is the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, as the Scriptures affirm, then the one who is overcome instead of overcoming is lacking in faith, and is not believing Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 5:4-5).

PUNGENT POINT #653 – No man can tame the tongue (James 3:8) – but grace can (Col 4:6).

PUNGENT POINT #654 – When it comes to the things and works of God, human systemization is counterproductive – even impotent. This is because the things of God operate according to “the purpose of Him that worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph 1:11) – and that is something man cannot systematize.

PUNGENT POINT #655 – If it is really true of those in Christ Jesus, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col 3:3), selfishness is tantamount to rebellion.

PUNGENT POINT #656 – The tendency of religious men to invent new careers and ministries within the church confirms a rejection of the placements God has made within the church: "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." His placements are in view of His own purpose and pleasure (1 Cor 12:18; 1 Cor 12:1-11,28; Rom 12:3-6; Eph 4:11; 1 Pet 4:10-11)

PUNGENT POINT #657 – Fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12) involves fighting to maintain it: resisting contradicting influences, and culturing godly ones.

PUNGENT POINT #658 – The “body of Christ” is an assembly view of the church – when the saints come together into one place (1 Cor 11:20; 14:23). There is an intentioned interdependence in this “body.” We are not taught to consider a disassembled

“body.”

PUNGENT POINT #659 – Jesus cannot be exalted any higher than He is at this present time. He has defeated all enemies – including the “last enemy” – and has received all power in heaven and earth (Matt 28:20). He is, in truth, “the blessed and only Potentate” (1 Tim 6:15). No professing Christian has done well who does not discern this.

PUNGENT POINT #660 – A false prophet is one that God has not sent (Jer 14:14-15) – one who is delivering a message God did not give, and emphasizing what God has not emphasized.

PUNGENT POINT #661 – If God’s nature does not change (Mal 3:6), then He is still a Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb 11:6).

PUNGENT POINT #662 – If the Divine requirement is, “Brethren, be not children in understanding . . . in understanding be men” (1 Cor 14:20), then perpetual spiritual infancy is neither right nor acceptable.

PUNGENT POINT #663 – If it is true that “he that seeketh findeth” (Matt 7:8), then the one who does not find, has not sought.

PUNGENT POINT #664 – If it is possible to “ask amiss,” then there is some kind of criteria associated with asking. (James 4:3)

PUNGENT POINT #665 – If baptism is associated with being “saved” (Mk 16:16), with the remission of sin (Acts 2:38), with washing away of sin (Acts 22:16), and with receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), then those who say baptism has nothing to do with salvation are simply wrong.

PUNGENT POINT #666 – If Christ ascended into heaven from the earth, and is now seated there (Heb 1:3) with all power in heaven and earth being given to Him (Matt 28:28), then that is where our attention is to be focused (Col 3:1-2; Heb 12:1-2).

PUNGENT POINT #667 – God will neither ignore nor abandon the person who conscientiously engages in an effort to do His will (Heb 13:21).

PUNGENT POINT #668 – It is one thing to know the Bible says the Lord is “able to keep you from falling” – it is quite another to believe it (Jude 1:24).

PUNGENT POINT #669 – If hope is “an anchor of the soul, both steadfast and sure” (Heb 6:19), then the drifting soul is one that is not anchored – or more specifically, is without hope.

PUNGENT POINT #670 – However astute human reasoning and conclusions may appear to the minds of men, they can never be used to buttress the truth of God, direct the lives of His people, or promote sound spiritual reasoning (1 Cor 2:5).

PUNGENT POINT #671 – There is no short-cut to heaven. Christ is the way, grace is the means, and faith is what takes hold of grace and produces obedience. (John 14:6; Eph 2:8; Rom 16:26). The single thing all of those have in common is that they come from God.

PUNGENT POINT #672 – When men use human reasoning to fortify their theology and doctrine, their motives are not apt to be noble. (1 Cor 2:5-8)

PUNGENT POINT #673 – In the Kingdom of God, there is such a thing as buying “without money” (Isa 55:1-3). This circumstance is most excellently adapted to our condition.

PUNGENT POINT #674 – Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation – the HUMAN science of interpretation. It is a methodology that had its genesis in the minds of men. As such, it cannot possibly be the means of perceiving the truth that is revealed from heaven (1 Cor 2:9-10). It is a Person who unlocks the truth, not a science (Eph 1:15-17; 2 Tim 2:7; 1 John 5:20).

PUNGENT POINT #675 – If historical artifacts actually confirm the truth to the heart, then God would have placed the tables of the covenant, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna before the eyes of the people. Instead, He hid them (Heb 9:3-4).

PUNGENT POINT #676 – Some have depicted James as contradicting Paul on the matter of believing. James, however, is not addressing the subject of believing, but of SAYING that one believes (James 2:14,18). Paul addresses the fact of believing, and its particular relation to justification. (Rom 1:16; 3:22,26; 4:5,24).

PUNGENT POINT #677 – God chose Abraham, shaping our knowledge of him by snapshots of small segments of his life. That record is an depiction of faith – the kind of faith that saves the soul. (Rom 4:9,12,13,16; Gal 3:7-9,14).

PUNGENT POINT #678 – There are forty-two generations from Abraham to Jesus (Matt 1:17). All of the progenitors of those generations, beginning with Abraham, were selected by God, being chosen from families with several children.

PUNGENT POINT #679 – God did not have a “wonderful plan” for Pharaoh’s life – at least not from the experiential point of view. He rather raised him up to show in him His power, that His name might be declared throughout all the earth (Ex 9:16; Rom 9:17).

PUNGENT POINT #680 – God depicts Himself in a way that contradicts much modern theology: "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things." (Isa 45:7, NKJV)

PUNGENT POINT #681 – Because God intends that His children should “comprehend” the magnitude of His great salvation (Eph 3:16-18), no professing “Christian” can be satisfied while not being able to comprehend that magnitude.

PUNGENT POINT #682 – The world will not believe that God sent Jesus until all professing believers, and not just a few groups of them, are united in both the Father and the Son – and that will not take place until their focus is upon Christ. That is a revealed purpose for those who believe on the Son through the word of His apostles. (John 17:20-21)

PUNGENT POINT #683 – Jesus is the only One who knows the true identity of the Father, and also those to whom He reveals the Father. That is what He said (Matt 11:27). He then invited those who labor and are heavy laden to come to Him, and learn from Him (Matt 11:28).

PUNGENT POINT #684 – No saying of Jesus has become obsolete. He said His words will never pass away, and they will not (Matt 24:35).

PUNGENT POINT #685 – At some time every believer will have to come to grips with this word of Jesus: "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matt 10:35-36).

PUNGENT POINT #686 – God can make a person do something against their will: –i.e. Nebuchadnezzar losing his mind, and eating grass with the beasts of the field (Dan 4:23). For that matter, when Jesus comes again, they will face and stand before the exalted Christ, bow the knee to Him, and confess He is Lord – whether they want to or not (Rom 14:11-12; Phil 2:10-11). Christ's coming will be a glad occasion for those who have bowed the knee and confessed while on the earth.

PUNGENT POINT #687 – The things that God has prepared for those who love Him transcend anything conceived or imagined by men. They have no parallel or likeness in the earth, yet they are very real – and God has revealed them to us by His Spirit. (1 Cor 2:9-10).

PUNGENT POINT #688 – Satan and his hosts do not have faith, and the Scriptures nowhere affirm that they do. What is said is this: "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble!" (James 2:19). Of course, they believe there is one God because they fell from His presence (Jude 1:6). It is obvious that this is not the kind of believing that causes one to have "everlasting life" (John 3:36; 6:47) – either in demons or in men.

PUNGENT POINT #689 – By Divine intention, we are being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, God's Son, not to a theological position or tenet. (Rom 8:29). The conforming is accomplished by the Spirit (2 Cor 2:18) as we abide in Christ (1 John 2:27,28), live by faith (Heb 10:38), and and walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16,25).

PUNGENT POINT #690 – A word from God that is not ingested is no more nourishing to the soul than a carrot inserted into the ear canal is to the body. (Luke 4:4)

PUNGENT POINT #691 – The Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees were examples of those who read and study the Word of God in a disciplined and thoughtful manner, yet without Jesus in mind. Therefore, although they were textual experts Jesus said to them, "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt 22:29). And

again, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:39-40).

PUNGENT POINT #692 – If God has, in fact, positioned men in both place and time in order that “they might seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him” (Acts 17:26-27), and if the Lord is “a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Heb 11:6), then there is no reasonable excuse for not engaging in the quest to find and please the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PUNGENT POINT #693 – There are human expressions, outward and inward, that exclude one from the Kingdom of God – and, if not repented of and abandoned, mandate their damnation (Mk 16:16; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:5-6; Rev 21:8). There is no valid excuse for committing such things, and those who insist on doing them are to be warned of the sure outcome of their conduct.

PUNGENT POINT #694 – If we are “saved by hope” (Rom 8:24-25), and if hope is the sure anchor of the soul (Heb 6:19), and if we are Christ’s house “IF we hold fast . . . the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (Heb 3:6), then woe to that person who has “no hope” (Eph 2:12) –i.e. a hope that is “sure and steadfast” (Heb 6:19).

PUNGENT POINT #695 – If eternal life is defined as knowing “the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent” (John 17:3), then a lack of acquaintance with God, and being ignorant of His will and ways, is a most serious condition.

PUNGENT POINT #696 – Properly lived, life in this world is making oneself “ready” to dwell forever with the Lord (Rev 19:7).

PUNGENT POINT #697 – Whatever is not important when you are dying, should not have the preeminence while you are living. (Rom 14:8)

PUNGENT POINT #698 – Both the dying and the living of Jesus is made manifest in the mortal bodies of the people of God: “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." Make sure they are both being accomplished in you. (2 Cor 4:10-11).

PUNGENT POINT #699 – Jesus comes to believers to give them “an understanding” of God, that we “may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” All other purported God’s are nothing more than idols (1 John 5:20-21).

PUNGENT POINT #700 – If God truly works all things together for good to them that love Him, and are the called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28), then the incidents and experiences of our lives are not the critical matter. Rather, it is how they fit into the whole of a life that is acceptable to God.

PUNGENT POINT #701 – As long as we remain “in the body” (Heb 13:3), liability exists. That is the part of us that is not yet saved – even though it will be in the resurrection of the dead – “the redemption of the body” (Rom 8:23). Until that time, we are living with an enemy that must be kept under subjection –which it will not volunteer to do (1 Cor 9:26). In an act of deliberation it must be presented to the Lord (Rom 12:1-2). No person clothed with a body of flesh and blood has an unqualified guarantee of being forever with the Lord. During our earthly tenure, promises are often attended with an “IF” (Rom 4:24; 8:11,13; 11:22; Gal 5:18; Col 1:23; 2 Tim 2:12; Heb 3:6,14).

PUNGENT POINT #702 – The objective of Christ’s present unfettered and unlimited reign is not the subduing of His enemies. He is reigning in their midst (Psa 110:2), which circumstances proves their subjection to Him. All it takes is the Spirit of Christ’s mouth and the brightness of His coming to thoroughly and publicly defeat, humiliate, and destroy His enemies (2 Thess 2:8). The purpose of His present reign is to “bring many sons to glory” (Heb 2:10). So far as the reign itself is concerned, it cannot possibly be more extensive than it is right now. It is only the manifestation of that reign can be more full.

PUNGENT POINT #703 – Satan has a phenomenal amount of weaponry in his diabolical arsenal. And yet he is totally incapable of tempting a believer beyond their ability to resist that temptation. That is because God manages our temptations, not Satan (1 Cor 10:13). As seen in Peter, Satan must even obtain permission to level strong temptations at the saints of God (Lk 22:31-32).

PUNGENT POINT #704 – God has “highly exalted” Christ, giving Him a name “that is above every name” (Phil 2:9). He has “put all things” under the feet of Jesus, and gave Him to be “head over all things” (Eph 1:22). At this present time “angels, and authorities, and powers” have been “made subject to Him” (1 Pet 3:22). He now “IS the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim 6:15). Heaven knows this. Satan and his hosts know it. It is inexcusable that professed members of Christ’s church are waiting for Him to reign.

PUNGENT POINT #705 – In Christ Jesus, men not only have “access” to the Father (Eph 2:18), they have “access with confidence” (Eph 3:12). They are urged to “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16). They can come as often as they want, stay as long as they want, and receive as much they need.

PUNGENT POINT #706 – The grace of God saves us (Eph 2:5,8), justifies us (Rom 3:24, Tit 3:7), brings us redemption and forgiveness (Eph 1:7), teaches us (Tit 2:11-12), makes us what we are in Christ (1 Cor 15:10), enables us to live in this world (1 Cor 1:12), and is the environment in which we stand (1 Pet 5:12). Believers should not submit themselves to any person or dogma that puts a throttle on the grace of God, moves it beyond consideration, or in any way minimizes its much needed influence and power.

PUNGENT POINT #707 – When any person or group of persons, in the name of the Lord, make an doctrinal issue out of something God, Christ, the Spirit, or the apostles have not designated an issue, they have assumed Divine prerogatives – and that is a most serious matter; especially if they choose to divide over it (Deut 18:20). We are admonished to have “the same mind and the

same judgment, and “speak the same thing” (1 Cor 1:10).

PUNGENT POINT #708 – Human reasoning, as valuable as it is, can never be the BASIS, or foundation, for doctrine. Doctrine must be based on Divine affirmation, not supposition, or theorization. Doctrine must be “sound” (1 Tim 1:10; 2 Tim 4:3; Tit 1:9; 2:1). Human reasoning is too weak to support that kind of doctrine.

