

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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1429 Howlett Street
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PROSPECTUS OF THE “SIGNS”

The existence, sovereignty, immutability omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah - the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. “These three are one.” John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 01/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

As we begin a new calendar year, we see nation rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. We see famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. These are the beginning of sorrows. We see as in the days of Noah "that the wickedness of man is great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually." For they are eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. We see parents killing their children and children killing their parents. The gay lifestyle is becoming

more widespread and accepted by more people. Several states have approved marriage of a man with a man and a woman with a woman. The drug culture is becoming more acceptable and even legal in at least the state of Washington. The Lord's people since Abel have been persecuted. Christ said "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." The enemies of Israel are becoming more aggressive and determined in surrounding this little country and in their avowed intent to destroy it, if it were possible. The doctrine of election and predestination is despised and its enemies would like to silence those who unabashedly proclaim it. The second beast prophesied of in the book of Revelation has come up out of the earth which is Islam with its Shariah law and its stated purpose to "cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." The earth from which this beast came was Mohammed and the two horns represent the two factions of Islam, Sunnites and Shites. This beast tries to present its self as a lamb, but it speaks as a dragon.

Now, where is any comfort, peace or consolation? Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Daniel said that wisdom and might are God's. He removes kings and sets up kings. Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed that "all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He 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?" He is our comfort, our peace, our consolation.

The angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph and told him not to fear to take unto him Mary his wife because that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. The Lord chose Mary to be conceived in her not because she was righteous or holy as she was a sinner as all of Adam's race, but because it pleased Him to do so. So the Holy Ghost came upon her and the power of God over shadowed her. It was a virgin birth as there were no works of man involved in it. All the worldly scholars have never been able to understand what took place, but God's elect understand because they have experienced that spiritual birth.

The angel told Joseph that he shall call the child's name Jesus. The Lord did not leave the name to Joseph or Mary or anyone else. This name was for no one else but Him because it means Saviour for He SHALL save HIS people from their sins. How comforting that God determined, ordained, predestinated all this to come to pass. All in the purpose and will of Him with whom we have to do. Everything with God is sure and certain. There was no uncertainty nor any chance in the proclamation that He shall save His people from their sins. There was no choice left to man to accept or reject. Man doesn't have that power. God chose [elected] His people before the foundation of the world as stated in **Ephesians 1:3-7**, "**Blessed be the**

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." So He came to earth to redeem His people from their sins. Therefore, His people are safe and secure eternally because they have Christ who is eternal life.

God, speaking through His prophet Isaiah, said that when you pass through the waters He will be with you; and through the rivers, they would not overflow you. He also promised that when you go through the fire you shall not be burned neither shall the flame kindle upon you. He did not say that He will take the trial or tribulation away, but He will be with you through it. His grace is sufficient for you. His strength is made perfect in your weakness. He says "**Fear not for I am with thee.**" "**I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour.**"

O, you are a blessed nation in Christ for **Psalm 33:12** says "**Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance.**" His people are that blessed nation.

“Who can lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth.”

The words of Christ in **Luke 21:26-28**, **“Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”** His people are looking for that day and they have a precious hope that they will hear those most wonderful words **“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”** and to have their vile bodies changed that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

As The Apostle Paul wrote, **“Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.”**

“Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for He *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the

day approaching.”

May the Lord be with each of us as we see the day approaching.

Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

November 7, 2012

Brother Tony Horton,

Since the Zion’s Landmark has closed, some of our people are without good, sound communications. I recommend them to subscribe to the Signs of the Times, as I have received this paper for several years and find it’s pages to be sound and uplifting to the wayfaring pilgrim. Please enter a two year subscription in the following name.

Nan Wilson
95 McElroy St.
Winder, Ga 30680

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins

Oct. 28, 2012

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my renewal for another two years of the Signs, the balance to be used as you feel best.

I so enjoy the many good articles from “Voices of the Past”, and Elder

Farmer's October editorial was a special blessing to me.

May the dear Lord continue to bless all who work to publish it every month, as it is a blessing indeed to all those who lived in far - away places with no one of like faith near by to fellowship with.

Yours in hope, by God's grace alone,

Caroline Martin

11-7-12

Dear Brother Tony Horton,

Sorry, I am late. Things just keep popping up and I put off what I need to do. I am sending a check for two years use the rest as you see fit. I have been blessed with 86 birthdays. I have in my day experienced some good times in the Old Baptist Church.

In the October issue, 2012 Signs of the Times, I remember a lot of Elders that have passed on. I will mention two. Elder D.V. Spangler was my pastor for many years. I've been blessed to be a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church for 61 years. I also remember Elder E.J. Lambert. Many years ago He and His wife spent the night at my mom and dad's home. They were also blessed to be a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. I could almost tell you Elder E. J. Lambert's experience. When he first started preaching for another faith.

Then he was led to the Primitive Baptist Church. He was blessed to travel for miles and miles in different states preaching the gospel of salvation by grace.

Thanks to the editor, Elder Cleo Robertson, the associate editor, Elder Jerry B. Farmer and circulation manager and treasurer Tony R. Horton and all who have a part in getting this paper out each and every month. It is a source of news of meetings and comfort to God's Little Ones.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll
120 Gunn Road
Reidsville, NC 27320

November 5, 2012

Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for \$50.00. Please extend my subscription for two years and use the rest as needed. I look forward to receiving the Signs each month. Since God's truth doesn't change. I can depend upon the Signs as a regular source of inspiration and sound doctrine.

Would it be possible to feature a church of the month from time to time - perhaps with a picture of the building and/or the pastor(s)?

Please keep up the good work and don't be "weary in well - doing."

Your brother in hope,
Jim Carr

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE NEED FOR, THE PROSPECTUS, AND THE OBJECT OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves heard by our brethren scattered abroad, by publishing a paper devoted to the cause of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which under the name of Baptist, had so greatly prevailed. With these objects in view, in the year 1832, we issued the following prospectus, viz:

Proposal for publishing a semi-monthly paper, to be called the "Signs of the Times," devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause, maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal perfections of the Great Jehovah -the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These Three are One." -1 John 5:8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

7. The final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

8. The Resurrection of the dead and Eternal Judgment.

9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers - that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament, that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

10. That there is no connection between Church and State, and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R.M. Johnson, in his report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

The "Signs of the Times" will be decidedly opposed to Bible Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions.

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who re-

main steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone and they seek my life." In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." Prov. Xxv. 25.

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In the days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often to one another;" and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we "exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

Elder G. Beebe

ECCLESIASTES 5:17-18.

All his days also he eateth in darkness, and *he hath* much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

Behold *that* which I have seen: *it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.*

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was *faithful* in all his house." Hebrews 3:1-2

My mind has been exercised recently on a particular portion of the above scripture, namely, "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Therefore, in this article the writer hopes to dwell on these particular words.

The apostle Paul (a believer) writes to believers about the superior excellency of Christ, to angels and men, and the superior excellency of the priesthood of Christ Jesus and his sacrifice, to the Levitical priesthood and its sacrifices. What a wonderful exhortation to believers to "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus"!

In the first two chapters of Hebrews Paul sets forth the dignity of Christ's person, his assumption of human nature, and suffering in the room and stead of his people. In the third chapter Paul exhorts believers to consider Christ Jesus, to pay attention to him, to have faith in him and to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Paul uses the word "wherefore" to mean "for which reasons" (which are set forth in chapters 1 and 2) holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, should consider Christ Jesus. Paul believed that they were holy

brethren because they were of the same spiritual relationship with him. They had the same Father, they were the adopted sons of God, they were the brethren of Christ, they were of the same family and Jesus was their elder brother. They were holy because they were sanctified by the Holy Spirit. They were so by profession because they had professed their relationship in the family of God as he had done. They had given a reason of the hope that was in them with meekness and fear. As well, Paul refers to believers as partakers of the heavenly calling. This calling is a call from heaven to come out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light, a call to the enjoyment of the blessings of grace here and to glory hereafter. These, as all believers, are partakers, that is, they are called as are all believers by God. Paul says, **"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began". 2 Tim. 1:9.**

Paul (a believer) writes to believers, to consider. Jesus was sent of God to do the will of his Father; to preach the gospel, to work miracles and to obtain redemption and salvation for his people. The high priest among the Jews was considered an apostle or messenger on the day of atonement. So, Christ Jesus is spoken of here as the Apostle (spelled with a capital to set forth "Christ Jesus", particularly) of our profession which should be made both in word and deed. The word

"apostle" literally means "one sent forth".

We should note that High Priest is also capitalized in the King James version and rightly so. This sets forth the particular one, Christ Jesus.

In 1 Tim. 2:5-6, we read, **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."** The word mediator means intermediary and intercessor. When we consider "one mediator" we should consider Christ (meaning the anointed) Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King. Prophets, priests and kings were anointed when they were vested with their offices. These offices seldom if ever met in one person. Paul says Christ Jesus was faithful to him that appointed him as also Moses was faithful in all his house. Christ Jesus was counted of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Christ Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King. God's children are ignorant, and blind and need him as **the Prophet** to enlighten them and instruct them and make known unto them the will of God. God's children are sinful, guilty creatures, and children of wrath by nature even as others and need **the Priest** to make atonement for them. God's chil-

dren in their state of nature are enemies of God and need him to subdue them. In their converted state God's children are helpless and weak and need **the King** to rule over them and defend them.

In this particular article the writer will confine remarks to that of Christ Jesus as Priest, because of space. The Lord willing, Christ Jesus as Prophet and King will be considered on another occasion.

Christ Jesus has executed, is executing, and will continue to execute his priestly office. To this great work he was verily ordained before the foundation of the world.

In Hebrews we find many descriptions of Christ Jesus as the High Priest. The reader would do well to read Hebrews when making a consideration of Christ Jesus, as the High Priest of our profession. Only a few considerations will be mentioned here. He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. He was faithful to him that appointed him, that is to God. Christ Jesus was faithful as a son in his house (whose house we are) while Moses was only faithful as a servant. Christ Jesus is a great high priest that is passed into the heavens. He is a high priest which can be touched with the

feeling of our infirmities, and he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Christ Jesus glorified not himself to be made an high priest but God called him, said unto him, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec".

Christ Jesus was a son yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Christ Jesus was made a priest not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Christ Jesus, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. He is able, also, to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. He needeth not daily to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. Christ Jesus is such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Christ Jesus hath obtained a more excellent ministry than Moses, in that he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; 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: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Hebrews 8:10-12. The high, priest, under the old dispensation, went into the holiest of all, alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people, but our High Priest by his own blood entered in once into the holy place (even heaven), having obtained eternal redemption for us. Now he appears in the presence of God for us. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto Salvation. "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, he sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool, for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:12-14. Surely, Christ Jesus is the High Priest over the house of God (whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end).

Christ Jesus was, is, and will continue to be the High Priest of our profession. As High Priest he **has made** the sacrifice for his people, he **is making** intercession for his people and will continue to make intercession for them and bless them. Often the following questions are deep in the bosom of this poor sinner: Has the High Priest laid

down his life for me? Is he making intercession for me on high? Has he blessed me in the past and will he continue to bless me? Sometimes the words of the hymnwriter,

"His love in times past, forbids me to think,

He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink,

Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,

Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

Let me examine his sacrifice, his intercession and his blessings which I hope by faith and hope I believe are for me. When Jesus said on the cross "It is finished", this one who often feels to be poor in spirit, believes that he did indeed lay down his life for all of his friends, not one more and not one less. He shed his precious blood for the remissions of all of the sins of all of his friends. Was this sacrifice for me? When he brings to my remembrance whatsoever he has taught me I am made to remember the burden of wrongdoing, the depths of wickedness of my heart and the troubled days and sleepless nights. When the burden was lifted what joy I found in the words of the hymns:

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,

The joy of my heart, and the boast of my tongue;

Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,

Hath won my affections, and
bound my soul fast.

Thy mercy in Jesus exempts me
from hell;

Its glories I'll sing, and its wonders
I'll tell;

'Twas Jesus my friend, when he
hung on the tree,

Who opened the channel of mercy
for me."

The lines of another hymn, "My saviour's obedience and blood, Hide all my transgressions from view" have been a wonderful strength to me. As I look back over the twenty and more years there have been many doubts and fears as to whether Jesus did indeed die for me. About two years ago when everything was as dark or darker than ever before or since as I lay awake tossing and turning and failure in everything seemed uppermost in my mind, the words as found in Job. 16:19 came to me, "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high". Are not these precious to us? Sometimes we have in remembrance many precious moments of communion with him. Other times we search and seemingly find none.

Has the High Priest made and is he making intercession for me? Again my mind goes back over the years. As Paul said in Romans 8:23, "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" and Romans 8:26-27, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray

for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." How precious to me is the scripture found in Hebrews 4:15, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin". We often sing the 58th Paraphrase:

"Where high the heavenly temple
stands

The house of God not made with
hands,

A great High Priest our nature
wears,

The guardian of the righteous ap-
pears.

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye;
Partaker of the human name,
He knows the frailty of our frame.

Our fellow sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains ;
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, his agonies, and cries.

In every pang that rends the heart,
The Man of sorrows had a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

With boldness, therefore, at the
throne,

Let us make all our sorrows known,
 And ask the aids of heavenly power,
 To help us in the evil hour."

Also, I often ask, "Has the High Priest blessed me?" How wonderful is the scripture in **Ephesians 1:3 etc.**, "**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, etc.**" Many are the blessings of the High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Some particular hymns and scriptures come to mind to illustrate some of the blessings which I hope I have received from Christ Jesus. I believe that,

"There is a period known to God
 When all his sheep, redeemed by blood,
 Shall leave the hateful ways of sin;
 Turn to the fold, and enter in."

