

# Cliff's Notes

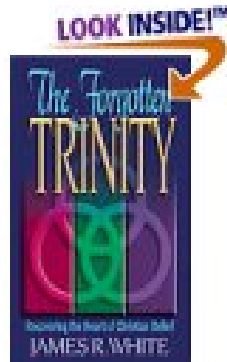
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GBF is 17 months old now (73 weeks). We averaged 102 people per Sunday last month; we've had over 650 folks visit us since we started; we've had a first-time visitor with us for 72 weeks; one of our members came to church 70 weeks in a row; we finished Ephesians with 52 sermons; Sam Kim preached for us to kick off the new year; we re-vamped our Children's Church ministry; we had folks visit us in response to the KFAQ radio ad; over 60 friends came to the New Year's Eve bash; 17 saints came to our Friday night Bible study as we began a new month studying 1st John; we continue to enjoy the wonderful building God has allowed us to use; we look for greater things in 2008!

**Red-Letter Date:** Church planting is exciting work. Laying the foundation for the first time in so many areas is a highlight and historic. We have seen many "firsts" at GBF since we began. This last month we had a new "first"—the birth of our CD ministry! Thanks to the efforts of several gifted GBF saints, our sermons are now available on CD for \$5. The sermons will continue to be available for free on the website as well.



We have begun a ten week series called *"The Forgotten Fundamentals."* These are basic doctrines that every Christian should know. *"Know the truth and the truth will set you free"*—that's what Jesus said (John 8:32). Knowing the basic truths of the Christian faith is key to cultivating spiritual stability as we are assaulted continually with false teaching and deception as we live in this world. The doctrines we'll be studying include the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, the Person of the Holy Spirit, Creation, Salvation, Hell, Death and Resurrection, to name a few. Mature Christians are discerning Christians (1 Thessalonians 5:21); healthy believers are grounded in the Word and truth. To aid with growing in knowledge, peruse the GBF book table for the best in practical Christian literature at great prices. This month's featured book is James White's excellent work on the Trinity. Retail \$16.99; **GBF price = \$12.00!**



# Christian America...?

This is election year. Political discourse is heating up...even among Christians. The perennial issue of debate hovers around the question, "Who should Christians vote for?" One Christian leader recently told me that he will vote only for a Christian. Much heat is being generated over two republican candidates relative to their religion. One is Mike Huckabee, who is a former Baptist pastor. The other is Mit Romney who is a Mormon. Many Christians actually are touting that believers should vote for Huckabee because he's a Baptist and we should not vote for Romney because he's a Mormon. They say the only, or at least the most important, litmus test for choosing the correct President of the country is the religious test, i.e. which candidate is a "Christian." Because "after all," they say, *"America is a Christian nation!"*

The election is not until November so we have lots of time to discuss this issue. I want to begin this month by simply asking several very basic diagnostic questions that every Christian needs to think through clearly when it comes to politics and the Bible. 1) Is America really a Christian nation? 2) What makes it a Christian nation? 3) What other countries of the 193 in the world are also Christian countries? 4) Was Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence, a Christian? 5) Was Benjamin Franklin a Christian? 6) Does a person have to be a Christian to be a citizen in the US with full rights and privileges? 7) Is the Constitution biblical? 8) Is the basis for running American society the Bible or the Constitution? 9) Does the Bible give qualifications for who should be President of the US? 10) Should Christianity be the only religion allowed in America? 11) Should atheism be against the law? 12) Did Jesus live under a corrupt political government in His day? 13) Was Jesus a political activist? 14) Did Jesus ever encourage or command any of His Apostles or disciples to run for political office? 15) Did Paul live under a corrupt, pagan government? 16) Did Paul ever try to change the laws of government? 17) Was Paul a political activist? 18) Did Paul ever command political activism? 19) Does the Bible mention a "Christian nation"? 20) Is Israel a Christian nation? 21) Does God have a plan for Israel in the future? 22) Should the Church be formally involved in politics?

We'll be looking at answering these questions over the next several months until Election Day. This will be fun and no doubt just asking the questions will prompt lots of electric dialogue. For stimulating reading on Christians and politics I would recommend, *Blinded by Might* by Cal Thomas, *Kingdoms In Conflict* by Chuck Colson, *Why Government Can't Save You* by John MacArthur and *Whatever Happened to Heaven* by Dave Hunt. In the meantime, happy prognostications. -PC