PUNGENT POINT #709 – In this day of India rubber theology, many say they do not have a doctrine. First, this is not true. Their doctrine is, in fact, that they have no doctrine. Second, without ordained doctrine, or teaching, men are shut up to ignorance, which alienates men from God (Eph 4:18). The Word of God has too much to say about “doctrine” for such foolish aphorisms to be said (Acts 2:42; Rom 16:17; 1 Tim 1:3; 4:6,13,16; 6:3; 2 Tim 3:16; 4:2; Tit 2:10; Heb 6:1; 2 John 1:9)

PUNGENT POINT #710 – The change that is wrought in salvation is very real. It is not metaphorical, ineffectual, or in any way to be doubted. It involves a new heart and a new spirit (Ezek 36:26), a “new creation” (2 Cor 5:17), “the workmanship of God” (Eph 2:10), “the operation of God” (Col 2:12), the purging of the conscience (Heb 9:14), being born again (1 Pet 1:23), being delivered from the power of darkness, being translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son (Col 1:13), and old things passing away and all things becoming new (2 Cor 5:17). That all of this could take place without the affectation of human conduct is incredulous, to say the least.

PUNGENT POINT #711 – There is no known limit to the extensiveness of spiritual growth – no known boundary beyond which we cannot go. The target is to be “filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph 3:19), be perfected “in every good work” (Heb 13:21), and be wholly sanctified and preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord (1 Thess 5:23). Spiritual stagnation and a lack of growth is an insult to God.

PUNGENT POINT #712 – If it is true that those in Christ have been “raised . . . and made” to “sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph 2:6) – and if it is true that God has “blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, (Eph 1:3), and “given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3), then those in Christ have been given every possible advantage. On the day of judgment, they will be judged with those realities in mind. In view of that, it is on the part of wisdom to live with those verities in mind.

PUNGENT POINT #713 – If the church would take advantage of the “Comforter” (John 14:16,26; 15:26; John 16:7), and “Counselor” (Isa 9:6) that have been provided by the Living God, it would put a lot of religious professionals out of business. Too many people are profiting from the fact that professing Christians are not availing themselves of what God has given.

PUNGENT POINT #714 – The church is primarily for Deity – a bride, or wife, for Christ (Rev 129:7; 21:2,9; 22:17), and a dwelling place for God (1 Cor 3:16-17; Eph 2:22; Rev 21:3). Every other legitimate use or function of the church is subordinate to, and sanctified by, those objectives. Somehow the awareness of this has been greatly obscured.

PUNGENT POINT #715 – If God is making His wisdom known to principalities and powers in heavenly places through the church (Eph 3:10), then a clear demonstration of God’s wisdom must be perceived by these personalities in heavenly places in “the church.” Men must give some attention to the consideration of how heaven views the church” in the earth. The message of the Head of the church to the seven churches in Asia confirms that our consideration must not be from the standpoint of theoretically ideal churches.

PUNGENT POINT #716 – Division in the church will cease when those who are associated with it perceive and acknowledge that it is a sin (1 Cor 1:10; 3:3; 11:18).

PUNGENT POINT #717 – The existence of such a thing as martyrs (Acts 22:20; Rev 2:13; 17:6; 20:4) confirms that there really are a people who, for Jesus’ sake, “loved not their lives unto the death” (Rev 12:11) – people who would rather die than deny the name of Jesus. This is the kind of mindset for which Jesus died. As it is written, "And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor 5:15). Any other mindset is totally unacceptable.

PUNGENT POINT #718 – Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27). No person who fails to hear and give heed Jesus, and does not follow Him, has a right to be called one of Christ’s own, a disciple, or a “Christian.”

PUNGENT POINT #719 – It is written that “the saints shall judge the world” (1 Cor 6:2). God will judge the world by Jesus (Acts 17:31), and Jesus will employ His people in the judgment of the world (Rev 3:21). In view of this circumstance, I can almost hear an angelic voice saying in that day, “Hear ye! Hear ye! The trial of Stephen will now resume – judge Stephen presiding!

PUNGENT POINT #720 – It is not possible for man’s essential nature to change and his conduct remain the same. It is the change of character that results in a change in expression and activity. (2 Cor 5:17).

PUNGENT POINT #721 – Spiritual renewal and awakening is when a hunger and thirst for righteousness is ignited (Psa 42:2; Matt 5:6). People want more of the Word (Lk 5:1), want to know more about the Lord, and what His desires are for men. The “What must I do” attitude surfaces (Acts 2:37; 9:6; 16:30), and refuses to go away. There is a dominating interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, His death, and His resurrection. It is the kind of interest that cannot be suppressed. People will do anything to please the Lord, and instantly obey Him. We have no record of any Scriptural renewal that included any form of entertainment, a stereotyped “praise service,” or any kind of promotion.

PUNGENT POINT #722 – A dead church (Rev 3:1) does not need a program, a seminar, a recovery program, or a work shop. It needs a resurrection – and only God can raise the dead.

PUNGENT POINT #723 – Religious men should cease to shape men’s thinking by quoting supposedly “Christian sayings” and aphorisms that had their genesis with men. If men speak at all, let them do so “as the oracles of God” (1 Pet 4:11). The problem is compounded when humanly-contrived sayings become the basis for theology, doctrine, and determining who is or is

not a true believer, and what action is valid or invalid.

PUNGENT POINT #724 – The thing that makes the people of God unique is not what THEY do, but the God and Savior in whom they unwaveringly trust – the God who works in them both to do and to will of His own good pleasure. It is HIS will that they do (Matt 7:21; Eph 6:6; Acts 9:42; Heb 11:6; Phil 2:13).

PUNGENT POINT #725 – Is it true that God casts a vote for us, Satan casts a vote for us, and we cast the determining vote? Let it be clear, the responsibility for the DETERMINING choice does not rest with men, but with God. If we are not “received,” that is the end of the matter (Rom 15:7). If we are not “made accepted,” we simply will not be accepted (Eph 1:6). This does not eliminate human responsibility. It does mean that human response is evaluated by God, whether it has been done in truth or not.

PUNGENT POINT #726 – If it is true that God’s “Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Pet 1:3), then there is no valid reason for being spiritually dead (Rev 3:1) or ungodly (1 Pet 4:18).

PUNGENT POINT #727 – If the Lord “is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24), then “falling” can only be the result of a rupture in the relation of men with that Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #728 – If Paul could thank the Lord for the Thessalonians “because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (2 Thess 2:13), then men should not object to speaking in such a manner, or suggest that such language is unacceptable. There also must have been incontrovertible evidence to support the statement (1 Thess 2:13).

PUNGENT POINT #729 – If the revealed objective for the body of Christ is for all of its members to “grow up” into Christ, “which is the Head,” in all things” (Eph 4:15), then the lack of spiritual growth, perpetual juvenileness, and a lack of understanding are most serious conditions.

PUNGENT POINT #730 – The apostle prayed for the saints, when he had heard of their “love in the Spirit”: “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Col 1:9). There is no indication that God has provided a salvation that allows for these things to continually be lacking in the people of God.

PUNGENT POINT #731 – There is a profound magnitude to the salvation of God, described as “the breadth, and length, and depth, and height” (Eph 3:18), together with “the love of Christ that passeth all knowledge” (Eph 3:19). These things are intended to be “comprehended” and “known” by the people of God.

PUNGENT POINT #732 – The people of God are admonished, “Brethren, be not children in

understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men" (1 Cor 14:20). And again, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." (Eph 5:17). It is rather astounding how this requirement has been obvious ignored by the professing church – and its leaders.

PUNGENT POINT #733 – There is such a thing as a resurrection body – one that is immortal and incorruptible (1 Cor 15:52-53). It is called “our house which is from heaven” (2 Cor 5:2). When we occupy this body, we will be “clothed with our heavenly dwelling” (2 Cor 4, NIV). After making this known, it is written, "Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come" (2 Cor 5:5, NIV). If that is why we have been created in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:10) – to occupy our house from heaven – then let us get ready to move into it – a body that will be incapable of sin.

PUNGENT POINT #734 – Inner peace and stability is the result of having peace with God. As it is written, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 5:1). This is the fundamental and superior peace experienced by men. Once possessed, and as it is known and cherished by the individual, nothing else can cause distracting disturbance.

PUNGENT POINT #735 – The Holy Spirit bears fruit in the children of God (Gal 5:22-23). It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we “abound in hope” (Rom 15:13). The Spirit leads believers in successfully putting to death the deeds of the body (Rom 8:13). The saints are “builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph 2:22). The truth is obeyed “through the Spirit” (1 Pet 1:22). A theology that does not require the working of the Holy Spirit of God is false to the core. It is fundamentally wrong.

PUNGENT POINT #736 – God can put people in a position where they have nothing whatsoever to say about what happens. Without their consent, He cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden (Gen 3:23-24), cursed Cain (Gen 4:11), and destroyed the world with a flood (Gen (Gen 7:21). He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19), barred Israel from entering the promised land (Heb 3:18-19), and made Nebuchadnezzar wander in the open field for seven years, eating grass like an ox (Dan 5:21). He can make a fish swallow Jonah (Jonah 1:17), then make it spit him out (Jonah 2:10). He can abruptly end the lives of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:5-10), as well as Herod (Acts 12:21-23). That is not to mention raising the son of a widow from Nain, Jarius’ daughter, and Lazarus from the dead (Lk 7:11-13; Mk 5:35-42; John 11:39-44). Thank God, through Jesus we can be at peace with that God – “the true God” (1 John 5:20)!

PUNGENT POINT #737 – There are some places in which Jesus Himself can “do no mighty work because of the dominance of unbelief (Mark 6:4-6; Matt 13:58). It seems to me that if there are spiritually sterile churches, where no work of God can be readily detected, the explanation may be found in their likeness to the synagogues in which Jesus taught, in His own home country (Matt 13:53-57).

PUNGENT POINT #738 – If Jesus will “in no wise” cast out those who come to Him (John 6:37), and if Jesus openly invites “all” who “labor and are heavy laden” to come to Him, and He will give them rest (Matt 1:28), then all restless souls, fainting beneath the load of care, have

simply not come to Jesus. If you know of such souls, tell them what the Savior has said.

PUNGENT POINT #739 – There is a Divine protocol involved in approaching the God of heaven. It is not a mere routine or method of regimentation like those to which men are accustomed. It is, however, an established requirement. "Let us draw near WITH a true heart IN full assurance of faith, HAVING our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb 10:22)

PUNGENT POINT #740 – Jesus will defend those who choose to hear Him above other human involvements. He will give them something no one can take from them. This is seen in His words to Martha concerning her sister, Mary, who chose to listen to Him when He was in their house. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:41-42).

PUNGENT POINT #741 – No person or influence, whether human or demonic, or experience, can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. Once that love is upon us, nothing outside of ourselves can remove it. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 8:37-39). That is something you can believe, nothing doubting!

PUNGENT POINT #742 – In the nominal church there has been a dramatic shift of emphasis from God to man, from eternity to time, from Christ to contemporary life, from the inward man to the outward man, and from obtaining from the Lord to achieving in this world. Earthly success and happiness have supplanted a quest for heaven and obtaining the crown of life. That shift of emphasis required the removal of certain theological landmarks. And, as it is written, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psa 11:3).

PUNGENT POINT #743 – It is written, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov 14:12). There also is a way that "leads to life" (Matt 7:14). It is imperative that men distinguish between these two ways. The way of human default the way that SEEMS to be right, but leads to certain destruction – eternal destruction. The true way is a revealed one – one that has been made known by God through Christ Jesus. No one will be excused from not finding and entering that way.

PUNGENT POINT #744 – There are some things Jesus simply will not tolerate. Ranking high in these matters is lukewarmness – not being fervently for, or adamantly against Christ. This is a condition, although it is precisely descriptive of a considerable percentage of professing Christendom, that makes Jesus sick. He Himself said of such a church, "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth" (Rev 3:16, NKJV). Now, that is a serious condition!

PUNGENT POINT #745 – Jesus once asked a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, "What do you want Me to do for you?" (Mk 10:46, NKJV). Can you imagine him answering the Lord in the

following manner? “Lord, could you provide me with a new cloak?” Or, “Could you speak to the people passing by, telling them to contribute more to me?” Or, “I need a better mode of transportation to get to this place where I can be a more productive beggar.” Does that seem preposterous? There are a lot of prayer requests that sound a lot like such a response. Bartimaeus knew what to ask for: “Lord, that I might receive my sight.” How about you? Do you know what to ask for?

PUNGENT POINT #746 – If, at the day of judgment, a person is commanded, “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt 25:41), or “I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity” (Luke 13:27), it will really make no difference what they did with their life – for them, it will all have been vain, totally vain. Due consideration of this will compel people to live now so they will not have to hear such words from the Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #747 – There is a fight that is a “good fight.” It involves fighting to keep the faith, resisting any attempts to neutralize that faith, and firmly standing against anything that jeopardizes its retention. No wonder we are admonished, “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” (1 Tim 6:12).

PUNGENT POINT #748 – In the body of Christ “leaders” are not bosses. They are not rulers after the order of this world. Jesus said to the premier leaders in His church, His apostles, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant” (Matt 20:25-26). The saints are not told to follow the orders of their leaders, but to follow their faith (Heb 13:7). Unfortunately, this has been left out of a lot of leadership seminars.

PUNGENT POINT #749 – When worldly motivators, employed by businesses and sports, are brought into the church to create incentive, we have fallen upon hard times. As it is written, “Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?” (Jer 8:22). Unless there really is no such thing as Divine remedies, the church ought not to go to the world for help in matters pertaining to God.

PUNGENT POINT #750 – I wonder if the contemporary approach to sustaining para-church ministries through offering assistance with estate planning, could fall into the category devouring widows houses (Matt 23:14) – particularly when it may not be an expression of assistance, but of covetousness.

PUNGENT POINT #751 – If Jesus promises, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Rev 3:21), it surely is worth all of the effort required to be an overcomer. It also accents the foolishness of becoming so vulnerable to the devil, one is easily overcome.

PUNGENT POINT #752 – When Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with

Me." (Rev 3:20), He was speaking to one of His churches. The church was in such bad shape, He had to seek entrance into it. Somehow, He had been shut out of a church belonging to Him. He did not call out to all the people, but rather inquired whether or not any one person there could hear His voice and respond to Him. Do not doubt that such churches still exist.