The realization that we are dead in trespasses and in sins and that we have been quickened by his holy spirit is a wonderful blessing. He and He alone changes the heart, renews the will and turns the feet to Zion's hill. We see our righteousness as filthy rags. It is said of Abraham "He believed in the Lord ; and he counted it to him for righteousness", Genesis 15:6. Paul says in Romans 5: 1 "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". This faith to believe is a gift or blessing of

God. "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Romans 5:5. The two mites of faith and hope are sufficient for commendation by Jesus as they were with the widow when she cast them into the treasury.

There are other blessings which follow quickening and belief. When we receive the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba Father" and the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God, we can then say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name".

Christ Jesus blesses us with his spirit, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him but we know him for he dwelleth with us and in us. He maketh the storm a calm and we realize the peace that passeth understanding. His grace is sufficient for us, His strength is made perfect in weakness. Amazing grace is what we are given to sing. "**Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance**". Psalm 89:15. Holy brethren and partakers of the heavenly calling know the joyful sound of the Gospel, the good news from the heavenly country. Israel knew when Aaron went into the holy place before the Lord, and when he came out because they heard the bells on the hem of his garment. So, spiritual Israel hears the gospel that Jesus has gone into heaven, the holiest of holies, and we shall hear and know the sound

when he comes again. Another great blessing is the desire to be baptized, even as he was, and to partake at the Lord's table. Sometimes it takes years before our desire is fulfilled, after much meditation and prayer. As we look back upon this uniting with his friends, our friends, it is a great strength and blessing to us.

One of the sweetest scriptures that is often in my mind was spoken by Simon Peter in St. John 6:68, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life". The desire for eternal life is often uppermost in our minds. The foretastes of our heavenly home are precious. Are these not wonderful blessings of our High Priest? All of the blessings of our High Priest are covenant blessings, spiritual, irreversible and eternal.

Aaron was to bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he went into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually. So with our High Priest.

"My name from the palms of his hands,
Eternity will not erase;
Impressed on his *heart* it remains,
In marks of indelible grace."

Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

(Elder) D. Alex McColl
June, 1976 Issue of "Signs"

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching 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 Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:11-13)

The entire second chapter of Titus must be read for the context of the above verses. Also, note that the reason for the admonition or exhortation by the Apostle is plainly set forth in the first chapter, where he wrote, that "A bishop (elder) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake... Wherefore rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith ... They profess that they know God, but in works they deny *him*."

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Because there were many who did not speak sound doctrine, but were unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, the Apostle

said, "whose mouths must be stopped." That is, their preaching should not go unrefuted, since they were preaching things contrary to sound doctrine.

Titus, and all other gospel ministers, were exhorted to hold fast the faithful word which they had been taught: which was one of the qualifications of a bishop which Paul enumerated in the first chapter. When Paul wrote to Timothy his second epistle, he said, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Sound doctrine and sound words, we conclude, are the same. It would be impossible to preach sound doctrine without using sound (or proper) words expressing that doctrine.

There were many in that day who were not contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Paul knew this from his own experience. He had been there himself once, but was now brought out of that darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God; and he knew as well as any man the difference between light and darkness. The things the servants of God were to preach and teach were the things they had been taught by the working of the Spirit of God in their hearts: things which were revealed in them pertaining to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

Each one should recognize that to be a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one must preach and contend earnestly for the very things Jesus taught, which also the apostles set in order among the brethren and churches, Jesus having commanded

them: "... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

In our early days of coming before the brethren, we remember that our chief concern was to uphold the doctrine of predestination and election. We still do this with such ability as we are given, for we know that the gospel cannot be preached if these things are left out or glossed over.

How well we remember first reading the text at the beginning of this second chapter of Titus, with understanding: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." And to exhort the aged women, the young women, young men, and servants, as we read in the second chapter. The Apostle called this sound doctrine and admonished Titus to so speak in his preaching to them.

But our main desire now is to consider the eleventh verse to the end of the chapter. When the Apostle wrote, "For (because) the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men..." he meant not an universal appearance, but to all classes and conditions of men. Note that Titus was to speak to old men and old women, young men and young women, and servants; for of these the whole household of faith consisted. And they were the ones that the grace of God appeared unto. It would be entirely inconsistent with the Apostle's language and intent, to consider "an men" to mean every man of the Adamic race.

Then the Apostle hastens to say that this grace teaches us something. It is when this teaching is manifested in "us" that we have evidence. that the grace of God has appeared to us, for this evidence always appears powerfully and never unto any but those who are saved, for it always manifests salvation to whomsoever it comes. It never appears without making a great change in the person's life from then on as long as he lives. He is taught that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." In this appearing and bringing salvation, as with Saul of Tarsus, there is a turning away from old things, for the enjoyment of old things has passed away. The wonderment of God's grace instills the denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts to such an extent that he ever desires to live soberly, righteously and godly his remaining days in the world.

When we see these things in the brethren, as manifested in their walk and conversation, talking of their blessed hope, and of their looking for the glorious appearing of their God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for them, that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, it is sure and certain evidence that they have been taught of God and that his grace has appeared unto them. This means that they have the witness within and testify to what they have seen, felt and handled of the word of life.

Exhortation in the mouth of a servant who is in the hands of God, the persons exhorted being also in the hands of God, has its effect. Otherwise it is vain and empty.

Elder John Wood,
September 1969

I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD

Is this too much for a poor sinner to say while begging for guidance along life's way.

I search the Scripture to sustain what I believe is true; I believe in Him who said I will never leave nor forsake you.

I believe that I am but a creature God created, and I hope predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.

If not deceived, I love the Church and the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace. I have believed this from the days of my youth to be the blessed truth.

I do not understand the work wrought of God upon man. I get my Bible and look; I find the Lord said to Jeremiah, write thee all the words I have spoken unto thee in a book.

I believe I have heard in the middle of the night that tender voice within me say, get up and write.

My parents were kind. They taught me to mind, but unto God I believe I learned obedience by the things I suffered; and I must obey my master's command hoping He will bless my

trembling hand.

I believe He gives me grace to praise His Holy name, when I feel I should hide my face in shame.

My earthly friends tell me it is left with man to stand or fall; that Jesus came to save all, but I find there is a remnant whom the Lord shall call.

I believe I have been taught to know I am a sinner here below, and to the grave I soon must go; for life's evening sun is sinking low.

One of the nicest times I know is the cool and calm of the evening. The day is spent and that restful sleep is nigh, and we are oftentimes given to praise the Lord on high.

When my soul was troubled and I could find no rest, I felt the eagle had stirred up my nest. In a dream I was carried beside the still waters and the grass so pretty and green, it was so peaceful I wanted to remain but the Lord knew best.

My field became a wilderness, and I became wearied with my journey in the night. I believe I found His truth to be my shield and my path to light.

I believe I received a precious hope of being numbered with that great host and baptized with the Holy Ghost, before I was baptized in the waters of the river, the lowest place around. This does not save, but typical of the grave, before we can be resurrected, we must go down.

I have felt that upon me there must be a woe. I feel so unworthy and misfit wherever I go. I hear the voices of my Brethren sing, and I do not know how to take a part, though I feel to sing

praises in my heart.

There have been many trials and troubles along life's way, but it has not been all sorrow. I believe I have been taught to be thankful for my blessings today and boast not of tomorrow.

Ofttimes I am made ashamed to complain, for the joy I have found is beyond words to explain. I have no great riches to decay and rust, though I hope I have been given in God to trust.

I have many earthly ties, though I am not worldly wise. I am dependent upon the Lord whom I believe hears my cries. I believe that in weakness I shall die, but I hope to be raised in power from on high.

I believe the Gospel is comforting 'tis true, and an awaking power too. It comes as the rain and by it I heard that Isaiah saw the train, and I was awakened to a dream I could not explain. My pastor, Elder W. C. King, made it plain.

In the darkness of the night I saw a vision so bright, the cross that reached from one end of the earth to the other. Sometimes I believe it has been upon me since I was born of my mother, and it reached from earth to Heaven, pointing to him whose name is Holy and Reverend.

When I think of things so precious, I humbly try to thank him who has been most gracious. I oftentimes feel, who am I, these wondrous things to see, do I bear the cross in me.

The Temple I have seen in a dream its beauty untold, the door in the side of pure gold, the garments of the Saints

were pure white, and the gracious Lord was the light.

I believe those included in the election of grace, their affection for one another will show in their face. I believe in good works wrought upon us by Him, and we do walk in them.

I see things that are not pleasing, a people enjoying sin for a season. I cannot rejoice in this. I have a sin sick soul; that is my reason. I know the precious things I hold so dear is but foolishness to them, for they have not been taught to fear.

I believe that to all things there is a time and place, and I do not appreciate foolishness concerning the Lord and His Grace.

These are some of my experiences, if indeed I know, for oftentimes I walk with a bowed head, feeling so very low.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil and pride, from such His goodness he will hide.

May my last moments on earth be spent praising Him whom our gracious God has sent. All honor and praise I give to thee, whom I hope saved a wretch like me.

When the graves give up their dead, he will reveal for whom His precious blood was shed, for by Him only was the Lamb's Book of Life read.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone; and when He comes without sin unto salvation, we will know even as we are known; and He will change our vile bodies like unto His own.

To each of His flock will be given

a white rock. In the rock will be a new name written, and I believe it will be me if my soul is blessed to see that Heavenly home, but I will not be presented to the throne of God and His Son, as Clifton Robertson of Route 1, Reidsville, North Carolina. Lord have mercy on me.

Clifton Robertson
Rt. 1, Reidsville, N.C.

"OH THAT I HAD WINGS LIKE A DOVE"

The taskmasters in Egypt made the lives of the children of Israel very bitter with cruel bondage, Ex. 1:13-14, and the sinner convicted by the Holy Spirit of his sins under the law, finds to his soul's grief that he cannot meet the laws demands. He consents unto the law that it is good, and its requirements righteous. Oh, he would be righteous, but finds himself the servant of sin, a poor, condemned sinner. How willingly he would fly away from his wretchedness, but he has no wings; and where shall he flee from his sins and the felt displeasure of the Almighty God against whom he has sinned. The Psalmist David, in his sore oppressions when encompassed by his cruel enemies in his overwhelming afflictions, exclaimed, "**Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off and remain in the wilderness Selah. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest,**" Psalm 55:6-8.

“When the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham,” Acts 7:17. The very year of God’s redeemed had come, Isa. 63:4; the outstretched arm of the Lord brought forth the tribes of Israel from their Egyptian bondage. The Lord had his decreed way for their exodus, their redemption, their deliverance from the “iron furnace”, Deut. 4:20. Israel found Egypt to be a terrible furnace, and the sinners called by grace, while in his sins, while under the curse of the law, find themselves melted because of the iron furnace. From the right hand of the Lord there goeth forth a fiery law, Deut. 33 :2, and the convicted sinner fears in his conscience that he will be utterly consumed by his sins under the burning displeasure of the Lord.

The Passover Lamb was very significant unto the families of the house of Israel. They were to take the blood of the Lamb and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it, and, saith the Lord, the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are. And when I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt”, Ex. 12:7-13.

Shall I say the blood of the Passover lamb gave them the wings of a dove to fly away out of Egypt, and against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, Ex. 11:7. “Thus saith the Lord, They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, as a dove out of the land of Assyria; and I

will place them in their houses”, Hosea 11:11. They have made their flight out of bondage and captivity and their hearts flutter with hope and in gracious expectation of the loving kindness of the Lord. Oh, what happy moments are they when on the wings of faith and love we fly to the bosom of Christ and him crucified. Thy wings I believe in Christ Jesus are covered with silver, and thy feathers with yellow gold, Psa. 68: 13.

O beautiful sweet dove, with thy silver, golden wings, thou flyest in the heavens for Jehovah is thy help, and the sun of righteousness shineth upon thee. O how radiant thou art. Thou shinest in resplendent glories. Though in thy Egyptian slavery thou hast lain among the pots, now thou fliest to thy windows of the Lord’s graciousness in the everlasting covenant, to the bosom of Emmanuel, thy Redeemer, the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. O fair and sweet Dove, I am delighted to see thee fly.

“In the ark the weary dove
Found a welcome resting place;
Thus my spirit long to prove—
Rest in Christ the ark of grace.”

FREDERICK W. KEENE,
RALEIGH, NC

PSALM 84:5.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:25)

Yesterday we tried to speak from this Scripture, and as our mind is on the matter yet, we will try and pen a few thoughts in connection with it. The apostle, in addressing the church of God at Rome, uses the expression, “And we know,” showing that the knowledge he speaks of is not known by him alone, but also by those he was addressing, as he says in another place, We do not tell you these things because you do not know them, but because ye know them. Amidst a world of confusion and strife, where nations are falling right and left, where men’s hearts are failing them, where fear is in the hearts of man, it is a comforting thought that God is Lord of heaven and earth, and all things are in his hand, from the falling of a sparrow to the heart of kings, and are in his hands as rivers of water and he turns them whithersoever he will. God works all things after the counsel of his will, and none can stay his hand. If we could feel as sure that we are the ones who love God and are the called according to his purpose, as we do that he works all things for the good of such ones, it would suit our feelings better, but God

has so arranged that our walk should be a walk of faith, and not by sight. No doubt the apostle Paul, as he reviewed his journey from Jerusalem to Rome, could certainly realize that all things had worked together for his good. God appeared unto him before he started from Jerusalem to go to Rome, and told him that he should bear witness of him at Rome. When we examine the journey to Rome we find Paul traveling in the hands of his enemies. They were carrying him to Rome to preach the gospel. yet they did not know what purpose the Lord had in the matter. Today wicked men, and the wars that are raging, are fulfilling some wise design, and all these things shall work together for good to the chosen of God, yet the wicked know not anything about his wise purpose, and their wickedness shall fall upon their own heads. God punishes not only his people for sin, but also nations, and often the wicked are used as a sword to punish them. His people often need purging and humbling. We are often brought in these times to repeat the hymn,

“When thou, my righteous Judge,
shalt come

To fetch thy ransomed people
home,

Shall I among them stand?

Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?

I love to meet among them now,
 Before thy gracious feet to bow,
 Though vilest of them all;
 But can I bear the piercing
 thought,
 What if my name should be left
 out?
 When thou for them shalt call."

No doubt the reason men reject the idea that all things are being worked together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose, is because they only see the act, and cannot behold the purpose.

"Blind unbelief is SURE to err,
 And scan his works in vain;
 God is his own interpreter,
 And he will make it plain.

His providence unfolds the book,
 And makes his counsel shine;
 Each opening leaf, and every
 stroke,
 Fulfills some deep design."

Even the apostles of our Lord when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophecy concerning the suf-

fering of Christ, the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling the manner of his death, that a bone of him should not be broken, that they should look on him whom they had pierced, that for his garments they should cast lots, etc., that they would have understood these things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. Many to-day are trying to foretell the outcome of the present war, but unless God has revealed it to some one, no one knows. The reasoning of the carnal mind is always contrary to truth. Peter was a stronger predestinarian on the day of Pentecost than he was in the judgment hall, and so are we all. As he stood in the judgment hall and bitterly denied that he knew the Lord, he knew not the purpose of God in the matter. The Savior had told him that before the cock crow this night thou shalt deny me thrice, yet it took the completion of the denials for him to remember the word of the Lord. All this was working together for his good. He had declared that he would not forsake the Lord, even though others did. Now he had learned how weak he was, and had been converted, and sifted as wheat, so that he could strengthen the brethren with the doctrine that, You are kept by the power of God. through faith, unto salvation. None know their weakness as those God has left to try themselves. and have found they are not their own keepers, Through such experiences we learn that our only

hope is that underneath are the everlasting arms.

From the creating of the garden of Eden, placing man there, giving him a law, unto the crucifixion of Christ, or in other words, all things in time, from the beginning to the end, work for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, and God so worketh all things that his word declares, Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shall thou restrain.

As we close this article, we would say unto the beloved of God, you unto whom his word is precious, that in every dispensation the darkest times are always before the dawning of a new day. We know not how much trouble is in store for us, how many heartaches and sorrows the world of strife may bring to us, yet if it does we need them. Lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing nigh. May we as a people, separate from all the people of the earth, seek the welfare of one another, the things that edify one another, and love one another with pure hearts fervently.

Elder D. V. Spangler

PSALM 136:8.

The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:

“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” - HEBREWS xii. 2.

No one can ever run the race set before him, except by looking unto Jesus. He is at the head of the race; he stands at the goal, holding the crown of victory in his hand, which he puts upon the head of the successful runner. And we can only run on as we view Jesus by the eye of faith at the right hand of the Father opening his blessed arms to receive us into his own bosom at the end of the race. Nor indeed can anyone really look to him but by the special gift and grace of God. He must be revealed to the soul by the power of God; we must behold his glorious Godhead and his suffering manhood by the eye of faith; and we must view him as the incarnate God; the only Mediator between God and man. We must see the efficacy of his atoning blood to purge a guilty conscience; the blessedness of his obedience to justify a needy, naked soul; the sweetness of his dying love as an inward balm and cordial against all the thousand ills and sorrows of life. We must see his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; his suitability to every want and woe; his infinite compassion to the vilest and worst of sinners; his patient forbearance and wondrous long-suffering of our sins and backslidings; his unchanging love, stronger than death itself; his readi-

ness to hear; his willingness to bless; and his ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Thus the heavenly runner looks not to the course however long, nor to the ground however rough, not to his own exertions however multiplied, nor to his own strength whether much or little; nor to applauding friends nor condemning foes; but wholly and solely to the incarnate Son of God. Jesus draws him onward with his invincible grace. Every glance of his beauteous Person renews the flame of holy love; every sight of his blood and righteousness kindles desires to experience more of their efficacy and blessedness; and every touch of his sacred finger melts the heart into conformity to his suffering image. This is the life of a Christian, day by day, to be running a race for eternity; and as speeding onward to a heavenly goal, to manifest his sincerity and earnestness by continually breathing forth the yearnings of his soul after divine realities, and to be pressing forward more and more toward the Lord Jesus Christ, as giving him a heavenly crown when he has finished his course with joy.

J. C. Philpot

PROVERBS 24:10-13.

If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain;

If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doeth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?

My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste:

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2012

Caroline Martin, WA.....	10.00
Jim Carr, VA.....	25.00
Allen Carroll, NC	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER EULA LEE MILLS FORNES

On July 29, 2012, our Heavenly Father called our precious sister, Eula Lee Mills Fornes, home to be with him. Sister Eula had spent her last couple of years on this Earth in a nursing home with Alzheimers Disease. I truly believe that she is at home now with the Lord and her dear and faithful

husband, Brother Claude Fornes, who died on June 10, 2011.

Sister Eula was the daughter of the late Tucker Zeno and Eva Edwards Mills and a nature and lifelong resident of Pitt County. She and Brother Claude were baptized in July of 1978 by Elder Joseph Sawyer. She was a member of Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church until its closing. She and Brother Claude then joined Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Eula married Claude Alton Fornes on December 20, 1940. They were blessed with three children. Their first child, Sandra Lee, was born on their first anniversary. They had a son, Donald Claude Fornes, born on June 12, 1949 and another daughter, Claudia Arlene, born on August 21, 1955. They were married for seventy years.

Sister Eula is survived by her two daughters, Sandra F. Dixon and husband Leaky of Greenville and Claudia F. Wainwright and husband Dale of Grimesland; a son, Donald Fornes and wife Jeanie of Greenville; five grandchildren, Leaky Dixon, Jr. and wife Rita, Kenny Dixon and wife Barbara, Chad Fornes and wife Lisa, Jason Fornes and wife April and Adam Wainwright; eight great-grandchildren, Gabriel, Cameron, Lee, Victoria, Jordan, Austin, Carrie, and Chandler; two sister-in-laws Helen Mills of New Bern and Clarice Mills of Chinquapin.

Sister Eula was a home maker and never desired to work outside of the home. She was a wonderful mother and wife. She loved her family very much and kept in close contact with them. She would call her sister and her brothers every week to make sure they were well. She also loved her neighbors and was right there to help or carry food to them if they were sick. Her daughter Claudia remembers her fixing several neighbor's and family members' hair.

Sister Eula was an excellent seamstress and cook. She won many blue ribbons at the Pitt County Fair. She was famous for her pecan brittle. Her daughter, Sandra, remembers wearing dresses that Sister Eula made for her out of feed bags. She said they were pretty and she was "proud to wear them to school."

Sister Eula loved going to church and seeing her brothers and sisters. She cooked and carried many ham biscuits, corn fritters and batches of pecan brittle to church dinners through the years.

Sister Eula Fornes was laid to rest in Pinewood Memorial Park beside her beloved husband, Claude Fornes, on July 31, 2012. Therefore, be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be sent to the family, one recorded in the church book and one sent to "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Written by her niece, Janelle Vanhorne, who loved her dearly.

ROXIE ANN BILLINGS STRADER

Our dear Lord gathered unto Himself one of His most precious lambs, Sister Roxie Strader, on March 23, 2012. Sister Roxie was born March 10, 1925 to the late Dorsey Robert and Mary Bell Reynolds Billings. She was preceded in death by her husband of 55 years, Brother Ira G. "Pete" Strader and her brothers, Arthur Thomas and Franklin Billings. Left to mourn her passing are two sisters-in-law, Lorine Tate and Opal Strader; her brother-in-law, Numa Reid Strader, Sr.; several caregivers, numerous nieces, nephews, and great nieces and nephews as well as those of us, who were blessed to walk with her in love and sweet fellowship for almost 30 years.

Sister Roxie was blessed to ask for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 12, 1982. Brother Pete was blessed to ask for a home with the church on September 25, 1982. The two of them were baptized together along with six others on September 26, 1982 by Elder David Spangler. Sister Roxie loved her God, her church, and her family. The Lord so graciously blessed her to faithfully fill her seat on Sunday and to inquire into the welfare of her brethren and sisters and to let others know when there was one, who was sick or had suffered loss. Prior to her passing, she had only been home about three weeks from extended care. The writer was blessed with many lovely times of

traveling to and from church with her. After her return home, she was blessed to attend church two of the following three Sundays and was so thankful to be back home and to be able to go to church. The Lord blessed her to sit in her favorite chair in her natural home, fold her hands, and fall asleep in Christ with a lovely, peaceful expression on her face. There is comfort in the scripture, Psalm 116: 15, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Thomas Solomon, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on March 26, 2012. That spirit, which the Heavenly Master placed in her, has returned unto God who gave it and her body laid to rest to await the resurrection morn and those lovely, most welcome words, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We sorely miss her lovely smile, warm embrace, and her kind, loving countenance, but we trust that the Lord might bless us to witness with Job, "...the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." May the gentle Shepherd bless her family and all of us, who miss her so very much, with the comfort and reconciling peace that only He can give. In all things may the Lord be praised.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins

Signs of the Times

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“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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PRAYER

Psalms lxxxviii. 2.

Weary of life, and care, and sin,
Dear Lord, where can I flee?
Thou alone dost a refuge prove,
I long to rest in thee.

The world and all its lauded charms
Can never give me rest;
I long alone to feel thy love,
And then I will be blest.

Give me some token of thy love,
Some word my soul to cheer;
No eye but thine can see my need,
Thou hearest my heart-felt prayer.

I beg for mercy, in the name
Of thy beloved Son;
His righteousness my only plea,
For I myself have none.

When thou dost give a heart to pray,
Wilt thou not heed my moan?
I wait on thee—renew my strength,
The praise shall be thine own.

Flossie I. Faulkner,
In Signs 1931

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EDITORIAL

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even

to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it.” Isaiah 22:20-25.



Elder J.B. Farmer

It seems always a fearful place to be, when given a mind to set down some thoughts concerning the scripture. For we know that no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation. And we fear we might inject some of our opinions, which are worth nothing. But the servants of the Lord are commanded to **“study to shew thyself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”** Those who are blessed to study (or to be diligent) to speak as the oracles of God give evidence that they are led of the Spirit. But the rightly dividing must be given by revelation. The deep, hidden mysteries are not given to the wise and prudent, but are revealed unto babes. This is one of the ways that God holds men back from boasting, and makes sure that all honor and glory is rendered unto Him alone. For only God, the creator of heaven and earth, is worthy to be praised.

The prophet, being moved of the Spirit, prophesied of things that would come to pass about 800 years in his future: **“And it shall come to pass in that day,”** That day is surely the day

of the Lord, the day when Jesus would come as **“Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”** The Lord laid aside His glory, which He had with the Father, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. And being found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. In **‘That day’** the Lord came and wrought salvation for His people, the elect of God.

The prophet also declared by the Spirit of God: **“that I will call my servant Eliakim”** (which name means the God of Rising). Jesus said to Martha, **“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”** And Jesus also said, concerning His life, **“No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”** By His resurrection, He was victorious over death, hell and the grave, and has given His people the victory in Him. Because He lives, you shall also live, and never die. The second death has no power over you.

The prophet also declared by the same Spirit that God would call Eliakim **“the son of Hilkiyah** (which name means the God of Portioning). The One called the God of Rising is the Son of the God of Portioning. Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, is the Son of God, who portions all things, or con-

trols all things, to His own glory and honor. **“For the Lord’s portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.”** **“The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.”** Men think and do wickedly, but God frustrates their purposes and brings good forth from the evil they intend. And the wickedness they would do, which does not suit the purpose of God, He restrains or holds them back from doing it. Consider Joseph, who was hated by his brethren, and how they sought to kill him, but rather sold him into Egypt, that he might go before them to preserve life according to the wisdom and power of God. **“Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”**

And the prophet continues, **“And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.”** Jesus was clothed with the robe of perfect righteousness, was strengthened with the power of God, was given the administration of the government of His holy nation, and became a Father to all the family of God. Jesus was altogether righteous. No man could ever convict Him of sin because there was no sin in Him. He is the spotless, sinless, Son of God. All power was given to Jesus. He said, **“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”** By Him were the heavens and the earth created. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word**

was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.”

According to the Holy Spirit by way of the prophet it is written: **“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”**

This same Jesus came into the world as a little baby, grew into a man, and offered up Himself, the perfect sacrifice unto God, that we might be redeemed from all sin. The government of His kingdom is sure, for he directs and upholds it by His almighty power. None can stay His hand, or say to Him what doest thou? He looked and there was none to help. By His own arm He brought salvation. When Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus said, **“He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.”** **“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.”** The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God. And He (Jesus) of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He indeed is all in all and **“a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.”**

“And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.” The Lord alone has determined who should be the inhabitants of His kingdom. It is open to the lame, the weak, the poor, the naked, the blind, the diseased, the broken-hearted, the fatherless and the widows, the babes and little children, the debtor, the distressed, the discontented, those who mourn, those who labor and are heavy laden, the ignorant and the fools, even to all them who are made to know that they are vile sinners, and who are blessed to believe in God. But it is closed to all who are righteous in their own eyes, to all who walk in pride, to them who glory in the flesh, and to all who say in their hearts there is no God.