PUNGENT POINT #753 – We are admonished to “seek peace and pursue it” 1 Pet 3:11, NKJV), “follow peace with all men” (Heb 12:14), and "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom 12:18). Yet, we are not to seek peace at any cost. If it requires compromise, conducting ourselves unwisely, or drawing back from the Lord, we must remember the words of Jesus: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt 10:34). Part of living by faith is finding a way to put those things together.

PUNGENT POINT #754 – There is a copious supply of benefits available to those who are living by faith – and it has always existed. As it is written, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High" (Psa 46:4). Like the river of Ezekiel’s vision, it was more narrow in its beginnings among men. However, with time it has broadened and deepened, so that it is now a river that cannot be crossed over – and it has “waters to swim in” (Ezek 47:1-5). Now, with Jesus enthroned in glory, no child of God has any reason to be living in spiritual poverty.

PUNGENT POINT #755 – It is lamentable that many professing believers have little respect for baptism into Christ, choosing to argue about it, and debate over its necessity – even though no one of Scriptural record ever had any questions about this ordinance. Perhaps if those who have been baptized were really walking in newness of life (Rom 6:4), there would be fewer questions about the effectiveness associated with baptism (Acts 2:38; Rom 6:1-6; Col 2:11-12, etc).

PUNGENT POINT #756 – If God does not put any importance on buildings, why did He command the building of the Tabernacle that He might dwell among the people (Ex 25:8), and give the layout for the building of the Temple (2 Chron 28:11-12). Why did Jesus call the Temple “My Father’s house” – a structure built by Herod (John 2:16), and a “house of prayer” (Isa 56:7; Matt 21:13)? Why did Jesus regularly attend the synagogue (Lk 4:16)? I realize this matter can be carried too far, and that is not my intention. However, it seems to me that the views of an unchanging God (Mal 3:6), and a Christ who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever (Heb 13:8), ought to be considered. Men should not overreact to an incorrect emphasis on religious buildings, or treat them as though they were nothing more than a human innovation.

PUNGENT POINT #757 – The faith that is “obtained” by all believers is of the same kind as that obtained by the apostles. Therefore Peter wrote, "Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 1:1, NASB). The difference is in the “measure” of faith, and not in faith itself (Rom 12:3). Among other things, faith adapts men for their role in the body of Christ (Rom 12:3-6). There is a difference in the roles of men, but not in the faith itself.

PUNGENT POINT #758 – If God really teaches men through silence, and certain things are revealed by that silence, then surely there is a set of commentaries somewhere delineating the Revelation text, "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about

the space of half an hour" (Rev 8:1). Actually, holy men have asked God NOT to be silent (Psa 28:1; 30:12).

PUNGENT POINT #759 – Once a person or a people accept the postulate that Divine requirements are sometimes based upon precedent, they are at once faced with the gargantuan task of classifying things designed by God to be precedents. Different groups issue differing licenses to perform this task – but it is always in the interest of the group, and forever remains without divine definition or sanction.

PUNGENT POINT #760 – If it is true that we are “changed” by beholding the glory of the Lord we behold (2 Cor 3:18; 2 Cor 4:6; 1 John 3:2), then the less we behold Jesus, the less glory there is, and the less change there can be. If this is true, it is a serious mistake to attempt to correct or improve human behavior by methods, technics, and disciplinary programs.

PUNGENT POINT #761 – A lot can be known about persons when their view of gathering with the people of God is known. God took note of such gatherings, declaring the people would be His “jewels” (Mal 3:16-18). David was glad when they said to him. “Let us go into the house of the Lord” (Psa 122:1). Jesus said He would be with even two or three that gathered together in His name (Matt 18:20). Paul wrote of saints being gathered together in one place (1 Cor 11:20; 14:23). Pentecost took place when brethren were gathered together in one accord in one place (Acts 2:1). All of this postulates a valid reason for coming together. And then, there is the solemn exhortation not to forsake such gatherings (Heb 10:25).

PUNGENT POINT #762 – When His disciples were alone with Jesus, they sometimes asked Him what He meant by what was said more publically (Matt 13:36-43) – and He would give them an explanation. That suggests there are some things that are privileged information, and not intended for the masses. Even Jesus did not give His pearls to the swine (Matt 7:6).

PUNGENT POINT #763 – I have often thought that, in matters pertaining to religion, titles like “Doctor,” are merely a means of distinguishing one worm from another. (Job 17:14; 25:6; Isa 41:14)

PUNGENT POINT #764 – Only faith can look “at the things that are not seen” – and that “look” transforms burdensome experiences into “light afflictions” (2 Cor 4:18)

PUNGENT POINT #765 – There are difficulties associated with being “saved.” They are not insurmountable, but they are very real. The “gate” through which one must enter is “strait,” or difficult, and the “way,” or the road on which men must walk, is “narrow” as well (Matt 7:13-14). Even the “righteous,” we are told, will be “scarcely” (with much difficulty) saved (1 Pet 4:18). It is essential to be “converted” (Matt 18:3), “repent” (Lk 13:3,5; “eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man” (John 6:53), and “abide” in Christ (John 15:4). Even if men do not understand what all of that means, it should be obvious that salvation requires the full attention of the one being saved.

PUNGENT POINT #766 – The love of God can be perceived. As it is written, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for

the brethren" (1 John 3:16). Let there be no question about whether or not God loved us. Nor, indeed, should there be any question about our willingness to lay down our lives for the brethren –i.e. Christ's brethren (Heb 2:11), that is why they are our brethren.

PUNGENT POINT #767 – God certainly did not need to confirm His promise with an oath, for He “cannot lie” (Tit 1:2). However, He was "willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel,” and therefore “confirmed it by an oath" (Heb 6:17). In taking that oath, He was helping us to believe. It was our infirmity that required the help, not His character.

PUNGENT POINT #768 – The same grace that saves us also teaches "us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13). It appears to me that you cannot have one of these benefits without having the other also – salvation and effective teaching.

PUNGENT POINT #769 – The faithfulness of God, we are told, is manifested in Him not allowing us to be tempted above our ability, and in MAKING a way of escape with every temptation (1 Cor 10:13). Therefore, there is no valid excuse for yielding to temptation. When you are tempted, do not yield. Look for the escape – the way out – it is there!

PUNGENT POINT #770 – Some one has well said, “The way up is down.” Here is how the Lord Jesus stated it: "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11). Again after telling of two men that prayed – one with pride, and the other with humility – “He said, I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:14). Woe to that man who promotes himself. If anyone is worth promoting, God will do it (Psa 75:6).

PUNGENT POINT #771 – If man “lives by every Word of God,” as Moses declared (Deut 8:3), and Jesus confirmed (Matt 4:4; Lk 4:4), then those who do not regularly ingest the Word of God are, spiritually speaking, either dead or dying.

PUNGENT POINT #772 – If Moses esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: “for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb 11:26), what can be said of those professing Christians who choose some of the miserable baubles of this world, exchanging their soul to have them?

PUNGENT POINT #773 – Satan used a higher order of temptations when he tempted Christ. The things that tempted Judas, or drunkards, or fornicators, could not tempt Christ, for nothing of Satan was in Him (John 14:30). If you doubt this, how many times have you been tempted to turn a stone into bread? When were you tempted to jump off the pinnacle of a high building, banking on the angels keeping you from dashing your foot against a stone? Or, when was the last time you were tempted to think all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory, were within your grasp? Yet, those were all in the category of things with which we are tempted: The lust of the flesh (stones into bread); the lust of the eyes (all the kingdoms of the world); the pride of life

(the angels will bear thee up). Think about it!

PUNGENT POINT #774 – God said of David, "David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite" (1 Kgs 15:5). To say the least, it is not wise to speak in contradiction of that statement, as though the Spirit had not stated the case accurately – as God sees it.

PUNGENT POINT #775 – It is said of a person who is justified by God, "by Him [Jesus Christ] all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39). This being true, those who have been "baptized into Christ" (Gal 3:27), who wrestle with guilt, can surely overcome it by concentrating on believing. There is no chance that the affirmation just quoted is an overstatement.

PUNGENT POINT #776 – At this present time Jesus Christ "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim 6:15). There is an appointed time when God will "show" the exalted Christ to be precisely what He has said – what He is right now (1 Tim 6:15). At that time, a lot of theology will have to be scrapped. Best to throw it away now.

PUNGENT POINT #777 – No theory has any moral or spiritual power. A theory cannot clarify, confirm, or prove anything. It cannot properly be classified as knowledge. It cannot expose an error or reveal the truth. It cannot produce satisfaction in those who embrace it. It cannot bring relief from sorrow, or cause insightful rejoicing. A theory is like "a dead lion," that has no effect upon a "living dog" (Eccl 9:4). A theory simply cannot do anything. So why are men so eager to embrace theories? – in academia, theories like evolution; in religion, theories like Premillennialism, Postmillennialism, Amillennialism, and Preterism? A plaguing question, indeed.

PUNGENT POINT #778 – There is a work going on in salvation that must be known and relied upon by the children of God. They are to build their lives around this truth: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." (1 Pet 5:10).

PUNGENT POINT #779 – The fact that "God is" can only be established to the heart by faith. It is not possible to amass enough external evidence to persuade a person that "God is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb 11:6). It is true that God's eternal power and Divinity are "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom 1:20). However, in all the history of the world, no one has ever looked at nature and come to this conclusion. That is why God has revealed Himself, particularly doing so in and through Jesus Christ.

PUNGENT POINT #780 – For those professing an association with God through Jesus Christ, all of life is a great test of their profession. In opportunities (Matt 25:36), trials (1 Pet 1:7), obedience (2 Cor 10:6), the love of the brethren (1 John 5:1), and the establishment of their priorities (Matt 6:33), the children of God are made known.

PUNGENT POINT #781 – The effectiveness of our baptism is traced back to the resurrection of Jesus Christ: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us . . . BY the resurrection of Jesus Christ:" (1 Pet 3:21).

PUNGENT POINT #782 – The failure to be “separate” (2 Cor 6:17), being holy (1 Pet 1:15-16), and not touching the unclean thing (2 Cor 6:17), is disqualification from being “forever with the Lord.” In that glorious realm, "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev 21:27). It is time for the professing “church” to take the matter of separation from the world seriously, and to get sin out of the members’ lives. There simply is too much of the world in the modern church.

– Given . Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #783 – The word “seeker” does not occur in any standard version of Scripture. It has been revealed that God has strategically placed nations in both time and place in order that they might seek the Lord – and find Him. "From one man He made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:26-27, NIV). Now, that puts a different light–inspired light–on seeking the Lord.

– Given . Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #784 – Man’s involvement/response to salvation is imperative, but it is not at the foundational or causal level. At the root, it is what Jesus Christ has accomplished that accounts for the putting away of sin (Heb 9:26). He is the One who has delivered us from this present evil world (Gal 1:34). He is the One who has “destroyed the devil” (Heb 2:14), “spoiled [plundered] principalities and powers” (Col 2:15), and reconciled us to God (Col 1:20-21). It is He who has thoroughly “satisfied” God (Isa 53:11). God “made Him to be sin for us,” “that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor 5:21). Without those accomplishments, any response from man carries no weight. Because of these things our responses can be received by God.

– Given . Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #785 – If men insist on being the ones who cause salvation by their works, then there are two things they must do. First, they must go up into heaven, and bring Christ down to earth. Second, they must bring Him up from the grave, and raise Him from the dead. If they cannot do these two things, then they must rely on the One who did do them. Thus it is written, “But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above): Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom 10:6-9). If men cannot do these things, then they must rely on Him who did!

– Given . Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #786 – If the Law was “our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal 3:24-25), then men cannot be saved unless they are first exposed to the demands of God’s holy, righteous, and spiritual Law (Rom 7:12,14). It is not enough that they realize the need of help and strength. They must first see they are transgressors

(James 2:9), disobedient (Tit 3:3), and dead in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1-2). The “Gospel of peace,” and glad tidings of good things” (Rom 10:15) is not effective until the bad news is first delivered. This was the manner of sermons recorded in the book of Acts (Acts 2:14-40; 3; 3:12-26; 4:8-12; 7:1-32; 13:16-41; 17:22-31).

– Given . Blakely

PUNGENT POINT #787 – There are twelve detailed and summary messages recorded in the book of Acts – messages delivered to those who were NOT in Christ. (1)–Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40). (2)– Peter in the Temple (Acts 3:12-26). (3) Peter to the rulers, elders, and priests of Israel (Acts 4:8-12). (4)– Peter at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:34-48). (5)– Stephen speaking to the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:2-53). (6)– Paul in a synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:16-47). (7)– Paul and Barnabas in the area of Lystra (Acts 14:51-17). (8)– Paul in Athens (Acts 17:22-31). (9)– Paul before some accusing Jews (Acts 22:1-21). (10)– Paul reasoning with Felix (Acts 24:25). (11)– Paul speaking to Agrippa (Acts 26:1-29). (12)– Paul to some Jews in Rome (Acts 28:17-29).

In all of those messages tro the unsaved, there was not a single reference to the love of God, or to Jesus helping to resolve the problems of men. Now, there is something to think about!

PUNGENT POINT #788 – There is no definitive affirmation or doctrine in Scripture concerning the will of man, or man’s “free moral agency.” There are statements that have to do with men being willing. Some samples are here provided (Ex 35:5,21; 1 Chron 28:9,21; 29:5; Isa 1:19; Matt 26:41; John 5:35; 2 Cor 5:8; 2 Cor 8:3,12; 1 Thess 2:8; Heb 13:18). The Spirit did declare that in the day of Christ men would be “willing in the day of His power” (Psa 110:3). Those are the kind of references we have to work with. They are not sufficient to develop an official and binding teaching concerning the will of man. They are enough to confirm that God, particularly within the framework of salvation, works within the circumference of willingness – His own first, and secondarily that of men.

PUNGENT POINT #789 – As a matter of observation, there is no reference in Scripture to “personal evangelism,” although there are examples of proclaiming the good news to individuals. In fact, neither the word “personal” nor the word “evangelism” occur in most versions of Scripture. He New King James Verison refers to “personal favoritism” (Lk 20:21; Gal 2:6), and “personal aide” (Acts 12:20). The New American Standard Bible refers to “personal servant” (Gen 39:4), “personal service” (Dan 1:5,19), “personal presence” (2 Cor 10:10), “personal interest” (Phil 2:4), and “personal favoritism” (James 1:21). The New International Version refers to “personal advisor” (Gen 26:26; 1 Kgs 4:5), “personal servant” (2 Sam 13:17), “personal vows” (2 Kgs 12:4), “personal treasures” (1 Chron 29:2), “person attendants” (Esther 2:2), and “personal servants” (Acts 12:20). The New Revised Standard refers to “personal opinion” (Prov 18:2). It seems to me that cherished nomenclature should have a strong Scriptural basis.

PUNGENT POINT #790 – One of the marks of the New Covenant is, “they shall all know Me” (Jer 31:34; Heb 8:11). Any church, or local congregation, that is fundamentally unacquainted with God, could certainly not be called a “new testament church.” This has some rather alarming implications.

PUNGENT POINT #791 – Once a person has been forgiven by God, his sins can no longer be

justly charged against him. The challenge is hurled out, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Rom 8:33). This being true, what shall we say of those who say Abraham was a liar, Jacob was a deceiver, and David was an adulterer and murderer? Such people, in spite of their hoary arguments, will be judged with the same kind of judgment they leveled against those saints of old (Matt 7:2). They chose to give a negative evaluation of those saints even though God never so assessed them.

PUNGENT POINT #792 – If the people of God are admonished to seek the things that are above (Col 3:1), and to set their affection on things above, and not on the earth (Col 3:2); and if the King of kings and Lord of lords said to “seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matt 6:33), then those with other priorities are in serious trouble.

PUNGENT POINT #793 – The “great God and our Savior” (Tit 2:13), who "is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 1:24), is to be trusted fully, and without doubt and withdrawing fear.

PUNGENT POINT #794 – If it is true that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psa 46:1), then in times of trouble, we are to look to Him, not to the trouble. By faith, our thoughts can be occupied with our Helper, instead of with our troubles and difficulties.

PUNGENT POINT #795 – On the day of judgment, those who have lived “unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor 5:15), can bank on Jesus saying something like, “He is with Me!” If He is “not ashamed to call them brethren” during their earthly sojourn (Heb 2:11), He will certainly not be ashamed to own them in “that great and notable day of the Lord” (Acts 2:20). To those who have been “faithful unto death” (Rev 2:10), our blessed Lord will say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Mat 25:21). Now, that is worth living for!

PUNGENT POINT #796 – Jesus, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden, affirmed, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me DRAW HIM: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44), and "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were GIVEN TO HIM of my Father" (John 6:65). The Holy Spirit moved Peter to write, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might BRING US TO GOD, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pet 3:18). It is not possible that any view of salvation that omits or obscures these realities, is true.

PUNGENT POINT #797 – The phrase “the will of man” is mentioned two times in Scripture: John 1:13 affirms that the sons of God are NOT born “by the will of man.” Second Peter 1:21 declared that prophecy did NOT come by “the will, of man.” The phrase “will of God” is mentioned twenty-three times from Mark through 1 John 2:17), “His will” is mentioned thirteen times, and “His own will” three times. It should be obvious which will is to be emphasized.

PUNGENT POINT #798 – In salvation, we obtain fellowship with God (1 John 1:3), fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:9), and fellowship, or communion, with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:14). God is said to dwell in His people (1 John 4:12,15). Jesus dwells in them (Eph 3:16-

17; Col 1:27), the Spirit dwells in them (Rom 8:9,11), and the Word of Christ dwells in them (Col 3:16). Add to that the fact that the grace of God, which brings salvation, effectively teaches us to reject ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (Tit 2:11). None of these are responsible for the eruption of sin, indifference, lukewarmness, or disobedience. All of them are attended by a moral and spiritual power that removes any valid excuse for failing to grow up into Christ in all things (Eph 4:15). It is not possible to come up with a greater advantage in the matter of growing up (2 Pet 3:18, resisting the devil (James 4:7), and perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1).

PUNGENT POINT #799 – The fact of the matter is that, concerning “spiritual understanding” (Col 1:9), “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3) are “hid” in Christ (Col 2:2). The persuasion of this reality, together with the acceptance of Christ’s present teaching ministry (Eph 4:20-21; 1 John 5:20) will shape the manner in which conscientious men seek the truth of God.

PUNGENT POINT #800 – With the exclusion of God the Father (1 Cor 15:27), there is not a personality in heaven, on earth, or under the earth (Phil 2:10), that is not currently in total subjection to Jesus Christ (1 Pet 3:22). He is, in ever sense, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim 6:15). This is known in heaven. It is also known by the devil and his angels. The only personalities who have trouble accepting this are the offspring of Adam – which is, at this time, the inferior personalities.

PUNGENT POINT #801 – The future is bright for those who fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12), finish the course of life that has been set before them (Heb 12:12), and keep the faith (2 Tim 4:7). Paul summarized the inexplicable benefit this way: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Tim 4:8). That is worth a hearty and consistent effort, unwavering faithfulness, and separation from the world.

PUNGENT POINT #802 – God has unequivocally stated, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). It now becomes the solemn obligation of every professed believer to determine by sound reasoning whether or not they have the Son of God. Is He living in them or not? This is for their benefit, not God’s – He already knows the facts in the case. Their knowledge can only enhance the experience. It will have no bearing whatsoever on the facts.

PUNGENT POINT #803 – It is what happens AFTER the trying of our faith that proves its validity. An expression of this is found in a testimony given by Paul. “We are troubled on every side, yet NOT DISTRESSED; we are perplexed, but NOT IN DESPAIR "Persecuted, but NOT FORSAKEN; cast down, but NOT DESTROYED" (2 Cor 4:8-9).

PUNGENT POINT #804 – There is a Divinely ordained process involved in readying us for glory. God Himself is in charge of this process. One perspective of it is stated by Peter. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pet 5:10).

PUNGENT POINT #805 – If it is true that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa 30:5), you may very well be close to the conclusion of your current trial and sorrow. Look up, saint of God! Look up! For you, this may be "the morning!"

PUNGENT POINT #806 – All of your temptations are managed by the Lord. None of them are random, or unique to the individual. And they are not controlled by the devil, even though they may appear to be. Here is how the Spirit states the case. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor 10:13). All of us have good reason to thank the Lord for this arrangement.

PUNGENT POINT #807 – God can, and is disposed, to put things in the hearts of men. He put in the hearts of Bazaleel and Aholiab to teach the craftsmanship required in the building of the Tabernacle (Ex 35:31-35). He "put" wisdom in Solomon's heart (1 Kgs 10:24). He put in the king's heart "to beautify the house of the Lord in Jerusalem" (Ezra 7:27). He put in Nehemiah's heart to rebuild the wall in Jerusalem (Neh 2:12). David confessed God had "put gladness" in his heart (Psa 4:7). He put an "earnest care" for the Corinthians in the heart of Titus (2 Cor 8:16). God promised He would put His Law in the inwards parts of His people (Jer 31:33; Heb 8:10). He said He would put His fear in men's hearts (Jer 32:40). It is good to trust in THAT God, through Jesus Christ the Lord!

PUNGENT POINT #808 – John wrote his First Epistle in order that those who actually have eternal life might know that they do: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John 5:13). That means such knowledge is important – even vital.

PUNGENT POINT #809 – The Lord revealed Himself to be a God who visits "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation" (Ex 34:7). He also revealed through Moses that He is "the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations" (Deut 7:9). What a marvelous comparison!

PUNGENT POINT #810– There is such a thing as great and stressful difficulty turning out to be salvation, or deliverance, through the prayers of the saints. As it is written, "For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil 1:19). Now, there is something to put into the arsenal of your mind!

PUNGENT POINT #811 – It is affirmed in Scripture, "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Prov 21:1). While it is true our country does not officially have a king, this text appears to me to be more powerful than the voting booth.

PUNGENT POINT #812– If it is true that God "doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?" (Dan 4:35), then it makes perfect sense "that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1 John 5:15). The persuasion of that truth will transform one's approach to prayer.

PUNGENT POINT #813 – Thinking is to be a strong point among the people of God. They are to continually renew their minds (Rom 12:2), be "renewed in the spirit of their minds" (Eph 4:23), and gird up the loins of their minds" (1 Pet 1:13). God is also to be loved with "all thy mind" (Matt 22:37). A spiritual leader is to have a "ready mind," or willing mind (1 Pet 5:2). There is such a thing as a "pure mind" (2 Pet 3:1), "humblness of mind" (Col 3:12), and "a sound mind" (2 Tim 1:7). It is time to restore good and godly thinking within the professing church.

PUNGENT POINT #814 – God's people are noted for what they "know." Twenty-two times from Romans through First John, the Spirit refers to what "we know" (Rom 3:19; 7:14; 1 Cor 8:1,4; 2 Cor 5:1; 8:22,26,28; 1 Tim 1:8; Heb 10:30; 1 John 2:3,18; 3:2,14,19,24; 1 John 5:2,15,18,19,20). Spend some time and confirm if you are included in the "we know."

PUNGENT POINT #815 – There are some things God "cannot" do. He cannot be tempted with evil (James 1:13). He "cannot lie" (Tit 1:2). He "cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim 2:13). In all of these things, the prohibiting factor is not the lack of strength or aptitude, but a nature that will not allow such things. God is holy, consistent, and unwavering. Any view that suggests otherwise is simply wrong.

PUNGENT POINT #816 – If a person does not receive the love of the truth – and that is something that is "RECEIVED" – God will dictate what he does believe, leaving him no alternative but to believe a lie and be damned. Thus it is written, "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; BECAUSE they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And FOR THIS CAUSE God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess 2:8-12). A sobering truth, indeed!

PUNGENT POINT #817 – When Peter reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and the confirmation that God had received them, those who heard these things, "held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18). If God is glorified through such sayings, it would be good to hear them more frequently.

PUNGENT POINT #818 – When God gives His grace, there are perceived evidences of it. It is

said of Barnabas, "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" (Acts 11:23).

PUNGENT POINT #819 – Every child of God has a competing law, or principle, within – something separate and distinct from what is obtained in Christ. Paul spoke of this intrusive law in this manner: "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" (Rom 7:23). By this Paul did not mean he had to sin, but that he had to deal with sin, rejecting its lusts, casting down imaginations, resisting the devil. Have you detected such a law in yourself?

PUNGENT POINT #820 – If God has predetermined that those He saves will be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29-30), then all those who are not being so conformed are outside of the will and purpose of God.

PUNGENT POINT #821 – If it is true, as the Word of God affirms, that we “are complete in Him” [Christ] (Col 2:10), then, so far as spiritual life is concerned, there is nothing that has had its genesis with men that is needed in the lives of the saints. All such programs, procedures, doctrinal additions, traditions, etc, are in the category of “dung” and refuse, and are to be discarded as worthless (Phil 3:9).

PUNGENT POINT #822 – Moses walked away from all of the advantages of living in Egypt, and in the very household of Pharaoh (Heb 11:24-25). Paul chose to throw away the advantages of a religious pedigree, and the elite under the Law, in order to apprehend Christ (Phil 3:4-8). I have noticed over the years that a phenomenal number of religious professionals continue to dig in the garbage cans of human attainment for what Moses and Paul threw away.

PUNGENT POINT #823 – When we consider the greatness of salvation, the fulness of its provisions, and the “Eternal glory” that attends it, we should have done with small thoughts concerning what we can be and do. We have been called into an “eternal purpose” (Eph 3:11), and made “one spirit” with the King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Cor 6:17). The Lord has given us His Holy Spirit (1 Thess 4:8), has “created” us in order to do “good works” (Eph 2:10), and has promised He will be with us, “even unto the end of the world” (Matt 28:20; Heb 13:5). He has assured us that “all things are possible to him that believeth” (Mk 9:23). We have access to the throne of all grace (Eph 3:12; Heb 4:16), and to “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places” (Eph 1:3). There is no justifiable reason for any child of God to be unproductive, mediocre, or be lacking in growth. “All things are yours!” (1 Cor 3:21-23). Believe it!

PUNGENT POINT #824 – Paul prayed that our love might “abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment,” in order that we might “approve things that are excellent” (Phil 1:10). And, what are the “things that are excellent?” They are surpassing things – surpassing by their very nature, not by mere appearance. They are the “things” that are not contaminated by “this present evil world” – things that are compatible with heaven, nourishing to faith, and

conducive to hope. These are “things” that can transport into the glory, and will, by their very nature, outlast the fading fancies of this world. To “approve” of such things is to perceive their value, and thus embrace them. It is to be able to distinguish them from the things that are passing away. Are you able to approve such things? Can you perceive them, and comprehend their relevance to your life now and in the world to come? If so, then Paul’s prayer is being answered in you. Give thanks to God for this marvelous benefit.

PUNGENT POINT #825 – This is something to know: “KNOWING this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience” [endurance, or perseverance] (James 1:3). God is the One who tests, or tries, the faith of men (Psa 5:9; 11:5; 1 Thess 2:4). Their faith is not taken for granted. A profession of faith is not sufficient. Faith is tested in the furnaces and lions den’s of Divinely orchestrated circumstances. That trial is designed to strengthen resolve, endurance, and spiritual stamina.

PUNGENT POINT #826 – There really is no satisfactory answer to the Divine interrogation, “Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?” (Luke 24:38). The question is not asked to obtain an answer, but to promote self-examination.

PUNGENT POINT #827 – Comfort is NOT ministered at the point of experiential commonality. You may not have passed through the same trial as one who is being troubled – but you can still minister comfort to them. That is because comfort is ministered at a deeper level than that of specific common experience. Thus it is written, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in ANY TROUBLE, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God” (2 Cor 1:3-4). The quieting of the soul goes deeper than the agitation.

PUNGENT POINT #828 – There is an effectual teaching that does not come through men. It is a teaching that is corroborated by the faithful teaching of men, yet did not originate with their instruction. Thus Paul wrote, “But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.” (1 Thess 4:9). This is a marvelous circumstance.

PUNGENT POINT #829 – Sometimes faithful men of God suffer trouble as though they were evil-doers, yet, the truth they speak is not necessarily hindered by such false reports. As Paul wrote, “Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound” (2 Tim 2:9). Of course, God will settle all such matters in the day of judgment.