“And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house.” Jesus is the Nail, the one secure place for the trust of all that are blessed to believe in God. **“The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.”** He is the glorious throne, He is the sure foundation, which no man can lay, He is the glorious chief corner stone upon which His glorious house is built. He is the glorious covering for the saints. He is the 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. We are in a safe and secure place under the shadow of His

wings.

“And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.” Upon that nail fastened in a sure place, even Jesus, depends all the vessels of honor prepared for glory. All praise, honor and glory is unto Him in that He alone brought salvation to His elect by redeeming them unto God with His own blood. You are not your own, you have been bought with a price, even with the life blood of Jesus. All your trust is in Him, and He shall not disappoint you, He will hold you up. **“For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”**

“In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it” In that day, Jesus was removed, cut down and fell. He was delivered up to be crucified by wicked hands according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. In His death, the burden that was placed upon Him, even all our sins, was cut off forever. He bore the wrath of God and made payment in full for all of our sins. He was made to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. All our sin was imputed to Him, and His righteousness was imputed to us. He gained the victory over the devil, and made an end of sin for the saints, in that all their sins have

been atoned for and washed away forever by His blood. This is an absolute certainty, for the Lord hath spoken it.

I know that I have only hinted at the deep meaning of this prophesy. May you be given the wings of an eagle to soar up into heavenly places to see and understand many more of the heavenly things hidden here and in other places. Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, revealed Himself to be the Son of God, spake as no man ever spake, fulfilled the law and the prophets, yielded Himself up to God as the perfect sacrifice, bore the wrath of God for His chosen people that they might not only be forgiven of their sins, but should be made righteous by His imputed righteousness. He destroyed the work of Satan, in that the devil has nothing with which to condemn the Lord’s people. Their sins are now removed from them as far as the east is from the west, never to be remembered against them forever. And He was also raised for our justification that we might also be raised up with Him at His coming, and be made in His likeness. He is your nail in a sure place, and all your confidence rests upon Him. He is governing in His kingdom, and His word is sure. **“Where the word of the king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?”** The Lord has promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against His church, and that is sufficient to quiet our troubled spirits. **“For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be**

saved.”

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer
7-24-2012

CORRESPONDENCE

Tony Horton,

Ollie Carl May
3272 Pineapple Hwy.
Greenville, ALA. 36037

Dear Sir,

Sorry I am late sending my subscription for Signs of the Times thanks for sending it anyway.

Had a birthday which was 88 yrs. old. I can't do or think like I used to.

I love the Signs. I hope to keep them coming for rest of my life.

Enclosed is \$30.00, \$25.00 for Signs and other as you see fit.

I haven't been able to go to church for over a year. The Signs sure come in good.

I love all the church of God!

Love you,
Ollie Carl May

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 02/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Bro. Cleo Robertson,

I have enjoyed reading the Signs of the Times for many years. Thanks to you, and all who have part in it publication. I submit to you an article, if you feel it could profit your Readers then you can include it in "the Signs." Thanks and may the Lord continue to bless you and "The Signs" and all who receive it.

Ralph Dale

Elder Robertson,

Please see the attached letter that was written to Elder Tench in 1952. Sister Willis was a member of Springfield Church and was the mother in law of Ann (Dad's wife). Daddy said he thought we should send it to have printed in the Signs. Ann does not think the letter was ever sent to Elder Tench.

If you have any questions, please email or give me a call.

Thanks,
Pam

PSALM 9: 1-3.

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

ARTICLES

“O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” (Jer.10:23)

I trust that the Lord will direct my thoughts as I attempt to set forth some comments on this text. It seems that these words of Jeremiah, when considering the verses that follow, are a prayer of the prophet to the Lord. In verse 24 of the same chapter, Jeremiah prays “O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.” Only God’s children know the terror of the Lord and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Only God’s children have the fear of the Lord in their hearts and it is because the Lord has put it there. Only God’s children know, because they have been taught of the Lord, that it is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed. This prayer of Jeremiah “O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.”, brings to mind David’s prayer “**O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure**” (Psalm 6:1). Jeremiah, David, and all God’s children know and feel themselves to be sinners and justly deserving of God’s anger and displeasure. Their constant prayer to the Lord is that He would show mercy to them.

What a great comfort it is to us to be blessed with a hope that God, whom we have sinned against, does indeed have mercy upon His people and forgives and pardons their sins, not because there is any merit in us, for we have none, but for Christ’s sake. (Eph. 4:32)

The children of God often stand in need of correction from the Lord. “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth (Heb.12:6). God loves His children with an everlasting love, and He will never cease to love them. He deals with them as with sons. “For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?” The Lord chastens His *own* children, and this chastening is for their profit that they might be partakers of His holiness. “No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” It appears that I have digressed from the text at the heading of this article, however, it is true, I believe, that every one who is taught of the Lord will confess as Jeremiah “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”

In Hope of God’s mercy,
Elder Ralph Dale
2508 Governors Pointe Ct
Concord, N.C. 28025

VOICES OF THE PAST

Dear Brother Tench,

I feel like I owe to tell you of what I saw and what did not see following my baptism, but first I want to thank you so much for baptizing me. I have thanked God so many times, and you too. You don't really know unless I tell you at that Saturday's meeting when I walked to the alter to be with those that I love, it was such a relief to me when I heard one of the brethren say "I move to receive her in the church". I thank them all. After the meeting was over we came home talking about the baptizing to be the next morning and said we guessed it wouldn't be a very big crowd there. I have a sister in law that lives in Draper, N.C. and I said I know she would come if she knew about it, but we didn't see anyway of her hearing about it so at last I said, as for my part I don't care if there isn't anybody there but the preacher and me. I said to Guy well I would like for you to be there if you will.

Brother Tench, if you remember it was a beautiful sun shining morning. I had been baptized before but I didn't see or feel the spirit of God within or around and about me, so after a time to come I had become miserable and in my poor way of knowing how I had asked God many times to show me the

right way of true salvation and I do believe here at this place he did.

When I was lifted from beneath the water I heard you say "Amazing Grace", I heard the sound of their voices, but not a word, and when I got to the bank I just could see one of the brethren reach down his hand for me. From then on all that I saw was hands one at a time as smooth as satin and as white as snow reaching out for me. Everything was just as still and quiet as could be and it seemed that there was one walking by my side but I did not see anyone, just those beautiful smooth white hands reaching out shaking with me. Until at last my natural eyes was open in the face of the sister in law that I mentioned above and I was made to cry aloud and say oh I'm so glad to see you.

She is a sweet sister to me, of this precious faith. The thought of this seems to me as the twenty third Psalm of David, it seems just as plain to me now as it did that day. So I hope I haven't been mistaken in what it means to me, sometimes I wonder if I have but it seems a precious hope to me.

Written by: Sister Una Mae Willis
Member of Springfield Primitive
Baptist Church
Received & Baptized
October 12, 1952
Died: June 3, 1990
Submitted by her daughter in law:
Ann Willis Goad

ELDER W. P. O'NEAL, EXPERIENCE

When I was a small child I had many fears. I was afraid of the sun, I was afraid of the darkness and I was afraid that the world would come to an end. When I stayed all night with my grandparents, I would cry because I was afraid. They would ask me what was wrong and I would tell them my belly was hurting.

When my troubles first began, I decided to go to church. I was hunting for the church. I went to many churches and everything I knew of that called itself a church. All were killing to me. They would come to the house and say that if I didn't accept the Lord that He would not give me another chance.

I was told to pray for the Lord to appear to me and that he would talk face to face to me. I would cry all night until my pillow would be wet with tears. I finally begged for the Lord to appear unto me and one night while begging for him to appear, a white lacy form appeared to come down from the ceiling and began hovering around me. I was so afraid that I jumped out of bed and ran from the room. I never had a desire to ask the Lord to appear to me again.

I would go to work at night and I was in trouble all night and all day. I got in such a fix I thought my wife and baby had turned against me. I would lay in the bed at night and try to talk to my wife but a deep sleep had been placed upon her. I did not know at the time that she could not help me. This burden was for me to bear alone. I cried day and night.

I got to having dreams. I had not read the Bible, but would wake up quoting scriptures, begging the Lord to show me the true church. I dreamed I was in a trench and there was no way out. I saw a red horse and a man riding on it. The red horse had smoke and fire coming out of its mouth. I thought that if I would get out of this trench that the man on the red horse would get me. The earth was boiling with a red heat that I cannot describe. I could not go back to my wife and child but had to go on through this trench to my grandfather who was an Old Baptist preacher. (When I was a child, my grandfather had told certain ones that some day I would be with the Old Baptists.)

Another time, I dreamed I was in a wilderness, in thorns, thistles and barbwire. I was going up a mountain. I was talking to someone and told them that I must go to the top of the mountain and when I got there everything would be as white as snow. When there, I saw a garden with all kinds of fruits and vegetables and the Old Baptists lined up at the table.

In another dream, I saw two trees. On one side I saw several denominations. The bark of their tree was slippery and swift growing. The apple was red delicious. These people were enjoying themselves and eating this fruit like it was so good. Someone gave me an apple, but it was the bitterest thing I ever ate. The other tree was on the right.

It was old, the bark was *twisted* the fruit was shriveled. I climbed up in the

tree and tasted the fruit. It was the sweetest fruit I ever tasted. I thought this was the true doctrine.

In another dream, I was going up a hollow through brush, thorns and thistles. I saw an old man coming down the hollow with a long beard. We shook hands and the man said, "Brother O'Neal, you ain't one of them. I said "No, I'm Old Baptist", and went on.

In another dream, a light appeared in the east in the shape of a rainbow and it lightened all the earth. I saw free wills, holiness and pentecostals, and they were under a graveyard. They were trying to pray and were working with their hands to try to find out what that light was. I saw an old brother (Elder Otto Tilley) at a table (which stretched as far as I could see) and I went to them and Elder Tilley shook hands with me and called me Brother O'Neal and I sat and ate with them. One said to me, "I will tell you what that light is. It is Jacob's well appearing in the east."

Sometimes, in the night, I would get up and crawl behind a cook stove and read the Bible by the light of the street lamps. I would be crying and wetting the pages with my tears. I got to where I did not want to see anyone. I thought people would think, if I went into the church, it would be just to hide my meanness.

I had a desire to go to the Old Baptist meeting at Bud. I tried to get my uncle to go with me, but he would not go, so I went on alone. I caught the bus to Bud, not knowing where the meeting house was. When I got off the

bus I saw two little boys. I *asked* them where the meeting house was. They pointed across the hollow to the next mountain. I got close enough to hear the singing but could go no farther. I looked up and down the road. I thought, if anyone would come by, I would go down into the woods and hide. I thought I would try to pray. I went into the woods and stopped, but I was afraid someone would hear, so I went farther into the woods. I kept going and finally I knelt down to pray. When I came to myself I was kneeling by an old burnt log. I was praying "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." When I went back home, I didn't go into the house. I went up under the porch. My wife came to the door and asked where I had been. I said I had been after a load of wood. She asked me what was the matter and I said "nothing." I lied I was trying to keep my troubles hid.

I finally went to church. I remember going in and sitting down. I don't remember what happened after that, but when I came to myself, the church had accepted me. I still do not know what I said. After this I had a strong desire to be baptized. I thought I could not wait until the next meeting on the fourth Sunday. I came to meeting and sat down on the floor. When they got done with meeting I sat there and cried. After meeting they took me and baptized me. Next, I wanted to go to the communion meeting.

I would wake myself up at night preaching. At meeting, when preachers were off talking, I was there too, talking scriptures. One day, after meet-

ing, the Elders were standing outside talking. They said, "What are we going to do with Brother O'Neal?" I heard this and went out into the outhouse and listened to hear what they would say. I was afraid I had done something and that they were going to take me up in the church. One said, "We are going to have to put him in the stand." I feared then that they would put me in the stand right away, but they did not. In three or four months I was asked to open service. I said, "I can't," but they insisted. Elder Otto Tilley said to "pick a song and if you can't continue, I will." I chose Amazing Grace. I stood and cried. I could not sing. When the song was finished, I knelt down to pray. I don't know if I made a sound, but what was on my mind was "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." After this Elder Tilley got up and went on in the stand and, preached. Every now and then I was called into the stand.

Another time I was called to stand and I thought that I made such a mess that I vowed I would never go back in the stand. Some time after this, I was working in the coal mine and a huge rock fell from the roof and pinned me under it. It broke my back and paralyzed me for a time. I prayed that if the Lord would spare me I would go back into the stand. After the rock fall and the hospital stay, I was made willing to go back into the stand. I am satisfied that the Old Baptist is the true church. But to tell you that I am one, I cannot do. They are the most honest and the humblest people that I have ever known in my life.

In another dream, I was in a multitude of people. There was a woman in front. I thought she was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. This multitude of people was dressed in white and followed the woman. She went around by a big rock and then went into the rock. Everything inside was as white as snow. All were clothed in white. I looked back and saw my wife May following along. When I looked back the second time, I didn't see her again. This worried me. I was told by Brother Mosely not to worry, that when in heaven, all would be alike. There will be no marriages in heaven. This seemed to satisfy me. I haven't worried about it since.