PUNGENT POINT #830 – There is such a thing as “presumptuous sins” (Psa 19:13) – sins that are committed out of pride and arrogance, because a person is reasoning incorrectly, assuming things that are not true. This is like Eve eating the forbidden fruit because she “saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one

wise.” She therefore “took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Gen 3:6) – even though her assessment was 100% wrong. That was the first presumptuous sin committed by humanity – and it was committed the very first time mankind was faced with a choice between good and evil.

PUNGENT POINT #831 – Every person in Christ must deal with "every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us," or “everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles” (Heb 12:1). This is some personal area of vulnerability, that holds us back from making progress, or introduces the element of jeopardy. The answer is not to learn to wrestle with such things, but to learn to lay them aside, or throw them off. As it is written, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us LAY ASIDE every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb 12:1). Other versions read “throw off” (NIV), “get rid of” (CEV), and “strip off” (NLT). Does that seem to difficult to you? It can be done – rather MUST be done – as the text continues, by "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb 12:2). If you do not know what that means, then the mandate is, “Go and learn what this means” (Matt 9:13).

PUNGENT POINT #832 – You have a body that “cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor 15:50). It is a “vile body” (Phil 3:21), and is referred to as “the body of this death” (Rom 7:24). Yet, both the death and life of Jesus are to be manifested in it (1 Cor 4:10-11). Those very bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20), and belong to Christ (1 Cor 6:15). The saints are charged with managing those bodies with the spiritual weaponry that has been given to them. Like Paul, they are to keep under their bodies, not allowing them to dictate their decisions and course of life (1 Cor 9:27).

PUNGENT POINT #833 – The people of God must never forget that “the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” – or "Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4, NIV). It is not possible to live in violation of that word and still be accepted by the Living God.

PUNGENT POINT #834 – “Sound doctrine,” or teaching, is an imperative. Paul spoke of a time when men – religious men – would “not endue sound doctrine” (2 Tim 4:3). He wrote to Titus that the exhortation and conviction of gainsayers could only be accomplished through “sound doctrine” (Tit 1:9). He also wrote that things were to be spoken that “become sound doctrine,” or are “in accord with sound doctrine” (Tit 2:1, NIV).

PUNGENT POINT #835 – Servants, or those who are under masters, are admonished to not pilfer, but show all good fidelity “that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things," or “make the teaching about God our Savior attractive” (Titus 2:10, NIV). It is sad, but true, that Christians do not generally have the reputation of being good, aggressive, and

trustworthy workers. This is even true of some church leaders. Such things ought not to be!

PUNGENT POINT #836 – Timothy, a young man, was warned, "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim 2:22). All professed youth ministries are to be evaluated and carried out with this in mind. From a Scriptural point of view, it is even questionable that the concept of a "youth ministry" is valid.

PUNGENT POINT #837 – If God has "highly exalted Him [Christ], and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Phil 2:9-10), then Jesus has no competitors. All who have chosen to serve someone other than Jesus have been deceived. There is not anyone who can be properly viewed as His equal, or in any way superior to Him.

PUNGENT POINT #838 – Jesus has not been enthroned to make the world a better place to live. He is rather devoted to bringing many sons to glory (Heb 2:10), which involves calling them out of the world (Acts 15:14), reconciling them to God (Col 1:20), preparing them for the eventual destruction of the present heavens and earth (2 Pet 3:10-12), and presentation to Himself (Eph 5:27). Such circumstances do not justify a quest or worldly prominence.

PUNGENT POINT #839 – Once Jesus had completed His mission of laying down His life and taking it up again (John 10:17-18), He was "received up into heaven" (Mk 16:19; 1 Tim 3:16). His primary work is now His High Priestly ministry, which involves His intercession and mediation in behalf of those who are coming to God through Him (Heb 7:25; 1 Tim 2:5).

PUNGENT POINT #840 – When Jesus entered into the world the first time, He was not recognized (John 1:10-11). When He comes again, this will not be the case, but He will be seen for who He really is by "every eye" (Rev 1:7). Those who are anticipating a secret rapture of the church are simply wrong.

PUNGENT POINT #841 – A leader in the body of Christ must be one who is noted for speaking the Word of God, and has a faith that can be followed (Heb 13:7). Organization and administrative skills, as men consider them, do not even have a rank on the qualification scale.

PUNGENT POINT #842 – If the church is "the body of Christ" (Col 1:18), the "Temple, of God" (1 Cor 3:16-17), "sanctified" (1 Cor 1:2), and "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15), then when faithless and weak people comprise most of the professing church, it is like Jesus having a group of apostles made up of eleven Judas's and one Peter.

PUNGENT POINT #843 – It is time for churches to collectively demand an instant cessation of all preaching and teaching that lacks spiritual substance and is void of power. No person,

however gifted, should be allowed to speak in the name of the Lord who does not have a prevailing interest in presenting the people as a chaste virgin to Jesus Christ (2 Cor 11:2; Col 1:28).

PUNGENT POINT #844 – At the point a person seeks to please men, altering his message and manners to gratify the desires of the people, he ceases to be the servant of Christ. The Son of God will not commission such a man, will give him no work to do, and will not receive anything that he does (Gal 1:10; 1 Thess 2:4).

PUNGENT POINT #845 – The minister who shapes his message and ministry to guarantee the continuance of his salary, is prophesying for wages, and is a brother to Balaam (2 Pet 2:15; 1 Pet 5:2)

PUNGENT POINT #846 – God’s “power unto salvation,” or “for salvation,” is not friendship. It is not a personal witness. It is not a fine-tuned organization, or special training. It is not prayer. The power that is in order to salvation is found in a message – “the Gospel of Christ” (Rom 1:16), elsewhere referred to as “the record God that God gave of His Son” (1 John 5:10-1).

PUNGENT POINT #847 – The means through which we become “partakers of the Divine nature” are the “exceeding great and precious promises” of God (2 Pet 1:4). Believers are like God to the degree they have believed and appropriated His good promises.

PUNGENT POINT #848 – The fervent and effectual prayer of a righteous man “is powerful and effective”(James 5:16, NIV). That being true, it seems to me that being righteous should rank high on the ladder of human objectives.

PUNGENT POINT #849 – If Jesus is truly “the faithful witness” (Rev 1:5), then He should, without fail, be both heard and heeded.

PUNGENT POINT #850 – The professed church must make more room for Jesus, and no room for the flesh (Eph 3:17; Rom 8:7-8).

PUNGENT POINT #851 – Ephesus was never visited by Jesus when He walked among men, going about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil (Acts 10:38). Yet, over two decades after Jesus returned to heaven, Paul wrote to the Ephesians, referring to them learning Christ, hearing Him, and being taught by Him (Eph 4:20-21).

PUNGENT POINT #852 – Jesus said the Scriptures testify of Him, and when understood will move men to come to Him (John 5:39). A holy angel, informed in the ways and message of God, said, “the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10). If any person fails to see

Jesus in Scripture, that person has not properly understood Scripture.

PUNGENT POINT #853 – There have been individuals empowered by God to make known specific things. Abraham was raised up to show the effectiveness of faith (Rom 4:9-16). Solomon was raised up to show that all of the wisdom “under the sun” and an abundance of wealth are not enough to save a person (1 Kgs 4:29-33; 10:23; 2 Kgs 11:9-11). Job was raised up to confirm how much a person can suffer without denying the Lord (Job 1:1-2:13; 1:22; 2:3; 13:15; 42:7).

PUNGENT POINT #854 – There have been people of whom God Almighty said, “Pray not thou for this people” (Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:11). Even though powerful intercessors (Noah, Daniel, and Job) prayed for such people, the Lord said He would not hear them, and they could only deliver themselves (Ezek 14:14,20). It is still true that, within the circumference of Divine wisdom and purpose, God’s Spirit “will not always strive with men” (Gen 6:3). Men sin grievously when they presume upon God’s mercy and longsuffering. They also do so when they misrepresent the Living God.

PUNGENT POINT #855 – There is sin for which, Jesus said, there is no forgiveness (Matt 12:31-32; Mk 3:29; Luke 12:10); and a moral and spiritual condition from which men cannot be recovered (Heb 6:4-6; 10:26). It is not for men to speculate concerning the specific identity of this condition, but rather to make sure they are not living in such a manner as to allow it to occur.

PUNGENT POINT #856 – There is no known line of limitation beyond which spiritual growth cannot take place (Eph 4:15; 2 Pet 3:18). Neither is there any prohibiting law that in any way limits possessing “the fruit of the Spirit” (Gal 5:22-23).

PUNGENT POINT #857 – Transformation cannot be achieved by mere personal discipline or regimen. We are “changed” while beholding “the glory of the Lord.” It is not possible for any degree of transformation to take place without a corresponding focus on the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor 3:18; 4:6).

PUNGENT POINT #858 – If Jesus is, in fact, “the Author and Finisher of our faith” (Heb 12:2), then faith can neither commence nor be brought to its intended completion without Him.

PUNGENT POINT #859 – Wherever there is a Jesus presented that contradicts the One revealed through the apostles; and wherever there is a Spirit that is out of harmony with Holy Spirit made known by them; and wherever there is a gospel that differs from the Gospel preached by the apostles, imposters are found proclaiming a false message – “another Jesus,” “another Spirit,” and “another gospel.” That is a matter of revelation (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6-7). Such presentations should not be called “opinions,” or “views,” but exactly what the Spirit calls them.

PUNGENT POINT #860 – If, in preaching and teaching in the name of the Lord, one’s main point, or emphasis, is off-center, everything built upon that point is erroneous, leading men in the wrong direction (1 Cor 3:10-11).

PUNGENT POINT #861 – When we consider the greatness of salvation, the fulness of its provisions, and the “Eternal glory” that attends it, we should have done with small thoughts concerning what we can be and do. We have been called into an “eternal purpose,” and made “one spirit” with the King of kings and Lord of lords. The Lord has given us His Holy Spirit, has “created” us in order to do “good works,” and has promised He will be with us, “even unto the end of the world.” He has assured us that “all things are possible to him that believeth.” We have access to the throne of all grace, and to “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.” There is no justifiable reason for any child of God to be unproductive, mediocre or be lacking in growth. “All things are yours!” Believe it! (Eph 3:11; 1 Cor 6:17; 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 2:10; Matt 28:20; Matt 29:36; Eph 1:4; 3:12).

PUNGENT POINT #862 – Considering that “the church” is being built by Christ (Matt 16:18), is added to by God Himself (Acts 2:47), is addressed by the Holy Spirit (Rev 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22), is the body of Christ (Col 1:18), is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim 3:15), is sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints (1 Cor 1:2), I wonder how many so-called churches are really “churches?” It seems to me that, in some cases, a lot has been taken for granted that may not be true.

PUNGENT POINT #863 – If the blood of Christ has redeemed just from “vain conversation,” or “the empty way of life received by tradition” from those before us (1 Pet 1:18), then no man can justify holding on to such vanity. Only the knowledge of the truth makes men free (John 8:32; 1 Tim 2:4).

PUNGENT POINT#864 – Let us be clear about the presence of the following qualities in the professed church: fruitlessness, lukewarmness, division, unfaithfulness, disobedience, unbelief, hardheartedness, spiritual ignorance, and other such things. These do not come from God, are not the result of Christ’s ministry, and are not the fruit of the Spirit. As quickly as we identify their real source, we need a strong initiative that will result in purging the church of those who insist on remaining in such a state. Then we can get down to the real business of perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 6:14-7:1).

PUNGENT POINT #865 – Some people have learned to live with unacceptable and spiritually lethal conditions. Already they have lost a sense of the wrongness of some things that have an eroding influence upon the soul. In addition to morally unacceptable conditions, there are spiritual conditions to which the soul must not become accustomed. Some of them might include, attending a church where the people are not being nourished up in the words of faith (1 Tim 4:6), choosing to remain where lukewarmness is prevalent (Rev 3:16), and where false teaching is tolerated (Rev 2:14-15,20,24). Maintaining such associations can be viewed as an unequal yoke (2 Cor 6:14-17), for none of those traits are in any way associated with faith. They

are rather associated with unbelief.

PUNGENT POINT #866 – At the root, differing theological and doctrinal views involve differing concepts of God and Christ. All such views, at some point, connect with a person's understanding of God and Christ – the knowledge of which is defined as “eternal life” (John 17:3). This is why religious men must take seriously statements such as the following: "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him" (2 Cor 11:4), and "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS. Amen." (1 John 5:20-21).

PUNGENT POINT #867 – Strictly speaking, the death of Jesus was a miracle. Death is the wages of sin (Rom 6:23) – but Jesus “did no sin” (1 Pet 2:22). Death had no claim on Him. The only way Jesus could die was to Himself lay down His life – which is what His Father commanded Him to do (John 10:17-18). If Jesus had not dismissed His Spirit (Lk 23:46), committing it to the Father, He could not have died. Jesus did not die of asphyxiation. He did not die from a loss of blood, or of a broken heart. He was “obedient to death (Phil :8), submitting to it– a death in which God, having laid the iniquity of us all upon Christ (Isa 53:6), condemned sin in the flesh (Rom 8:3). The rest of humanity have no choice in the matter of death (Heb 9:27).

PUNGENT POINT #868 – The effectiveness of baptism is traced to several things. (1)– Believing on Jesus Christ (Mk 16:16; Acts 8:37). (2)– Faith in the operation of God (Col 2:12). (3) Being united with Christ in His death (Rom 6:3-4).– (4) The resurrection of Jesus from the dead (1 Pet 3:21). Those who insist that baptism is not connected with being saved need to account for these actions apart from baptism – and that will prove to be a gargantuan task!

PUNGENT POINT #869 – If Jesus is going to return to earth to set up and reign over a kingdom of flesh and blood, then He did not “finish” the earthly work assigned to Him when He appeared “once” in the closing period of history (Heb 9:26). The difficulty with that view is that Jesus affirmed He did finish His work among men (John 17:4; 19:30). Rather than coming back to earth to reign, He ascended to reign (Dan 7:13-14; Acts 2:34; Eph 4:8-10; 1 Tim 6:15).

PUNGENT POINT #870 – God cannot accept people as they are by nature. That is precisely why sins are washed away (Acts 22:16), reconciliation is realized (Rom 5:10), and a new birth takes place (1 Pet 1:23). It is why old things pass away, and all things become new (2 Cor 5:18). It is why the Scriptures speak of what those in Christ ARE, as opposed to what they WERE (1 Cor 6:11; Eph 2:5,13; 5:8; 1 Pet 2:25).

PUNGENT POINT #871 – For salvation to be effectively realized, it must be RIGHT. That is, God must be righteous in saving men. The atoning death of Christ made it right for God to save

men. Therefore it is written, “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, say, at this time His righteousness: THAT HE MIGHT BE JUST AND THE JUSTIFIER of Him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom 3:26).

PUNGENT POINT #872 – The criticality of personal faith – “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:6) – is seen in the fact that it is THE MEANS: by which we are justified (Rom 5:1); by which we live (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11); through which our hearts are purified (Acts 15:9); we are sanctified (Acts 26:18); we have access to grace (Rom 5:2); by which we stand (Rom 11:20; 2 Cor 5:7); become the children of God (Gal 3:26); wait for the hope of righteousness (Gal 5:6); through which Christ dwells in our hearts (Eph 3:17); we are kept by the power of God (1 Pet 1:5) . . . etc. Men should not be arguing about faith, but eager to possess it in full measure.

PUNGENT POINT #873 – A person who lives by faith (Heb 10:38), walks in the light (1 John 1:7), does not quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19), is living unto Him who died for us and rose again (2 Cor 5:15), and is in fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:9) can be distinguished from those who are not so characterized.

PUNGENT POINT #874 – If we “obtain faith” (2 Pet 1:1), and it “comes” to us (Rom 10:17), and it is “from God” (Eph 6:23), and the grace of God is “exceeding abundant” with it, then faith is not the product of human effort.

PUNGENT POINT #875 – Those who are truly “with Christ” are appropriately described as being “called, and chosen, and faithful” (Rev 17:14). The saints are so addressed in the epistles—i.e. Rom 1:6; Eph 1:1,4, Col 1:2, etc). These are descriptions of what they are, not what they should be.

PUNGENT POINT #876 – Whatever a person may think about righteousness, room must be made in their conclusion for this salient inspired observation: “he that doeth righteousness, even He is righteous” (1 John 3:7).

PUNGENT POINT #877 – James affirms of a truly religious person is one who does “visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction,” and keep himself “unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). He also says of the man who “bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart,” – “this man's religion *is* vain” (James 1:26). In our time, these statements have startling ramifications.

PUNGENT POINT #878 – If the salvation of God involves the Holy Spirit changing those who are beholding the glory of the Lord from one increasing stage of glory to another (2 Cor 3:18), then stagnant religion is a confirmation that the Spirit has been “quenched” (1 Thess 5:19).

PUNGENT POINT #879 – If Jesus is, in fact, bringing “many sons to glory,” and He suffered to “bring us to God” (1 Pet 3:18), then those who are not advancing to glory, and readying themselves for it, are not being led by Jesus. (Heb 2:10).

PUNGENT POINT #880 – God was not tolerant of sin when the whole of it was laid upon Christ. It was when the sin of the world was laid upon Him that Jesus was “made a curse for us” (Gal 3:13). This being true, what would lead any person to believe God is now tolerant of sin being in those who profess to be His people? Such sin has to be confessed, and forgiveness obtained – even in view of the fact that Jesus took away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Sin defiles – before God – that is why we have to be cleansed from all, unrighteousness, even when we have been forgiven (1 John 1:9).

PUNGENT POINT #881 – If we are presently being “kept by the power of God through faith (1 Pet 1:5), and if it is true that we “stand by faith” (2 Cor 1:24), then those who fall do so because of their lack of faith.

PUNGENT POINT #882 – No influence or force external to believers can separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:35-39). That being true, it is apparent that we are to cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart (Acts 11:23).

PUNGENT POINT #883 – The surety and confidence of salvation is traced back to what the Lord has done. He is the One who has created us in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:10), put us into Christ (1 Cor 1:30), given us the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32), raised us to walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4), made us accepted in the Beloved (Eph 1:6), added us to the church (Acts 2:47), and blessed us with all spiritual blessings (Eph 1:4). Our confidence must be in these things, now what we have done – not even our obedience.

PUNGENT POINT #884 – One of the banes of institutionalized Christianity and the clergy system is that the people who make up the various congregations are no longer identified as a spiritual group, or “body” – i.e. a body of people whose faith and love is known abroad (Rom 1:8; Col 1:4). Consequently few think of assessing them as a congregation – as Jesus did (Rev 2-3). In our day “churches” are known for their “pastor,” their facilities, and their various provisions for the community. However, the “body of Christ,” over which Jesus presides is comprised of faithful believers noted for their spiritual qualities, not the things related to their appearance.

PUNGENT POINT #885 – No person can increase their comprehension of the truth further than the measure to which their lives are conformed to it. Further, it is imperative that the “love of the truth” be received before any of it can be comprehended, or any benefit from it can be realized. (2 Thess 2:10-11; Phil 3:15-16)

PUNGENT POINT #886 – There is no substitute for a knowledge of, and unqualified acceptance of, the Holy Scriptures. They alone are “able to make us wise unto salvation,” and are “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim 3:15-17). Where people are fundamentally ignorant of the Scripture, they are fundamentally deficient.

PUNGENT POINT #887 – It is an evil day when we have preachers who cannot preach acceptably, teachers who cannot effectively teach, singers who cannot sing in an edifying manner, and leaders who cannot properly lead. It is further complicated when many of these people have been exposed to religious higher education. God has not placed ineffective gifts in the church (1 Cor 12:18). An enemy has done this! (Matt 13:28)

PUNGENT POINT #888 – Our view of death cannot be shaped by the writings of Job, David, and Solomon. It is not that they were willingly deficient. Rather, this was an area that was not opened up in their time. “Life and immortality” has been brought to light by the Gospel (2 Tim 1:10). In that light death is seen as being “absent from the body,” which is “far better” (Phil 1:23). The Spirit boldly proclaims, “Blessed ARE the dead who die in the Lord” (Rev 14:13).

PUNGENT POINT #889 – Can you imagine Paul saying, “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?” (Eccl 1:2-3; 12:8). And why are not such expressions found in the writings of the apostles? It is because “a greater than Solomon” has come (Matt 12:42).

PUNGENT POINT #890 – If, concerning those who are in Christ Jesus, it is true that “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2), and that “sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law but under grace” (Rom 6:14), then it is not possible for a Christian’s life to be “out of control,” as the Celebrate Recovery program teaches. When sin reigns in a professed believer, it is because he has quenched the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19), and rejected the teaching of God’s grace (Tit 2:11-12). This needs to be proclaimed and clarified to our generation.

PUNGENT POINT #891 – There is no such thing as a salvation of God that does not lead to being established (Acts 16:5; 2 Pet 1:12), grounded and settled (Col 1:23), and being progressively changed from glory to glory (2 Cor 3:18). Unstable and wavering “Christians” are either not being “nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine” (1 Tim 4:6), or they have refused to yield to the truth.

PUNGENT POINT #892 – It is NOT possible to be “so heavenly minded you cannot be of any earthly good.” It IS possible, however, to be so earthly minded you are of no heavenly good (Rom 8:5-6).

PUNGENT POINT #893 – Rather than saying, “God helps them that help themselves,” it would be more accurate to say, “God helps them who CANNOT help themselves.” The obtaining of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus is a case in point (Psa 107:12-14).

PUNGENT POINT #894 – Jesus declared, “To Him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice.” “All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.” “I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine” (“My sheep know Me,” NIV). “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:3-4,7-8,14,27).

There is not the slightest chance that Jesus has any followers that are not so characterized!

PUNGENT POINT #895 – The real and exclusive Builder of the church is Jesus Christ (Matt 16:18). He is the solitary Head of that church, which is His body (Col 1:18). The members of this church have been placed in it where God has been pleased to place them – every one of them (1 Cor 12:18).

PUNGENT POINT #896 – God’s people are told, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor 6:17-18). The people who do not take that word seriously are foolish, and are tottering on the brink of eternal disaster.

PUNGENT POINT #897 – Jesus prayed, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20-21). This is not a prayer that can be answered by men – no matter how ardent their efforts may be. It was a prayer to God, and only God can answer it. It is His work, and His alone, that results in a people being joined together with one another, Himself, and His Son – and a unity that does not fulfill that three-fold cord is no unity at all.

PUNGENT POINT #898 – Jesus is interceding for those who are coming to God through Him through Himself (Heb 7:25). No intercessor has been appointed for anyone else. For outside of that category, the Gospel is declared by God-sent preachers (Rom 10:14-17). It is by means of “preaching” that God has been pleased that men be saved (1 Cor 1:21).

PUNGENT POINT #899 – The revealed purpose of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers is the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ, so that all come unto the unity of the faith, growing up into Christ, and the whole body being fitly joined together by that which every joint supplieth (Eph 4:11-16). Where that revealed objective is not taking place, the work and will of the Lord is not being done.

PUNGENT POINT #900 – Properly viewed, where God has placed the individual in Christ’s body (1 Cor 12:18), and the measure of faith he has received (Rom 12:3), constitute his credentials to minister. Titles and credentials granted by educational institutions are nothing more than a surface means of distinguishing one worm from another.

PUNGENT POINT #901 – “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Ps 46:1). None of God’s children are required to engage in a search for God – that is the appointed vocation of everyone else (Acts 17:26-27). Particularly for the person in Christ Jesus, God is in him, and he is in God (1 John 4:16). Christ is in him, and he is in Christ (2 Cor 3:15; Rom 8:10; Gal 3:27). The Holy Spirit is in him, and he is in the Spirit (Rom 8:9-11; Gal 5:25).

PUNGENT POINT #902 – Deliverance from the Law postulates deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, for the Law “for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane” (1 Tim 1:9). A person cannot remain in those categories, and yet be free from the Law.

PUNGENT POINT #903 – Syllogisms are not a spiritually powerful or acceptable form of reasoning. For example – Major Premise: “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom 14:3). Minor Premise: “The Law is not of faith” (Gal 3:12). Conclusion: “The Law is sin.” Although the major and minor premises were correct, being taken from Scripture, the conclusion is completely erroneous. As it is written, “Is the Law sin? God forbid!” (Rom 7:7). It is the form of human reasoning that is wrong. Yet, some people insist on using this kind of logic.

PUNGENT POINT #904 – Prior to being in Christ, we were alienated from the life God through the ignorance that was in us (Eph 4:18). An ignorance of God and the things of God still has alienating influence. It is alarming to me that it is at such a high level in the churches of our time – particularly when it has been revealed that, when Jesus comes it will be “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that KNOW NOT God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess 1:8).

PUNGENT POINT #905 – The glorified Christ, from heaven, sent special messages to seven churches that were in Asia (chapters two and three of the Revelation). He admonished five of those churches, as CHURCHES, to “repent” (Ephesus, 2:5; Pergamum, 2:16; Thyatira, 2:22; Sardis, 3:3; and Laodicea, 3:19). There are still whole churches that need to “repent.” They may have left their first love like Ephesus, have some among them who are holding to false doctrine like Pergamum, allowed a false teacher among them to lead them astray like Thyatira, become “dead” like Sardis, or grown “lukewarm” like Laodicea. It is just as imperative that they repent, as it was for the churches Jesus addressed in Asia.

PUNGENT POINT #906 – One of the great anomalies of life is that few sinners realize how lost they are (Eph 2:12), and few believers realize how saved they are (Rom 8:35-39).

PUNGENT POINT #907 – Dead churches (Rev 3:1) and lukewarm churches (Rev 3:16) are not represented as having special value to the Lord Jesus. They are warned that their condition will not be tolerated, and that they must “repent” (Rev 3:3,19). The King of kings warns the dead church that He will come on them as a thief (Rev 3). The lukewarm church is told Jesus will vomit them up, disassociated Himself with them (Rev 3:16). These are not idle words!

PUNGENT POINT #908 – Solemnly we are told that we are Christ’s “house “IF we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (Heb 3:6). Most people who have a genuine love for the church know that, so far as the nominal church is concerned, the “confidence and rejoicing of the hope” is glaringly absent. If that is true, the implications are rather startling.

PUNGENT POINT #909 – Faith can receive these words without associating them with time: “For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Heb 10:37). Faith transcends time, and flies forward to the time when the promise will be fulfilled. In so doing, the believer is “kept by the power of God through faith” (1 Pet 1:5).

PUNGENT POINT #910 – Pain is bad, and pleasure is good; yet pain is not the worst thing, and pleasure is not the best thing. No person should despair under the experience of pain, or rejoice overly much when experiencing legitimate pleasure. For the saints of God, there is coming a time when there will be no more pain (Rev 21:4), and there will be “pleasures for evermore” (Psa 16:11). The expectation of these realities will keep us stable in the extremities of life in this world.

PUNGENT POINT #911 – Unless Jesus has changed the rules, any church that has in its presence a fornicator, covetous person, idolater, railer, drunkard, or extortioner must at once disassociate itself from such. (1 Cor 5:1-11).

PUNGENT POINT #912 – If the Lord is “able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24), then you must live in the full persuasion of that, keeping the faith, fighting the good fight of faith, and being steadfast and unmoveable. Faith’s recollection of this truth will be accompanied by the power to be holy.

PUNGENT POINT #913 – In Scripture, the words “elect” and “election” are never presented as something men do or has done. These words are always associated with a Divine decision (Isa 42:1; 45:4; ; 65:9,22; Matt 24:24,31; Mk 13:22,27; Lk 18:7; Rom 8:33; 9:11; 11:5,7,28; Col 3:12; 1 Thess 1:4; 1 Tim 5:21; Tit 1:1; 1 Pet 1:2; 2:6; 2 Pet 1:10; 2 John 1:1,13). There are 23 references, none of which are ambiguous. No professing believer should be offended by these words, or deliberately avoid their proper use.