I joined the church May 25, 1947, was baptized on the fourth Sunday in June by Elder Otto Tilley and was ordained April 22, 1952.

Elder William Patten O'Neal

Note: Elder W. P. O'Neal was Moderator of the Newfound Church in Wyoming County, West Virginia, where meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month. The Newfound Church is in the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association.

PROVERBS 4:25.

Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

What greater power, knowledge and wisdom can any being have? Certainly there was no man to advise or question Him. God spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast. The finite mind of carnal man can in no wise comprehend such a thing, and only by faith can one believe it. There are people in this world today who have read or heard the first verse of the Scriptures many times and yet are searching diligently as to how the earth and the heavens originated and also the origin of man. Some believe (but I am sure they have no proof) that the heavens and the earth were formed when some tremendous planet exploded, and that man evolved from some creature in the sea. I have often wondered if any of these people ever ask, Who or what created that huge planet and the creature that supposedly evolved into man? I am sure they have never considered the bible a true source of information concerning this, but it is not my intention to discuss this any further, God being my necessary guide, but to talk of God's power, wisdom and knowledge to His elect children. The non-elect can never understand in truth what the Scriptures say: neither can anyone else until they are opened to him of God. Jesus taught his apostles and disciples many things while he was on earth in the flesh, yet they understood not until he opened their understanding (See Luke 24:45). To the others

Jesus always spake in parables. One of the apostles asked, Why?, and Jesus said, “Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given.” In another place Jesus said, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven, and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” All spiritual things are hid from the wise and prudent because it pleased the Father. “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” (1 Cor. 19-21). And the 18th verse says, For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. “Brethren, isn't it wonderful to feel the power that gives you hope that you are one of the us that are saved? I do not know that I am included in that blessed number, but at times I seem to have a hope that is ever so sweet. Who are the ones saved? Are they not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love?

God said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” He divided the light

from the darkness and called the light day, and the darkness night. God spake to the earth that it should bring forth grass, and herbs, and fruit trees, etc. and the earth did as commanded. God spake to the waters that they should bring forth abundantly every moving creature that hath life, and fowl that fly above the earth. God commanded the earth to bring forth all the living creatures, and it was so. In other words all living things upon the face of the earth and in the seas were brought into existence by the word of God's power. Such power and wisdom the finite mind of natural man can in no wise comprehend. Neither can he understand how God made man from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. But God is an infinite being and he has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. He is the Alpha and Omega.

When God made man he made him exactly as it pleased him and it pleased him to create man in his own image; male and female created he them, and he called their name Adam. Although the man God formed from the dust was only one outwardly, yet Eve was in him and so was all his posterity. Therefore he is the federal head of all mankind. In other words he is the father of all people born of the flesh, save Jesus Christ, whose Father is God.

The first man Adam was a figure of him that was to come, Jesus Christ. In type Eve represents the bride of

Christ, which is the church. She was in Adam just as the church was in Jesus Christ, who was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. When God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman and gave her to Adam, he said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Paul tells us that we are the members of the body of Christ. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Therefore we see that we were in him as Eve was in Adam.

God placed them in the garden of Eden and gave them a commandment that they should eat of every fruit of the garden except the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. God knew that his law would be broken, he said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." He did not say, "If thou eatest," but, "In the day thou eatest thereof." Sin would enter the world by this man, but the cure was already prepared, for Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The serpent was in the garden of Eden. This serpent is the Devil or Satan, and he was there by the will of God. Nothing is done outside the will of God. When he entered the garden we are not told, but he was there for a very specific purpose — to deceive. He was a liar from the beginning and the father of it. "He was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." Job said, "His hand hath formed the crooked serpent." These two verses should silence any who contend that God did not make the

Devil, but I don't believe they will. They will be twisted or ignored as are many of the other Scriptures. God saw that every thing he made was good: it is good for the purpose which he made it. We know that Satan was there and that he deceived Eve: and he is still going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it, seeking to devour who he may. And I will say that he is seeking to devour only the children of God, for all the rest are his. But God has put a hedge about his children as he did about Job, and Satan can go only as far as God permits, for Satan has only the power God gives him: there is no power but of God. All the powers that be are ordained of him.

Being deceived, Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and then gave to her husband Adam, and he did eat.

Being a figure of him that was to come, Adam was not deceived; but because of his love for his bride he ate the fruit. He had no power to bring her back, therefore he went to her. To be with her he must pay the debt that was incurred. Death is the only penalty or debt for sin. The debt of the wife is always charged to the husband, therefore sin has never been charged to the church, the bride of Christ, for all her sins were charged to him and his righteousness was imputed unto her, and because of his great love wherewith he loved her he came into the world and laid down his life to pay the debt that God's holy justice demanded. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Had not Christ been raised from the dead

we would still be dead in trespasses and sin and have no hope of heaven and eternal life. Christ is our life, and in him we live and move and have our being. And as surely as he lives we shall also live.

When Adam disobeyed the commandment of God he fell from his upright, pure, innocent state, to a state of sin, condemnation and death, and all of his posterity fell in him, for they were embodied in him. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In the flesh we are only Adam multiplied, and as Paul said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Though death has passed upon all men Jesus Christ has already paid the penalty for his chosen people: the just died for the unjust. How can justice be satisfied with this? We know that God is holy and perfect in all his attributes. His love, mercy, laws and justice are all equal: one cannot outweigh or override the other. We also know that he hath loved us with an everlasting love and that he has shown great mercy upon all. His love and mercy are the cause or reason for saving his elect people, yet it is not love and mercy that saved them, for his righteous justice must be satisfied, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Therefore Jesus shed his holy blood on the cross of Calvary. As our High Priest he offered himself a sacrifice unto God and by this one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. The

blood of sacrificed animals could never accomplish this, but the sinless blood of Jesus Christ did, and we are freely justified by the grace of God through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, for God set him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." To whom is this free grace given? Not to the entire world, for if it were thus so then the entire world would be saved. It is to the elect of God, those he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and as mentioned before they are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. We read in Ps. 139, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." What a marvelous declaration this is, for he is talking about the body of Christ. If we be the body of Christ then did God see us before we were ever born into this world. The body of Christ was not imperfect, but unperfect — being not yet fully manifested or developed. It will only be completed when the last member is brought into the world.

Christ is the head of the body and therefore he must control all of it. With-

out the head the body is nothing; it has no life. Therefore when Christ died on the cross we died in him. (I say 'we' only in hope for myself). Now justice can demand no more. Jesus suffered the pain and agony for us, but yet in a mystical sense we also died. We were buried with him and we arose with him; now therefore we are free from sin and condemnation. The debt has been paid, we have been ransomed. Had not Christ arisen we would still be dead in trespasses and sins, but he was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. This was the first resurrection, and if we had a part in it we are greatly blessed, for, "Blessed and holy is he that hath a part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." Those who had no part in the first resurrection and whose names were not found written in the Lamb's book of life will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell. This is the second death.

How wonderful, how marvelous, how beautiful! how greatly we are blessed when we are given eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart to understand and feel at least a portion of God's power, wisdom and knowledge. I feel that I have been greatly blessed to rejoice in hope as I have written these things unto you, and it is my prayer that God will also bless you likewise or more so. And if it be the will of God I will write more on this subject later. Right now my mind seems to be

full of Scriptures concerning this, and I know that the subject can never be exhausted if he gives us grace to write the rest of our lives.

May God bless the truth and pardon all my errors.

Submitted in love and hope,
Clifford Wilbanks

I spoke some months ago on some of the marks mentioned in the scriptures as they relate to the Lord's people and have been asked to write my thoughts on the subject.

(1) In Genesis chapter 4 a portion of the 15th verse reads, "*And the Lord set a mark upon Cain*" etc. This mark is a type we all have in nature. It is the mark of disobedience and death we have inherited from Adam and Eve. We have in reality committed murder because our sins brought about the death of Christ. We did by our misdeeds make it necessary for Him to be crucified and His blood cries on our behalf to God as the blood of righteous Abel cried. We so often hear the statement "They crucified Christ" but my beloved it was the sins of the Church that crucified Him. Now we see the mark of sin and condemnation of ourselves sent Him to the sufferings of the cross and not the world. Those who remain the descendants of Cain have no part in our hope of salvation through His redeeming blood.

Man cannot with self works erase the mark of sin anymore than he can change his height, or to refer to the

word, "anymore than a leopard can change his spots." We carry this mark of nature until death brings an end to sin. The corruption then (mark) will be destroyed as the body returns to dust. We have hope beyond this death that through Christ we shall live again without the mark of sin and death because His words is to present us without spot, wrinkle, blemish in perfection. We then shall have received the mark of glory and faith and hope will have become reality. We will then have been made perfect in love in order that we may dwell in His presence forever. The mark has been exchanged through Christ for a portion of heir to His throne. Praise God!

(2) Job writes in Chapter 22:15 "*Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?*" This way is surely marked in the minds of each of us as we remember the way we have come. We as the wise men of old have no desire to return again to the old way. It was a way we were satisfied with until such time as Christ was revealed and then we saw it as the way to the depths of hell. It is the same way David expressed as a horrible pit and miry clay and he would praise God that He had lifted him from such. We must render all praise to Him whose arm of grace is long enough to reach to any depths that one of His has fallen to. The old way is marked by our own remembrance that Christ has removed the joys of the circumstances of our sins in order that we not forget what we have been drawn out of. Those of the world are never concerned about this

way because they don't know the difference (have not been taught) and are known by their fruits (actions and pleasures).

(3) We find in Psalm 37:37 *"Mark the perfect man and behold the upright for the end of that man is peace."* There has never been but one perfect man and He is marked in our minds with His indelible blood. The marks of His laws in our hearts and minds holds us steadfast to His truths. We did not, nor can any man under the heavens bring these marks to be in or on another person, even our kinsmen by nature. These marks are of grace and thus not of works lest any should boast. We can behold the marks of grace on our brothers and sisters in Christ but not upon ourselves. This has been fixed thus in order we not become puffed up and exalted above measure.

The death of Christ not only brought peace to himself but also for us. He was taken out of this world that had been pain and humiliation for Him. He was indeed ready to die (willing) to and return to the father in glory from whence He came. We rejoice now that in Him and through Him we died too that we be separated from the condemnation of our sins. We also are comforted with the promise that as He burst forth from the grave we shall also when His voice calls with a shout of victory.

We see, in His coming to His death the perfect submission to the will of God. His humility caused him to accept in silence the marks of His body to obtain humility and submission for us. In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah some of

the marks are noted. *"He was bruised for our iniquities," "By His stripes we are healed," and "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him."* We will not suffer these wraths of God because He hath suffered them already for us. The world wonders after all these things why we trust and praise Him as our all in all Isaiah also writes *"He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied."* Then He had fully obtained peace for Himself, for us and for a dying thief when He said *"its finished."*

(4) In the gospel of Luke 14:1 we find this, *"And He put forth a parable to those that were bidden, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms etc."* We see this mark on many today along our journey. These are the ones who dote upon selfworks and choose for themselves an elevated place in so called Christianity. We hear oft - times some say they know God has a high palace for them because of what they have done. We are reminded that there will be no big I and little you in the climes of Glory. This same thought is under consideration in the completion of the verse for Christ reminded them that there could come one greater than they who had chosen the highest room. He also tells them that he who thinks himself greatest will be abased and he who considers himself least shall be exalted. Thus beloved we who consider ourselves least in His kingdom shall be exalted and stand before Him justified.

In keeping with this parable we should mark (not judge) how a member conducts himself or herself with

their brothers and sisters in Christ. We should mark what their conversation is and their humility. We should note (mark) how they conduct themselves in the house of the Lord. These expressions reveal *the* marks of *the strength* of their hope and faith and from whence it comes.

(5) In Psalm 48:11 -14 and especially note verse 13. It reads "*Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell the generation following,* David is speaking of Zion and reminds us to mark *her bulwarks which are the defensive strengths of the Gospel*. These strengths tell us that Christ was marked for death before He was born, in the will of God the father. We find John writing in the 18th chapter verse 37, "*To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth,* (The gospel, the bulwarks of Zion.) He came to fulfill the will of His father and obtain for us a place of safety within *the* bulwarks of Zion. He thus fulfilled to a jot and tittle the law for all who had been marked by election and predestination before the foundation of the world.

We now declare that all who were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ desire to hear the bulwarks of Zion are secure and its the duty of all God called ministers to assure them their hope, faith and salvation are eternal security within the realm of Zion. We who walk about Zion (among the churches) discern the marks of order and discipline she has. The marks of the true bulwarks of Zion

embody the virtues of Christ for He is the complete body of Zion (the Church).

We consider the palaces of Zion as the places where Christ is manifest to His own. The poet writing "*Prisons would palaces prove if Christ would dwell with me there.*" Historically palaces were considered places of comfort and safety and a home where peace prevailed. Is this not a true description of the Church? Thus anywhere we find Him *revealed is for a moment a palace and its as close as we come to the* palace of eternity in this time world.

Christ marked the way to Mt. Zion by His sufferings and the trials the scribes and Pharisees placed upon Him. They scorned and derided Him because they felt they had the answers and not He. He has marked us in such a way that we are turned away from the world (even our relatives in the flesh) to follow *the marks of the strait and narrow way*. These marks embody salvation expressed in this world and eternal life in that world (palace) to come. He has blessed us with the marks of love, fellowship and communion in order that His name be praised on the bulwarks of Zion and palaces within.