PUNGENT POINT #914 – Our final acceptance by God is conditioned by a number of “Ifs” – IF

we continue in the faith, grounded and settled (Col 3:22-23); IF we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end (Heb 3:6); IF we hold the beginning of our confidence firm to the end (Heb 3:14); IF we be dead with Christ (Rom 6:8; 2 Tim 2:11); IF we do not faint (Gal 6:9); IF we suffer (2 Tim 2:12); IF we walk in the light (1 John 1:7). Men do well to take these words seriously, for it is not possible that any of them will fall to the ground.

PUNGENT POINT #915 – If our faith is not like “the faith of Abraham,” it is not genuine faith (Rom 4:9-16; Gal 3:7-14).

PUNGENT POINT #916 – Jesus will never again come to earth to deal with sin. “Even so it is that Christ, having been offered to take upon Himself and bear as a burden the sins of many once and once for all, will appear a second time, not to carry any burden of sin nor to deal with sin, but to bring to full salvation those who are [eagerly, constantly, and patiently] waiting for and expecting Him” (Heb 9:28, Amplified Bible). The KJV reads, “appear the second time without sin”). Jesus dealt with sin “ONCE” (Heb 7:27; 9:12,26; 10:10; 1 Pet 3:18). This being true, the view that sees Jesus as coming to reign on the earth over sinners needs to be re-examined.

PUNGENT POINT #917 – A person cannot advance spiritually beyond the perimeter of their faith. (Mk 9:23,29; Heb 11)

PUNGENT POINT #918 – The person who balks at baptism, is balking at being “baptized into Christ” (Rom 6:3; Gal 3:27), and “baptized into His death” (Rom 6:3). Such have resisted a commandment (Acts 10:48), and have refused to do something Jesus Himself did (Matt 3:16), and commanded (Mk 16:16). No one should ask us to ignore such insolence – and woe be to the person whose teaching encourages such a stance.

PUNGENT POINT #919 – Passing from death to life is one thing; knowing that you have passed from death to life is quite another thing (1 John 3:14).

PUNGENT POINT #920 – The professing Christian who does not put on the whole armor of God should not be surprised if he is wounded by the enemy (Eph 6:10-17). He has been disobedient, and God will not reward disobedience.

PUNGENT POINT #921 – In Christ we come into an environment that is infinitely larger than personal interests and relationships. It is written, “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” (Heb 12:22-24). The awareness of this will alter how men live.

PUNGENT POINT #922 – The man who wavers and is double-minded is told: “For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord” (James 1:7). There are unanswered prayers that can be traced to this revealed cause.

PUNGENT POINT #923 – When Ezekiel preached to a valley of dry and scattered bones, they began to come together. What Ezekiel preached was unique, in that it was a clear declaration of what the Lord would do, with not one other kind of word spoken. “O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I WILL CAUSE breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I WILL LAY sinews upon you, and WILL BRING up flesh upon you, and COVER YOU with skin, and PUT BREATH in you, and YE SHALL LIVE; and YE SHALL KNOW that I am the Lord” (Ezek 37:4-6).

PUNGENT POINT #924 – Acceptance by God requires separation from the world. This requirement will not be ignored. It is written, “Wherefore come out from among them, and BE YE SEPARATE, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I WILL RECEIVE YOU, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor 6:17-18). It is a serious misconception for anyone who is a friend of the world to think they have been accepted by God (James 4:4).

PUNGENT POINT #925 – Among the unlearned it is frequently said, “God does not care what you wear.” Such are willingly ignorant, that the very first issue God had with man’s appearance was what he had chosen to wear (Gen 3:21). In the end, on the day of judgment, an issue will still be what men are or are not wearing (Matt 22:11-12). Each person must decide what they will do with such texts.

PUNGENT POINT #926 – While the saints are in this world, there is an indispensable need for comfort – consolation, assuagement, succor, relief, and solace. There is the weight of mortality, the need to confess sin, and the recollection of failure. There is opposition and persecution from without, temptations and fears within, and the fiery darts of the wicked one. There are the effects of having “this treasure” in an earthen vessel, and the frequent recollections of what we once were. There are the feelings of inadequacy, and formidable challenges that can even cause us to despair of life. There is the impact of the knowledge of a great falling away, the reality of Babylon the Great, and the awareness of many false prophets that have gone out into the world. For some there is the burden of failing health, wayward family members, and the loss of loved ones. Make no mistake about this: while we are in this world there is an indispensable need for comfort. Thank God for those who bring it.

PUNGENT POINT #927 – It is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity because of the effects of that blessed fellowship. The Psalmist said of such gatherings, “for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore” (Psa 133:3). This is a pervasive blessing, like the “dew of Hermon . . . that descended on Mount Zion” – like the precious ointment that went down from Aaron’s head to his beard, and even saturating his garments down to the bottom skirt. That is a most vivid description of a spreading, refreshing, and sanctifying pleasantness – one

that lasts for some time, bolstering the spirits of the people, fueling faith, and enhancing hope. No assembly should be satisfied with anything less.

PUNGENT POINT #928 – Not one, single aspect of Salvation can be transferred from one person who has received Salvation to another. Faith cannot pass from one person to another. No person is accepted by God upon the basis of the acceptance of one of his peers. God has no grandchildren. This is why the Gospel is to be preached to “every creature” (Mk 16:15).

PUNGENT POINT #929 – Jesus will not tolerate in today’s “churches” what He objected to finding in the churches of yesteryear (Rev 2:4,14,20; 3:1,16,17).

PUNGENT POINT #930 – What Jesus has done in taking away the sins of the world (John 1:29), plundering principalities and powers (Col 2:15), destroying the devil (Heb 2:14), ending the Law as a means to righteousness (Rom 10:4), and opening a new and living way to God (Heb 10:22), has NOT changed God. He views sin and sinners no differently. He is not more tolerant of sin, or more patient with sinners. God CANNOT change (Mal 3:6). ALL of the changes resulting from the Christ’s glorious work take place in men. They are the ones that needed to be changed.

PUNGENT POINT #931 – So far as the people of God are concerned, the most important choice is the one that God made (Eph 1:4; 2 Tim 2:4). It is His choice that sanctified their choice, and not vice versa.

PUNGENT POINT #932 – If the exalted Christ “is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim 6:15), then the enemies of the people of God have everything to fear, and the saints themselves have every reason to be comforted in all of their tribulation.

PUNGENT POINT #933 – If Satan had no power against Job except that which God allowed (John 1-2), and Pilate had no power against Christ except that which had been given to him “from above” (John 19:11), then those who have been joined to the Lord, and are living unto Him, have every reason to believe the same is true of them.

PUNGENT POINT #934 – Faith confirms to the heart the absolute integrity of the promises of God, then moves the individual possessing it to act upon those promises (Heb 11:1).

PUNGENT POINT #935 – At some point the professed church has to stop philosophizing and talking about what it ought to be. The time has come for it to manifestly be what the Lord says it IS: the “body of Christ” (Eph 4:16), “the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim 3:15), “the household of God” (Eph 2:19), “the habitation of God” (Eph 2:22), God’s husbandry” and “building” (1 Cor 3:9), Christ’s “house” (Heb 3:6), the Lamb’s “wife who is making “herself ready” (Rev 19:7), “a spiritual house” (1 Pet 2:5), and “the temple of the living God” (2 Cor

6:16). It is time to end making a defense for the presence of spiritually deficient people in the church, and start explaining why there is a lack of evidence confirming the presence and blessing of the Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #936 – For those in Christ Jesus, life in this world is a time for becoming oriented to “heavenly things” (John 3:12), seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt 6:33), cleansing themselves of all filthiness of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor7:12), growing up into Christ in all things (Eph 4:15), and making themselves ready to be married to Christ (Rev 19:7). Although it may appear as though there are misfits in the church here and now, you may be sure there will be none in glory (Rev 21:27).

PUNGENT POINT #937 – When it comes to the forgiveness of sins, the blood of Christ plays a prominent part (Col 1:14). Also, God’s forgiveness is “for Christ’s sake” (Eph 4:32), and “according to the riches of His grace” (Eph 1:7). But there is yet another facet of forgiveness (particularly concerning former sins, committed before Christ died) that is worthy of your consideration. God has set forth Jesus to be “a propitiation through faith in His blood” – and the “purpose” for that is to “declare HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS for the remission of sins” (Rom 3:25). The text does not say God was gracious in passing over those sins (although that is certainly true), but that He was RIGHTEOUS in doing so. God, in every aspect of salvation is RIGHTEOUS. As it is written, “. . . Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS: that he might be JUST, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom 3:24-26).

PUNGENT POINT #938 – Recently another effort at discovering Noah’s ark has been announced. Some professing Christians are excited about the possibility of some confirming evidence of the ark, and consequently, of the flood. Such excitement is akin to a college graduate being thrilled that a high-level mathematician discovered some technical procedure that confirmed one plus one is really two. Although the world does not recognize it, the confirmation of faith is the superior evidence (Heb 11:1).

PUNGENT POINT #939 – If it is true that “they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom 8:8), then a hearty effort must be expended to confirm and avoid being classified as “they that are in the flesh.” Where there is confusion on this matter, insightful preachers and teachers must do their work. I fear that a lot of contemporary preaching and teaching is actually leading people to be “in the flesh.”

PUNGENT POINT #940 – There is such a thing as being “alienated from the life of God,” and “ignorance,” or “blindness of heart” is what leads to that condition (Eph 4:18). “Alienated” means “unfriendly, hostile, bitter, at variance, estranged, and irreconcilable” (Oxford). The Greek word from which “alienated” is translated has the following lexical meaning: “to be shut out from one’s fellowship and intimacy” (Thayer). For those who do not know what “ignorance”

means, the “ignorance” of reference pertains to not understanding God and the things of God.

PUNGENT POINT #941 – If hope is truly “an anchor of the soul” (Heb 6:19), then those who lack it, and are unsure of their status with the Living God are, of necessity, in a spiritually unstable mode. They simply will not be able to withstand the storms of life.

PUNGENT POINT #942 – It is not possible for Jesus to be exalted any higher than He is at this present time. He has been given all power in heaven and earth (Matt 28:18), with “angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him, (1 Pet 3:22). He is the “only Potentate” (1 Tim 6:15), and “The Father . . . has given all things into His hand” (John 3:35; 13:3). It is the only, and most reasonable thing, to be wholly submitted to Him. The penalty for failing to do so will be eternal banishment from “the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power” (2 The3ss 1:9).

PUNGENT POINT #943 – Those who are suffering “according to the will of God,” are admonished to “commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator” (1 Peter 4:19). None of your peers can do this for you.

PUNGENT POINT #944 – Those who speak in the name of the Lord are admonished, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,” or as one speaking the very words of God” (NIV– 1 Peter 4:11). It simply is wrong to buttress preaching and teaching with the sayings of uninspired men, or the traditions of men. The wisdom, of this world – all of it – “is foolishness with God” (1 Cor 3:19). The idea that it can in any way add weight to the truth revealed by God, is an idea unworthy of being entertained for a moment.

PUNGENT POINT #945 – If Jesus is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” then any postulate or line of thinking that does not have Him as its basis or foundation cannot possibly be associated with the “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” as they were referenced by Jesus (John 14:6).

PUNGENT POINT #946 – Only the truth of God, as made known through the Person of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Scriptures, can produce the results God intends. This includes the justification and acceptability of the individual (Rom 8:1; 2 Cor 5:17; Eph 1:4), and the church destined to be the bride of Christ (Rom 7:4; Eph 2:22; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev 19:7). Professing individual Christians and collective congregations that are not what God produces through His Son (Rom 8:1-2; 1 Cor 6:17; 2 Cor 5:17), the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit (1 Pet 1:2), and the effectiveness of Holy Scripture (2 Tim, 3:16-17), have not been produced by Jesus, are not the result of the Spirit’s work, and have nothing whatsoever to do with Scripture. They are fraudulent representations of the work of God.

PUNGENT POINT #947 – It is not possible to be joined to the Lord (1 Cor 6:17) and remain at

a fundamental variance with Him. Either salvation settles the matter of alienation (Eph 4:18) from, and disagreement with the God of heaven, or it is nothing more than a sham.

PUNGENT POINT #948 – In any room of your home, there are thousands of radio signals that can be accessed. However, you must have the proper receiver to do so. If, for example, you have a hi-level shortwave radio, you can pick up on contemporary dialog in China, India, etc. Above this, wherever you are in the earth, there is a spiritual signal issuing from heaven. It, together with the kind of response to be rendered, is stated in this way: “So see to it that you do not reject Him or refuse to listen to and heed Him Who is speaking [to you now]. For if they [the Israelites] did not escape when they refused to listen and heed Him Who warned and divinely instructed them [here] on earth [revealing with heavenly warnings His will], how much less shall we escape if we reject and turn our backs on Him Who cautions and admonishes [us] from heaven?” (Heb 12:25, Amplified Bible).

PUNGENT POINT #949 – Any individual or group of individuals who claim they know the truth, yet who live out of harmony with the truth, are cast on the horns of a dilemma. Either they do not really know the truth, or Jesus did not affirm the truth when He said, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

PUNGENT POINT #950 – If God is finished with the Jews, He is also finished with the Gentiles, for Gentiles who have believed and obeyed the Gospel have been grafted into the Jewish olive tree, and partake of its root and fatness (Rom 11:17). They do not have a tree of their own.

PUNGENT POINT #951 – Paul prayed that the saints of God would have the eyes of their understanding opened to the greatness of the Divine power that is extended to them in Christ Jesus: “I . . . Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know . . . WHAT IS THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER TO US-WARD who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph 1:16-20). The greatness of that power accentuates what is required of the saints of God. It is time to kick small thinking out of the door. We have been made kings and priests to God (Rev 1:6). This is fighting time (1 Tim 6:12), and working time (Eph 2:10) – not playtime! It is a time that requires the kind of power that God has provided His people.

PUNGENT POINT #952 – There is a Divinely sanctioned vocabulary associated with the communication of the things of God:– i.e. “Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words” (1 Cor 1:13, ASV). It is the business of preachers and teachers to know what that means, and shape their speaking accordingly.

PUNGENT POINT #953 – Jesus said of the words that He spoke, “the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). Those lacking “spirit” and “life,” as defined by Jesus, do not have His word dwelling in them – no matter what claim they may make (Col 3:16).

PUNGENT POINT #954 – On the eve of His betrayal, Jesus spoke extensively to His disciples (John 13:1-16:33). His teaching included words about cleansing and humility (13:1-16), loving one another (13:34), being gathered to Himself (14:1-3), His unique role in coming to God (14:6-11), doing great works (14:13-14), the coming of the Holy Spirit (14:16-18,26; 15:26; 16:7-15), those in whom He would dwell (15:21-23), the realization of His peace (14:27), the Vine and the branches (15:1-7), keeping His commandments (15:10-15), His choice of His disciples (15:16), the world and His disciples (15:18-19), persecution (16:2), the impact of Him leaving them (16:16-22,31-33), and the impact of His return to heaven upon prayer (16:23-28). There is no Scriptural support for the supposition that these teachings applied exclusively to the apostles.

PUNGENT POINT #955 – There is no question concerning man having a will. However, the purported freedom of the human will is a supposition – a diversionary tactic of the wicked one. The issue is that man’s will, apart from Christ, is spiritually impotent. It is said of the new birth: “Which were born, not of blood, NOR OF THE WILL of the flesh, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, but of God” (John 1:13). It is also said of the origin of Scripture, “For the prophecy CAME NOT in old time BY THE WILL OF MAN: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet 1:21). Paul said of himself, apart from Christ, “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but HOW TO PERFORM that which is good I find not” (Rom 7:18). Paul states his agreement with Moses concerning the human will: “For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is NOT OF HIM THAT WILLETH, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy” (Rom 9:15-16). When it comes to the matter of “will,” it is the will of God that is exalted in Scripture, not the will of man.

PUNGENT POINT #956 – There are prayers that God will not hear (1 Sam 8:18; Psa 66:18; Isa 1:15; 59:2; Jer 7:16; 11:14; 14:12; Micah 3:4). It is the responsibility of every child of God, as much as possible, to make sure their prayers do not fall into that category.

PUNGENT POINT #957 – Jesus spoke the truth when He said, “If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it” (John 14:14). John also spoke the truth when he said, “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him” (John 15:14-15). It is our business to fervently seek to pray within those parameters.

PUNGENT POINT #958 – Here is a virtually unexplored area of priestly activity for the saints:

“ If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death” (1 John 5:16). If that seems difficult to understand, then extend yourself to understand it.

PUNGENT POINT #959 – God told Israel that if they obeyed His voice and kept His covenant they would be to Him “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex 19:6). However, they were a fundamentally disobedient people (Neh 9:26; Rom 10:21), and broke the covenant they had made with God (Jer 31:32). However, in the new covenant, and because of Jesus Christ and His redemptive work, the people of God are, indeed, “priests unto God” (Rev 1:6), a “holy priesthood” (1 Pet 2:5), and “a royal priesthood” (1 Pet 2:9). Priests have always been noted for their work – what they did. That is one of the primary ways in which the real church is made known – through its priestly work.

PUNGENT POINT #960 – Jesus said, “He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him” (John 14:21). If a person desires to be loved by the Father, loved by Jesus, and have Jesus make Himself known to him, now he knows what to do.

PUNGENT POINT #961 – Jesus said, “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself,” or “If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself” [NASB] (John 7:17). For those who have difficulty discerning whether what Jesus said is legitimate or not, desire to do His will, and in the doing of it the matter will become clear to you. That is some good news – according to Jesus.

PUNGENT POINT #962 – Recently, a popular minister of one of the largest churches in America released a new book entitled, “Your Best Life Now.” If you think on that statement, you will see that it only applies to those who will be consigned to Hell. If you are talking to the saints, it would be appropriate to say, “Your worst life is now.” (Heb 13:14; 2 Cor 4:17; Matt 5:4)

PUNGENT POINT #963 – If eternal life is to “*know*” the “only true God” (John 17:3), and if “the true God” is the One concerning which Jesus gives us a proper understanding (1 John 5:20), then it can be neither right nor safe to entertain erroneous concepts of Him!

PUNGENT POINT #964 – Our pilgrimage to glory is likened to a race that is “set before us,” and is being witnessed by a vast body of personalities who ran this same race before us. HOW we run this race is critical to its completion. We cannot afford to be distracted by the sights along way. In fact, the race can successfully be run ONLY as we are “looking unto Jesus” (Gen 12:1-2).

PUNGENT POINT #965 – Our adversary, the devil, has no successful response to “NO!” The saints of God are taught by grace itself to “deny,” or “resist,” ungodliness and worldly lusts (Tit 2:11-12). Stated another way, Satan is successfully resisted by being “steadfast in the faith” (1 Pet 5:8-9).

PUNGENT POINT #966 – If God has really “set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him” (1 Cor 12:18), then there is no such thing as a non-functional member.

PUNGENT POINT #967 – There are many expressions that involve a whole body of believers: “great fear came upon ALL the church” (Acts 5:11); Paul and Barnabas “assembled themselves with THE CHURCH [in Antioch], and taught much people” (Acts 11:26); Paul spoke of “the WHOLE church come together in one place” (1 Cor 14:23); Jesus addressed seven entire congregations – Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea (Rev 2-3); Paul wrote individual letters to entire congregations (Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and Thessalonica).

PUNGENT POINT #968 – The premier Person in the Bible is God Almighty (John 17:3; Heb 8:11). The exclusive means of knowing God is through Jesus Christ (Matt 11:28; 1 John 5:20). The ordained means of acquaintance with Jesus is the Gospel – the record God has given of His Son (1 John 5:10-11; Matt 11:27-28).

PUNGENT POINT #969 – Because He is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb 12:2), the fellowship of Jesus, into which we have been called (1 Cor 1:9) is imperative.

PUNGENT POINT #970 – If we are “saved by hope” (Rom 8:24), and if we are Christ’s house “if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (Heb 3:6), and if “strong consolation” is for those who “fled” to Jesus “to lay hold upon the hope set before us” (Heb 6:18), and if God has “begotten us again unto a lively hope” (1 Pet 1:3), then not being sure of where we are going is a dangerous circumstance.

PUNGENT POINT #971 – There are some things that are absolutely common among all believers – some things in which none of them are for any reason excluded. Here is one of them: “we ALL, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor 3:18).

PUNGENT POINT #972 – Jesus spoke of a person hating his own life, stating that it was a qualification for being one of His disciples – or one that He would teach and lead. “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26). It ought to be apparent that every professing Christian needs to know and accept what that means.

PUNGENT POINT #973 – It is written that God has “made foolish the wisdom of this world” (1 Cor 1:20), and that such wisdom is “foolishness with God” (1 Cor 3:19). There is not the slightest chance that this is not a precise evaluation. Men should extend themselves to know what this means. It seems apparent to me that there is a whole lot of “the wisdom of this world” in the nominal church.

PUNGENT POINT #974 – Jesus once asked His disciples, “When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve” (Mk 8:19). And again, “And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven” (Mark 8:20). There is not an academic environment in America that would not have given the disciples an “A” on those answers. But in the classroom of Jesus, they received an “F.”

PUNGENT POINT #975 – When Jesus saw a poor widow cast two mites into the Temple treasury, He said, “Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all” (Lk 21:3). Matthew says that at that point the disciples showed Him “the buildings of the Temple” (Matt 24:11). Luke says, “some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts” (Luke 21:5) – as though to point out that such buildings and their adornment could not be supported by gifts such as the widow offered. Jesus responded, “As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Lk 21:6). That is still an appropriate answer to those who show us their campuses!

PUNGENT POINT #976 – It should be readily apparent that when John “saw” the “souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held” (Rev 6:9-11), they were not sleeping. They cried out, white robes were given to every one of them, and they were told to “rest for a little season.” That is not the kind of report that would be given if death was really nothing more than “sleep.”

PUNGENT POINT #977 – Eventually, the difference between those in Christ and those out of Christ can be seen. Men “see” the good works of the saved (Matt 5:16; 1 Pet 2:12). Their love for one another is a means by which they can be identified as Christ’s disciples – which means that love has certain observable traits (John 13:35). It is true that some disciples are incognito for a while (John 12:42; 19:38). But eventually, they will become apparent.

PUNGENT POINT #978 – If it is true that without holiness “no man shall see the Lord” (Heb 12:14), then a lack of holiness ought not to be tolerated within the church, which is “the temple of God” (1 Cor 3:16-17).

PUNGENT POINT #979 – The liberty into which we have been called is not liberty to sin, but freedom from the obligation to sin (Gal 5:13). We are not debtors to the flesh, and must not live as though that was not the case (Rom 8:12).

PUNGENT POINT #980 – “Pure minds” (2 Pet 3:1) cannot willingly be employed to entertain false and defiling thoughts. Therefore, James admonished those in an inimical status toward God, “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded” (James 4:8).

PUNGENT POINT #981 – There is only one legitimate and dominating hope:—i.e. “one hope of your calling” (Eph 4:4). It is not the hope of a rapture. It is not the hope of world peace. It is not the hope of the unity of the professed church. It IS “that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ” (Tit 2:13).

PUNGENT POINT #982 – Running the race that is set before us (Heb 12:1-2) assumes consistent progress, proper focus, and unrelenting intention. This race simply cannot be run without these essential elements.

PUNGENT POINT #983 – If the word from heaven is, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” Col 3:1-2) – then there is no possibly way to justify worldly-mindedness.

PUNGENT POINT #984 – Those who are not found watching when Jesus comes are offered no hope of being received by Him (Rev 3:3). Grace teaches those who receive it to “look” for the appearing of the Lord (Tit 2:11-13). Any gospel that does not promote this expectancy is really not a gospel at all.

PUNGENT POINT #985 – A “dead” church (Rev 3:1) is a church that has not made room for the Living One.

PUNGENT POINT #986 – Salvation is initiated by a “call” that comes through the Gospel (1 Thess 2:13-14). Those who are in Christ are referred to as “the called” (Rom 1:6; 8:28). It is not possible to willingly receive this call and not be changed by it. Once the calling is perceived, there is an instant change of thinking – as when Saul of Tarsus was called, or apprehended (Acts 9:6). An immediate assessment of life takes place that provokes a dominating desire to know and do the will of the Lord.

PUNGENT POINT #987 – It makes no difference how you package religious vanity. It is absolutely void of the power that is needed to work continual change and conformation to the image of Christ within the believer. The consistent absence of mature believers is of itself proof that a flawed message is being delivered. (1 John 2:29; 3:7-8)

PUNGENT POINT #988 – All professing Christians who are continually overcome by and enslaved to sin are not walking in the Spirit – and there are no exceptions. As it is written, “This

I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Gal 5:16). Further, a failure to walk in the Spirit is infinitely more serious than men imagine.

PUNGENT POINT #989 – The determination of who is really righteous is rather straightforward: “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous” (1 John 3:7). And again, “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother” (1 John 3:10).

PUNGENT POINT #990 – To assist us in determining how to overcome the world, or even if this is possible, the Holy Spirit bears a clear witness: “For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5)

PUNGENT POINT #991 – There has only been one time from all eternity when Satan did not yield to Christ. That was when he was granted an “hour” to do his will – when Jesus gave His life for the ransom of the people (Lk 22:53). Even then, he did not take the life of Jesus, the Savior laid it down (John 10:15,17; 1 John 3:16). Jesus is, and has always been, over Satan, and with the single exception of His death, which was ordained of God, Satan has never failed to yield to the Lord. Therefore, those who are continually overcome by the devil must do some serious soul-searching.

PUNGENT POINT #992 – Jesus said if a man was willing, or wanted, to do God’s will, he would “know of the doctrine,” and not be confused concerning either its source or its meaning. “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:17). The Amplified Bible reads, “If any man desires to do His will (God's pleasure), he will know (have the needed illumination to recognize, and can tell for himself) whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking from Myself and of My own accord and on My own authority.” Of that you may be sure!

PUNGENT POINT #993 – The Word of God is able to save the soul – but only under certain conditions. As it is written, “So get rid of all uncleanness and the rampant outgrowth of wickedness, and in a humble (gentle, modest) spirit receive and welcome the Word which implanted and rooted [in your hearts] contains the power to save your souls” (James 1:21, Amplified Bible)

PUNGENT POINT #994 – In Christ Jesus every who continues to fight the good fight of faith wins (1 Tim 6:12); everyone who continues to run the race with patience will finish well (Heb 12:1,2); everyone who resists the devil is successful (James 4:7); everyone who does not quench the Spirit will enjoy His fruit (Gal 5:22-23); and those who add to faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity will never fall (2 Pet 1:5-10).

Those are the facts!

PUNGENT POINT #995 – If those who follow Jesus are described as “called, chosen, and faithful,” then those are the things we expect to be in some way seen in those who claim that are followers of Jesus (Rev 17:14).

PUNGENT POINT #996 – If Christ’s sheep know His voice, follow Him, and refuse to hear the voice of strangers (John 10:5,27), then the existence of a significant number of professing Christians requires some extensive explanation.

PUNGENT POINT #997 – No person should adopt a theological view that makes it difficult to receive the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. For example: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.” (John 10:38-30)

PUNGENT POINT #998 – If it is true that the “fulness of the Godhead” dwells “bodily” in Christ, and that “ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power” (Col 2:9-10), then seeking resources related to “life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3) anywhere else is an act of unbelief, and constitutes some form of rejecting Christ.

PUNGENT POINT #999 – In fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, God has appointed Jesus Christ “as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land” (Isa 32:2). If this is true, and it surely is, there is, in the sense of this text, neither ultimate protection nor satisfaction anywhere else.

PUNGENT POINT #1000 – The person who refuses to have Jesus reign over Him has, in fact, rejected Him (Lk 19:14). It is simply impossible to receive Jesus as Savior, and not as Lord (Phil 3:20). Those who suggest otherwise simply do not know what they are talking about.