We should treasure all the marks of afflictions and trials as well as the marks of His love. These are a part of the travel toward Zion. When we plan a trip (naturally) we choose a way that seems best and nearest to arrive at our destination. Thank God we do not (cannot) choose the way to glory for the

carnal mind is enmity toward God our best thoughts (choosings) as filthy rags. Christ Himself said "I am the way, the truth and the life." In first Corinthians 12:31 Paul writes "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." The many marks He has given us are indeed gifts for we have not (cannot) obtained them by works. These marks are the fulfillment of the promise, "My yoke is easy and my burden light." They are just mileage marks along the road to glory.

In Psalm 27:11 David writes, "Lead me in a plain path, etc." The path of the preserver of Zion is plain to His people yet hid from the world because it pleased Him to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them to babes. We then are commanded to tell these things to the generation following. We note the word generation is singular and not plural in any sense. This expresses the fact that there is but one generation of Christ. We became kinsmen of that generation because kinsmen of that generation because of the marks of the whip, spear and nails upon the body of the son of God.

The natural body has the mark of dust and death upon it for from dust was it made and in death to dust shall return. We can be assured that the spirit within has the mark of eternal life and returns unto God who gave it. It is that spirit of life that shall call (Christ) to the sleeping dust and shall deliver that new body to Zion's palace in order that we see Him for ourselves and

not another.

May we praise His holy name along the way (on the bulwarks) and feel in some marvelous way as did Paul when he wrote in Philippians chapter 3 verse 14, "*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*" Oh what a mark to receive and what joy to possess. Praise God!

Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

These are the words of Jesus to his disciples in the final hours that he was with them here on earth, shortly before he was to be betrayed unto the Jews by Judas Iscariot. It was a very crucial time in his ministry and his words have a special urgency as he began to tell them of the things that would come and the effects that these things would have on their lives and the lives of all of his chosen people in the generations to come. They are the most assuring and inspiring of all his teachings as he began to reveal the spiritual aspects of his ministry, how it would be manifested in their ministry and how and why it must be this way. In the scripture above Jesus sets forth, in one sentence, the complete sovereignty of God in the salvation of every heir of heaven, also, the complete inability of man even to approach unto the Father of their own initiative or strength.

Just prior to this time Jesus had told his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will return again and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also." Jesus was referring to the fact that he was on the way to the cross where he would make the sacrifice necessary to take away their sin; then come forth from the tomb victorious over death, hell and the grave so that as he had triumphed over them, all that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world would likewise come forth and reign with him in the kingdom of heaven throughout eternity. The law required this sacrifice for sin and Jesus was the only one that could make the sacrifice since it must be perfect no spot nor blemish. No one else could make it and man could not be instrumental in it in any way.

Jesus said, "I am the way." Under the law sacrifices were made continually of bulls and goats but they could not put away sin; rather it was just a yearly reminder of sin pointing to the time of the perfect sacrifice that would put away sin for all time. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak in flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." This is the way, the only way that a sacrifice would be acceptable before God and that was that it be the body that was prepared for this one special event. Just as no man helped Jesus to do anything during his ministry here on earth previously they could

not help, In any sense of the word, on this occasion; therefore Jesus said, I am the way, not a way but the way and the only way. The way of all is the same, it is the Christ. This is the only way that man can be turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, receive the forgiveness for sin, become heirs of salvation and be blessed to be able to look forward to receiving an inheritance among them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. Man speaks of many ways of salvation based on many necessary ingredients but Christ simply says, I am the way. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." And again, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." All of these words, and many others, spoken throughout his ministry leaves no room for doubt but that all that his Father gave him before the foundation of world shall come to him and all that cometh to him he will in no wise cast out. No man, of their own ability knows Jesus, for the scripture states, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Oh, the blessedness of those, in the fold, who hear his voice call unto them, by name, and who follow him in the way that leads to life eternal. They will not follow the voice of a stranger because they have not the words of life. This is the way that

all must come to God and all of it is in Christ who is the way of salvation to all that believe on him unto life eternal.

Jesus said, "I am the truth." All scripture is given by inspiration of God unto his servants for the edification of the church during its pilgrimage here in time: They are absolutely true and are profitable for doctrine for all who have been given the ability to discern the things of the spirit. The scriptures are a record of God's dealings with his elect people down the corridors of time as he made manifest his truths to them here in time and they are taught to fear him. "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom." All of the elect learn this lesson well as they are made to see what they are by nature and what they must be by grace, and see the great gulf between the two extremes and realize that they can never bridge this great gulf by their own efforts. This is where they are made to see their need of a savior and at the same time are given a hope that Jesus, the Son of God is their savior. This truth and knowledge which come as a package are the gift of God that enables them to know and to understand the word of truth: the word of truth that was made flesh and dwelt among them full of grace and truth. Only the recipients of this faith fellowship the mystery which has been treasured in Christ from before the foundation of the world but is made manifest in the Appearing of Christ to them at the time appointed by the Father. This truth and their love for it separates them from the world

and their love for it, as in former days, and make them see and realize the vanity and foolishness of the things in nature when compared to the glory of the spiritual realm. This causes them to desire more and more to explore the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God: to search out his ways and his judgements and find the ways that lead to life eternal. They realize that the truth is the only thing that is sufficient for their need and since Jesus, whom they know says, I am the truth, they will hear and follow him alone and trust him for salvation in time and in eternity.

"I am the life, Jesus said this many times during his ministry here in the world and each time that he said it he was speaking of that spiritual life which all must possess before they can have a hope of eternal life; before they can come to him and be healed; before they see the kingdom of heaven. They must have this life before they can believe as Paul wrote, "for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." When they receive this life, which was treasured in Christ, they are a new Creature, old things are passed away, behold all things become new. Their walk and their talk take on a new direction, their food and drink is the flesh and blood of Jesus, the flesh being the word of God and the blood the life thereof. Jesus said, "who so eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. This change in the lives of the followers of Jesus is the outward

evidence, to the saints, of the inward work of grace that had been done in the heart of the new believer. This is the life that radiates the light that shines before men, which cannot be hid, and gives light to all that are in the house, (household of faith). This miracle of grace causes rejoicing in the hearts of all who behold it, and they render praise to the giver of this perfect gift of life as a manifestation of his presence in their midst and evidence that he is still adding to the church daily such as should be saved. This life produces action, just as it does in nature, and the individual goes forth in the strength of the Lord manifesting his calling to all that have eyes to see. This was demonstrated in the lives of all of the Apostles and disciples in Jesus' day and if the calling is from God it will be in this day for the calling is for a purpose with a designated end to be accomplished. There are many callings and all are of equal importance, there are no insignificant callings, for they are for the good of the body, the church, of which they are a member and they are to the Glory of God the Father. As Paul wrote, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." You have been given this gift of spiritual life that you might fight a good fight of faith and finish your course having kept the faith in a pure heart as much as in you is. This is all that is your duty to do, and

do it as the spirit enables you to and being diligent in all things as unto God.

"No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Jesus had told Peter and the disciples, shortly before this, that where he was going they could not go now, but that they would go afterwards: Peter said why cannot I go now? I will lay down my life for your sake. Jesus answered, wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow til thou has denied me thrice. At this point in time Peter was willing and wanted to go with Jesus even unto death, but, when the time came to do it he denied vehemently that he even knew Jesus. This is the flesh; always subject to circumstances and very much interested in self preservation. "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven."

There was a certain time and way in which Peter was to leave this world and God had much to be done by Peter prior to that time; Peter did indeed lay down his life by crucifixion, as Christ did, but at the time and place appointed by God. Peter could not go unto the Father but by Christ and at God's time not Peter's. All who go to the Father must go in Christ. God only prepared one place for those that he formed for himself; only accepted one sacrifice as an atonement for their sin; only had one plan of salvation whereby all of his elect would be secured to himself and all of this was in the obedi-

ence of Jesus Christ to his Father's will. In Jesus' prayer to his Father he said, "Father the hour is come: glorify thy Son that thy Son may also glorify thee."

The glory of the Father and the Son rested in the accomplishment of the designed goal, the salvation of the saints by the death burial and resurrection from the grave of Christ. Then Jesus said, "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." The plan is executed, completed and successful and therefore the eternal abode of all the saints in Glory is absolutely assured. All who are in that number came to God by Jesus and those who climb up some other way will be judged out of the books at the final day.

In completing the work Jesus had taken away the first and had established the second; he had fulfilled the law, taking it out of the way and nailing it to the cross, and he had established the covenant of grace which was established on better promises than that of Moses. He had established a new and living way through the veil, that is to say the flesh, whereby each subject of grace might come boldly to the throne of grace and Commune with the Father in *spirit* and in truth: come having their loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of

the spirit which is the word of God. As Paul said, "wherefore take unto you the whole Armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. All of this Armor is defensive by design and is to thwart the attacks of the principalities and powers, resist the ruler of darkness and discern spiritual wickedness in high places. No offensive armor to help the Lord to resist these forces: He has already overcome them and thereby provided his children with these defenses.

O' the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. The depths can never be completely searched out, in this life, but the joys of searching and the treasures that the saints do find as they walk about Zion and study the word makes all the efforts worthwhile. It is sufficient to occupy the rest of their lives; it is the pearl of great price, the treasure that was hidden in the field; the handfuls of purpose that they find as they glean among riches of their inheritance here in this time world, the fullness of which will be realized when they enter into the joy of their heavenly home. The value of these things, to the wayfaring pilgrim is worth more than all of the wealth of the world. Their desire is to understand more and more of this mystery and obtain more and more evidence of their participation in this plan of salvation.

They would only be satisfied with certain knowledge but this they will never have in time: this is what keeps them pressing to the mark, for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God which is treasured in Christ who is the way, the truth, and the life, and by whom all of the heirs of grace approach unto God.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

“For we are his workmanship.”
--- Ephesians ii. 10.

Consider what is here declared of those who are saved by grace through faith --- that they are God's "workmanship" --- the fruit and product of his creative hand. All, then, that we are and all that we have that is spiritual, and as such acceptable to God, we owe to the special operation of his power. There is not a thought of our heart, word of our lips, or work of our hands, which is truly holy and heavenly, simple and sincere, glorifying to God or profitable to man, of which he is not by his Spirit and grace the divine and immediate Author. How beautifully is this expressed by the Church of old, and what an echo do her accents find in every gracious heart: **“But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand”** (Isa. lxiv. 8.) How suitable, how

expressive is the figure of the clay and the potter. Look at the moist clay under the potter's hand. How soft, how tender, how passive is the clay; how strong, how skillful are the hands which mould it into shape. As the wheel resolves, how every motion of the potter's fingers shapes the yielding clay, and with what exquisite skill does every gentle pressure, every imperceptible movement impress upon it the exact form which it was in his mind to make it assume. How sovereign was the hand which first took the clay, and as divine sovereignty first took it, so divine sovereignty shapes it when taken into form.

J. C. Philpot

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Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise:
He justly claims a song from me!
His loving kindness, O how free!
His loving kindness, loving kindness,
His loving kindness, O how free!

He saw me ruin'd in the fall,
Yet lov'd me notwithstanding all;
He sav'd me from my lost estate;
His loving kindness, O how great!

Though num'rous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose,
He safely leads my soul along;
His loving kindness, O how strong!

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick and thunder'd loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving kindness, O how good!

Often I feel my sinful heart
Prone from my Jesus to depart;
But though I have him oft forgot,
His loving kindness changes not.

Soon shall I pass the gloomy vale,
Soon all my mortal powers must fail;
O! may my last expiring breath
His loving kindness sing in death.

Then let me mount and soar away
To the bright world of endless day,
And sing, with rapture and surprise,
His loving kindness in the skies.

Medley

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EDITORIAL**CAIN AND ABEL**

Genesis 4:1-2, "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bore his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

of the non-believer and the ones of

Eve conceived and bare the first child born into the world. I believe that Cain and Abel are figures of the natural and the spiritual, of the lost and the elect,

faith. Cain was first. The Apostle Paul writes in **1 Corinthians 15:46**, "**Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural.**" Other examples are the sons of Abraham, Ismael and Isaac, as well as the sons of Isaac, Esau and Jacob.

Abel was a keeper of sheep. He was a shepherd. There were no works of the flesh involved as he did not make the sheep, but merely watched over them and cared for them. As such he was a figure of the Lord's ministers. By faith he offered the firstling of his flock and of the fat thereof. This was pointing to the suffering, death and shedding of blood of Christ. Revelation speaks of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. John the Baptist saw Christ and proclaimed "Behold the Lamb of God." The Lord had respect unto Abel's offering because it was offered in faith that the Lord gave him. The Apostle Paul wrote "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Faith is a gift of God given only to the elect.

Cain was a tiller of the ground which shows action and sets forth works of the flesh. He tilled the black dust of the earth of which his natural body was composed. He planted; he harvested. He offered the fruit of the earth, works of the flesh, unto the Lord. He had no faith as he knew nothing of the love and mercy of God. His offering was of the flesh, by the flesh and for the satisfaction of the flesh. His

works were evil. The works of the flesh are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. The Apostle added "that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." John writes that Cain was of that wicked one (Satan) and that his works were evil. **1 John 3:10-12, "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. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."** So Abel was manifest as a child of God and Cain was manifest as a child of the devil. Abel was the first child of God persecuted and slain because of his faith. That was the beginning of the persecution of the church. Christ promised His little ones that they would have tribulation in the world, but also told them to be of good cheer for He had overcome the world. The words of Christ as recorded in **Matthew 23:34-35, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come**

all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barochias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

God had not respect for the offering of Cain because his works were evil. **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."** Cain, filled with anger and wrath, rose up and slew his brother, Abel, and then lied about it.

Now, I believe, God presents a picture of that which will take place at the end of time. Revelation 20:12 reads, **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works."** Cain, based upon previous scriptures, will face this judgment in that time, but he experienced it in a measure at this time. He stood before God, not in love and mercy, but in judgment and the power of God. The Lord said unto Cain, **"where is Abel thy brother?"** Cain answered **"I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?"** The Lord said unto Cain, **"What hast thou**

done? the voice of thy brother's blood cried unto me from the ground." The Lord wasn't asking Cain to find out, but the Lord was rendering judgment. Cain was guilty of murder, lying, and hatred of his brother. His works were evil. **Proverbs 6:16-19** says "**These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.**"

Now judgment was executed, The Apostle Paul writes in **II Thessalonians 1:7-10**, "**And to you who are troubled rest with us, 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 (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.**" The Lord told Cain that he was cursed from the earth. When Cain tills the ground, it will not produce. He would be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. No more would Cain be in the presence of the Lord. Cain said that his punishment was greater than he could bear. The Lord set a mark upon Cain that he should

not be killed. Therefore, he must endure this hell on earth until he died. He still must face that eternal judgment and punishment at the end of time.

The doctrine of election is set forth as God chose one to eternal life before the foundation of the world and not the other one that the purpose of God according to election might stand. As the Apostle wrote to the saints at Rome, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Judgment has been rendered that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. There is none righteous. We are all sinners and guilty. But the Lord's people have their names written in the book of life which is Christ. He came to this earth under the same law His people are under to satisfy the demands of His Father's holy law for them and to redeem His people from their sins. He suffered, shed His blood, and died to satisfy the judgment against them. He paid their debt in full as He said on the cross "It is finished." He rose from death and the grave to justify His elect. Therefore "who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect for it is God that justifieth." The Lord's elect will not stand before God in that day to be judged out of the books of the law according to their works. Rather, they will be blessed to hear that command, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May the gracious Lord bless each

of you with comfort and peace that surpasses all understanding.

A little one in Hope,
Elder Cleo Robertson

Hope you and your family are doing well. I send my love to all. Please look over mistakes.

**A little sister in hope,
Estelle Thompson**

CORRESPONDENCE

January 16, 2013

Mr. Cleo Robertson, Editor
Signs of the Times
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va 24343

Re: Subscription for 2 years

Enclosed is my check for \$25.00 for 2 year subscription to Signs of the Times. While in a conversation with Harold Pittman, he indicated that an article written by my Grandfather, Elder B.S. Cowin was in your paper. He has sent a copy which I appreciate and value. I was not aware of your paper and want to receive future editions. I am very thankful for my Primitive Baptist background.

Thank you very much,
Rebecca H. Boyd

Dear Brother Horton,

I want to renew the Signs for one year. Sorry I'm a little late. I find myself more forgetful as I am getting older. I enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to getting them.

ARTICLES

“O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things. and to enter into his glory.” Luke 24:25, 26.

These are the words of Jesus after his resurrection when he joined himself to the two disciples after they left the others at Jerusalem and were on their way to Emmaus. He first appeared to them only as another traveler that was curious of their conversation. After hearing their concern and astonishment of what certain women of their company had reported, that they found not the body of Jesus when they visited the tomb. Jesus seemed to act in astonishment and said, in effect, that this is what they should have expected— and more.

The question is; “Why did they not understand what the prophets had spoken?” They had trusted that he was the Messiah that would redeem Israel in a political sense. They thought he would be the one to throw off the yoke of the Roman government, which they were under, and restore the temporal kingdom again to Israel. See Acts 1:6.

But the thought of a spiritual kingdom was apparently not at all in their understanding much less their expectations. Though it may seem to be an overstatement to attribute such a dullness to the two disciples, yet is this not the experience of a child of grace when left to his own reasoning, when first confronted with the seeming unreasonableness of the gospel? This man, whom they did not know, that walked with them on the road to Emmaus, seemed to imply unreasonable things to their natural minds and that these things that had happened to Jesus were necessary and that they should have known them.

Then, without revealing himself, Jesus began to expound, to their natural understanding, the things in the scriptures concerning himself, beginning at Moses and all the prophets. Yet he did not reveal himself and took pity on their dullness **“For he remembered that they were but flesh.” Psalm 78:39.** When they arrived at their abode he made as though he would have gone further, yet the crowning purpose of his presence had not yet taken place. But now the time had come to make himself known to the two and he went in as if to lodge with them for the evening. As they sat at meat Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. The things he had spoken earlier they now understood. Though they knew only in part of the glory they had witnessed, it was more than enough. How wonder-

ful to have had a personal experience with the risen Christ.

Dear child of God has your heart not burned, as that of these two disciples, when looking back to when the scriptures were first given to you in a meaning beyond that of interesting history and moral stories. and you began, for the first time, to see a heavenly purpose and the out shining of his glory. Your reasoning was given a spiritual dimension and you saw Jesus Christ as you had never seen him before. Now, Proverbs 3:5 had a newness of meaning. **“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”** He had never revealed himself to you before and now your world was turned upside down. Sorrow was turned to joy, and despair turned to an earnest expectation of things yet to come. And, like the two disciples, your desire was to be with others of your brothers and sisters and to speak and hear more of the things of the Lord.

Returning to Jerusalem the two disciples found the eleven apostles and other disciples with them and they too were saying that the Lord is risen indeed and had appeared to Simon. The two that had returned from Emmaus then told how Jesus had appeared to them on the road and how he was known to them in the breaking of bread as they sat at the meal. And as they spoke of these things Jesus himself stood in their midst and spoke to them, “Peace be unto you.” Being yet in the flesh they were frightened (no, terrified), thinking that he was a

spirit. And in a somewhat like manner as with the disciples on the road to Emmaus he challenged their lack of understanding.

He then invited them to **“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have.” Luke 24:39.** He was proving to the yet unbelieving disciples that he was the Jesus that they knew and with whom they had fellowship.

He also shows himself to be the same Jesus that they had seen crucified, and not some mystical spirit, as they may have at first imagined. He was yet in the flesh and had not been glorified, as mentioned in **John 7:39,** (“...for the Holy Ghost was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified.”) and **John 12:16.,** (“...but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him...”) His change had not taken place, but seems to have been at the time of his ascension, which would prefigure the manner of change of the saints at the last trumpet, recorded in **1 Cor. 15:51,52,** **“We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”**

Following the appearance of Jesus to the disciples he asked if they had any meat, and he ate and reminded them of what he had previously told them of the scriptures relating to him. And he apparently told them again

of the scriptures that were about him in the law, Moses, and the prophets and that all must be fulfilled. These are the scriptures of the Old Testament to which he referred and not the New Testament. The New Testament had not, at that time, been written.

“Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.” Luke 24:45. It might be asked: How were the scriptures revealed to these disciples when the Holy Spirit had not yet been given? But Christ was there and that was all sufficient, **“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.” Col, 2:9, 10.**

Christ explained again of the necessity of what had been done and what was taking place, Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, **“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things” Luke 24:47,48.** It appears, from Mat. 28:16 and Mark 16:14, that these last remarks and the commission was addressed to the eleven apostles only. They acted, **“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.” Mark 16:20.** This is further evidenced by the apostle Paul, **“...and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, and which was**

preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;" Col. 1:23. Even though the apostolic command may have been carried out then, nevertheless, in the words of Jesus in Mat. 24: 14 it is recorded, "**And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.**"

Therefore, is it not evident that there will continue to be ministers called and spiritually qualified to preach the gospel, even to the end? Not apostles, but godly men (disciples), called and qualified in a similar manner, for example, as Silas, Barnabas, Timothy, and others. Able men, ministering the holy scriptures "**...which are able to make thee wise unto**" (to, or about) "**salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**" 2 Tim. 3:15. Also, 2 Tim. 1:10, The salvation and calling of his people "**...is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.**" The scriptures are not then the initiating factor in salvation, but are the manifestation of that salvation that has taken place in the heart. Salvation is by grace, free and sovereign grace alone, which rests in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The last of the instructions given by Jesus was for them to wait in the city of Jerusalem until they were endowed (provided with) power from on high. Jesus had earlier said, "**And I will pray the Father, and he shall give**

you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:16,17.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled the house where they were. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This was the answer to the prayer of Jesus. The Spirit was now in them and not just dwelling with them as had been the situation before. And thus it has been since Pentecost, with the children of God. The Spirit dwells within; "**Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?**" 1 Cor. 3:16. Also; "**The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.**" Rom. 8:16.

Jesus had been with them, revealed himself, and instructed them after his resurrection. Then, having gone as far as Bethany with them he blessed them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Now they had seen, by revelation, what they had not understood before. He was Jesus Christ the son of God; The one who ... "**sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law**

might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”
Rom. 8:3-4.

Elder Wayman Chapell

EXPERIENCE

12 Country Manor Apts.
 Mebane, North Carolina
 June 18, 1983

Dearest Brother Spangler,

I just received the news of Sister Blackwell's death today from my grandmother. She has always been a lovely sister to me and I truly believe that she lived her belief. As I think back over the years since I was blessed with a home in the church, eleven years in July, I think of the many precious brethren who have departed this life. It is a very humbling thought to realize that the Lord would allow me to be numbered with His people. I do not know that I am among that blood-bought number who will someday be with Christ and be forever satisfied, therefore, to attempt to pen what I hope is an experience of grace is a fearful thing. As I begin, my prayer is that whatever I write might be in keeping with the truth and if it is His most holy will, that it might be to His glory.

I remember, as a child, going to church with my grandparents and thinking, sometimes, that the day was very long. Whenever they would ask me to go, I usually would go even though I

didn't really understand anything that was said. I did begin to do some reading at an early age which caused me to begin to have some concern about death and thereafter. For Christmas one year, I requested a bible story book which my mother bought for me. I read this before I ever started reading the Bible. One of my favorite chapters was the one about Joseph. I remember distinctly thinking as I read how Joseph treated his brothers with kindness, that I wouldn't have done that. What a blessing that the day did come when I trust that the Lord showed me that Joseph is a type of Him and that if He has not that compassion for me, then my soul is doomed to hell and His righteous law approves it well! Shortly thereafter I did begin reading in the New Testament, mostly in the first four chapters because they seemed easier to comprehend than some of the latter chapters especially Revelations. I think during this time I started to become a very staunch Arminian, which is the natural tendency of the carnal mind. I remember asking my grandfather one day, as he drew water from the well, if he thought the Lord heard all prayers. His answer was that if it is a prayer from the heart, then the Lord hears it. I thought my grandfather's answer had solved my problem because it was at this time that I had begun to fear hell and I wanted desperately to find a way to avoid it. So I felt that surely if I read my Bible and abided by the commandments there and prayed earnestly, that all would be well with me. I went through a period of time when I thought

I was doing that. I allotted a certain amount of my time every day to reading the Bible. One of my favorite passages of scripture at that time was the description of Christ's baptism particularly the words, "And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Whether my attraction to that scripture at that time was of a spiritual nature or simply a recognition of the beauty of the language in which it is written, I know not. I also found myself drawn to the first Psalm:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

What a different view of this scripture I came to have! I at this time, thought it a description of how I must be to inherit the kingdom. The day came, however, when I trust I was

blessed to see the Lord there, that it is He and He alone who has fulfilled the requirements.

My readings at this time also included the *Autobiography of Elder Wilson Thompson* which you and Sister Spangler gave me at the age of thirteen. It, along with an old copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* which my grandmother had, made a distinct impression on my mind and later, I hope, on my heart. I remember remarking in a high school English class that I had read and enjoyed *Pilgrim's Progress* after which a visiting college graduate remarked that she didn't see how anyone could enjoy it. Well, she's right, they can't if they're not given to understand.

Many times in high school, a friend, whose parents are members at Dan River, and I would defend the beliefs of the Primitive Baptists in the face of the opposition of an entire class and the teacher. I don't know if either of us at that time fully understood what we were defending, but I do know that even then I recognized that the Bible unquestionably supported these beliefs and that the scriptures when properly interpreted are evidence that the Primitive Baptist beliefs can not be refuted.

It was while in high school that I first had an exercise of heart, if indeed the Lord has dealt with me. My grandfather became ill and had to go to the hospital. It was the first time I ever remember his being in the hospital. To me this is an example of how the Lord knows exactly how to deal with indi-

viduals. Had I been touched bodily with an illness, it could not possibly have hurt me to the very heart as it did to see my grandfather in that hospital bed. I began to fear that I was being punished for not asking a home in the church and I tried to pray diligently that the Lord would bring my grandfather back home to us. During this time I attended a union meeting at Pleasantville Church. Elder John Lee Smith used the text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

This was the first time that I felt any strand of hope, any bit of assurance that the worthless worm of the dust that I saw myself to be, might be included in that number who had found grace in His sight. I visited my grandfather that day at the hospital. Before I left, you arrived, Brother Spangler, and you greeted me with such warmth. I remember feeling the desire to stay and listen to you talk and the fear of staying and telling you what I had felt that morning. So I left. My grandfather told me later that you had told him that you didn't think it would be long before I asked for a home in the church.

The Lord did bring my grandfather back home to us and it was one of those blessings in my life that I have never felt I have been able to be thankful enough for. As for going before the church, I still did not go. At this time in 1972 I graduated from high school and I remember your making a point of telling me that you and Sister Spangler would not be able to be there because one of your grandchildren would gradu-

ate the same night. It meant a great deal to me that you cared enough to tell me and at the same time because of the wretch I knew myself to be, it was very humbling to me to think that you would even consider coming. I'm a very shy person by nature and I was very nervous that night as I arose to deliver the valedictory speech, but I distinctly remember seeing Brother Coley Strader and Sister Mildred and other Dan River members in the audience and I felt no nervousness or fear while speaking because I felt that my friends and I hope my brethren were there. In that speech I quoted the scripture, **Psalms 30:5, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."** Little did I know that the time was drawing nigh in which I would feel the inexpressible joy of going home to my brethren.

On the fourth of July, 1972, I went to the Pine Creek meeting for the first time. It was a very beautiful day for me. Your text that day was **Hebrews 12:2, "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."** I was overwhelmed with the picture of Christ that the Lord blessed you to portray—such compassion and such love and I felt some hope that perhaps He had compassion on me, because I knew at that point that there was no other way.

That very same month I attended the Upper Country Line Association with my grandmother—my grandfather

was unable to attend. The preaching touched my heart to such an extent that I desired to go before the church but felt surely I could not in such a multitude of people. We went home Saturday evening as we were riding with Brother Boyd Minter. I asked my grandmother to go back with me that night and we did. The next morning I could not control my tears as the different ministers spoke. That afternoon as the service was ending and we were singing "How firm a foundation", you announced an open door of the church and you looked at me and then you cast your eyes downward. I could not hold back any longer. I don't remember everything I said, but I do remember calling on the words of Ruth to plead my case, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I felt then as I feel now that it would have been perfectly understandable had the church seen fit to deny my request for membership. I was not then what I would desire to be, and I'm not any closer to it in my carnal nature now. If there is any reason for me to believe that I might someday see the Lord as He is and be satisfied, then it is He and only He.

At the time I asked for a home in the church, I was seeing a young man whose mother was very much against my associating with Primitive Baptists. But that day I cared not what others thought. I felt that surely if he chose to turn his back on me when he learned

that I had joined the church, that it mattered not, because I knew what was most important to me. As it turned out, he did make an effort to accept the fact that I believe as I do.

One of the precious memories of that third Sunday in July is of a precious Brother who was the first to address me as Sister Mary, a word that I feel very unworthy of having precede my name even now. That was Brother Tilley. I'll never as long as I live forget the smile on his face as he shook my hand. Later on when I was in college at East Carolina, I was at home on a fourth weekend and Brother Tilley was in the hospital after suffering a heart attack. I drove back to Greenville that Sunday feeling surely he was going to be all right as there had been good reports. However, my grandmother called to let me know that the Lord had taken him. I drove back home for the funeral on the day before exams for that quarter. It was late when I returned to Greenville that day so I did little studying for the English history exam scheduled for the next day. I've always believed that a person should not waste what the Lord has blessed him with, particularly the mind. And for that reason, I felt badly because I knew my work on that exam was not up to the previous work in the course, and yet, I had no regrets for making the trip home. I had to go because of my love for Brother Tilley. I wrote a note on the exam and apologized to the instructor for not doing as well as I should have and I told her that I had gone home for a funeral. I feel the Lord softened her

heart and she had compassion on me because my grade could have been much lower than it was. But, had I failed, I feel I still would have had to go the same way if I had it to do over again.

On the fourth Sunday in July, 1972, I was baptized. The young man, of whom I wrote earlier, was there and I remember seeing tears in his eyes as I went into the water. Not long after that we agreed to be married and, as you know, we asked that you perform the ceremony but that you not mention it to anyone as we didn't feel our parents would agree to it since we would both be starting college in the fall. As it turned out later on, however, we both agreed that we would not be married because he was unable to accept my beliefs. Though that was a difficult time for me, I feel the Lord blessed me in not making a serious mistake. I was made to feel that I could say with the hymn writer:

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at thy throne of Grace,
Let this petition rise.

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of thy grace impart,
And make me live in thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou are
mine,
My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey
shine,

And crown my journey's end."

For the two years after I was baptized, I attended Rockingham Community College and was able to attend meetings regularly. Those were two of the best years of my life. I feel that the Lord blessed me to grow in the knowledge of Him during that time. There were so many beautiful themes in your sermons and in the sermons of others. The portrayal of Christ as the Son of Man and the Son of God was one of those themes that has been precious to me. He must be the Son of God to redeem His people and yet He must be the Son of man to be "Touched with the feeling of our infirmities." I think also at this time that it amazed me how plain it became that the scriptures unquestionably support the doctrine of predestination even in the very first chapter of Matthew where the lineage of Christ is given and Esau is not mentioned.

When the time came to choose a university, the overriding factor was where can I go and still be with the Lord's people. I attended East Carolina University and met with the Lord's people in that area for two years. I can never be thankful enough for the many kindnesses shown me while I was there especially by Brother Mark and Sister Grace Garner. Surely, I was a stranger and they took me in. The time spent in Greenville also taught me how thankful one could be to be able to attend meetings and to be with the Lord's people.

After completing college, I worked

for two years in Caswell County. During that time I met my husband. I remember the day I came to your home to ask that you perform the ceremony and you said to me that I must follow my heart in the matter when I told you that I knew that some of the brethren were concerned about my marrying someone who did not believe as I do. As I left that day Sister Spangler said to me, "Remember, Mary, that we've always loved you, since you were just a child." Tears still come to my eyes when I think of the look on her face when she said that. It was very humbling as I have always esteemed the two of you very highly.

I'd like to mention one last experience that occurred not long after John and I were married. I was driving to Mebane from Yanceyville because the snow and ice caused the school officials to close the schools early. Just outside of Mebane I skidded on the ice and I knew right away that the car was going to flip over. I remember feeling very calm and thinking that if this were my last day, it would be all right. I also remember trying to remember if I had told John I loved him that morning. I feel very strongly that it's important to let those people, whom you care for, know how you feel, because when I breathe my last, I want to feel assured that even though I may not be able to say good-bye, the people whom I love will know that I love them. The car did turn over in the air and landed back on the tires. An approaching car from the other direction just missed being hit by my car. I was unharmed. The Lord

surely was with me, but I thank Him most for that calmness which He granted because only faith in Him can cause a person to be prepared for death.

Mary Hawkins
(Reprint from Signs of the Times, May 1984)

VOICES OF THE PAST

1848 – THE TWO ADAMS

BY

ELDER WILSON THOMPSON

Harrisburg, Ind., Sept. 15, 1848

Beloved Brethren: – When visiting the churches which compose the few associations which I attended on the east of the Alleghany Mountains, *viz.*, the Baltimore, Md., Delaware, Del., Delaware River, N. J., and Warwick, N. Y., I was delighted in beholding their order, and the steadfastness of their faith in Jesus Christ. At the sessions of these four associations I became acquainted with many others, both ministers of the Word, and other faithful brethren and sisters from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland. The churches and five of the associations west of the mountains, *viz.*, the White Water, Lebanon and Conn's Creek, in Indiana, the Salem, in Owen County, Ky., and the Miami in Warren County, Ohio. These were all attended by vastly large assemblies; seasons were solemn and impressive. The correspondence and visiting ministers at these nine associations were from the scat-

tered sections of Zion, from Maine to Missouri; yet although so widely scattered, and habituated to all the varieties of custom, climate, habits, and fortune, their messages were the same, and their manner of delivering and defending the Truth so similar that no discord could be detected, but one unbroken chain of testimony was presented by all the ministers (about fifty in number) of these nine associations. This condensed body or "cloud of witnesses," must be confirming to the saints, and comforting to those who "*feed the flock of God.*"

The health of myself and wife throughout our long journeys this season has been unusually good; and finding all the churches and associations in such perfect peace and Gospel fellowship, all speaking the same language, and all minding the same things, has been truly refreshing to us. Our Western brethren from regions afar off, with some who are near, having joined with the brethren at the East in requesting a letter from me on some subject calculated to edify, if I could believe myself capable of writing for their edification, and for the comfort of the dear sheep and lambs of the Good Shepherd, I should esteem it a great privilege to contribute, if it were but a mite, to their advantage. I will, the Lord being my helper, try to write a few things of the subject of "**the two Adams.**" And in what I shall write, the respective families of the two Adams will be included, of course.

The apostle (1 Cor. Xv. 45) says, "**The first man Adam was made a liv-**

ing soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." These two Adams are distinguished in their order, *first last*; also in their natures, *soul* and *Spirit*. The order here observed is doubtless, not in point of existence, but in the order of *manifestation*, in all the tangible and corporal substances of the actual animal man in this mode of being. Although Christ was "*brought forth,*" and His goings forth were of old, from everlasting, yet in the visible creatureship of this world, Adam, the living soul, was first; and many generations of his offspring had peopled this world before "Adam, the quickening Spirit," literally appeared in this mode of being. It is in this sense the order of *first last* to be viewed. When God created this first man, Adam, in this order he was formed or framed, in all his corporal parts, of the dust of the ground, and by direct application of air, by the Agency of the Almighty, this first man, male and female (**Genesis 1:27, 28**) "**so God created man in His own image,**" "**and God said unto them,**" "**Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.**" This universal dominion over all created things, in this order, was given to Adam, the living soul, and this Adam was both male and female, with the blessing of God on them, and **the seed of them**, and the legal authority, or command of God, to be fruitful, &c. All this was in the **one** person of Adam, the living soul. In this

one man was the male and female, and the seed substance of all the human family; not *virtually*, in *purpose*, as some have said, but ***really and actually***; for the man was a "living soul," and the seed, to be fruitful and multiply, was as actually created in this first man, as was his flesh or his bones. In this manner, he was truly in the likeness and image of his Maker. Here, then, in one man did God create all men, male and female, to dwell upon all the earth, and "*He hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.*" - see Acts xvii: 25, 26; and Malachi ii: 10.

After all were created in one man, all men blessed in one man, and dominion over all other things, in this order, was given to this one man, all other living things were named by him; the law of his Creator was given to him, and he was placed in the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to control, subdue, and replenish the earth. Thus all nations of men, male and female, actually created in one man, and the earth, sea and air, with all their hosts, were put under his authority, or made subject to him.- Psalm viii: 5-8. This man in all this authority, with all men, male and female, **actually created IN him, was the *first* man, Adam**, and he was made a living soul. To him, as such, the law was given, and this law was binding on all the men, male and female, and seed, all in one Adam the first. After all this, the female was so separated as to take a distinct form, in person, but not essence; she was still "*bone of his bones and flesh of his*

flesh," as really so as when she existed a rib in his side. Therefore Adam said, "*She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.*" - Genesis ii: 22-24. This union was not only now perfect as before, but was to **continue indissoluble forever**; and for this cause, the indissoluble oneness, "*shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be **one flesh.***" This test of true affection, and God's imperatives, and man's acknowledged obligation to cleave to his wife, were soon tried by a severe ordeal; for the woman, being deceived by the serpent, was in a great transgression; but Adam, the man, was not deceived, yet he cleaved to his wife, even in death, and thus complied with the above *shalls*, and left all, and followed her. These *shalls* showed his obligation; the unity justified the *shalls*, and his willingly partaking at her hands showed the strength of his love, as he was not deceived. By this one act of this one man, in cleaving to his wife, "*sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death has passed upon all men (upon the whole seed created IN him,) for that all had sinned. And so judgment unto condemnation came upon all men,*" the male and female and seed were all involved.

This man being set over all created things in this order, the earth and all that God had formed out of it was cursed for man's sake. Many strange speculations have been indulged in as to what this first man Adam was in his nature; some contend that he was *spiritual*, and that, in his fall, he died a *spiritual*,

tual death. But this we know was not the case; for the apostle says, in positive terms, that he was not spiritual, but natural. -1 Cor. Xv: 45-48. This text speaks of Adam, as he was made, a *living soul*. He was truly a *very good* natural man, placed in a very good natural place, and invested with authority to rule over a very good natural world; and to him was given, by his Creator, a very good law, with liberty and proper prohibition, touching good natural things. Man, in this state, was possessed of a capacity for endless duration, but was subject to vanity; but he had no immortality, or death could never have passed upon him. God only "*hath immortality dwelling in the light;*" and Christ, in His resurrection from the dead, first brought it to light, or made a manifestation of it through the Gospel. Man had a *natural* soul, a *natural* mind, and rational faculties, and a strength of *natural* affections. God only required of him the proper exercise of the power that he possessed, either in the law respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or in the larger edition of it, as given later by Moses. To love the Lord God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might.- Deut. Vi: 5; and Matt. Xxii: 36-39. This was required of man, and this was no more than every *natural* man has; for he has a HEART, A SOUL, A MIND, AND A MIGHT, AND God requires the exercise of no other heart, soul, mind or might but that which He gave him. Man by sin is now already condemned to death, and his heart, soul, mind and might have be-

come alienated from the love of God; the mind has become carnal, and is enmity against God: it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. This relation between God as a Creator, and man as a creation, is that upon which is founded all *natural theories of religion*: The natural powers, natural senses, natural exercises, and *means* to operate through and upon the natural organs and natural susceptibilities.

God, as our Creator, is claimed by some as the "Father of us all," and His pity and sympathy for His poor, frail children, is argued by every teacher of natural religion. The apostle, so far from preaching salvation on this premise, shows universal condemnation, rather than universal salvation, — and that there is no possible salvation by any mediation in this relation; not a victim, not a priest, not a brother or a kinsman, nor an intercessor, possessed either the worth, the innocence, or the right to redeem either himself or his fellow. In the absence, then, of another relation, and another order of things, salvation is utterly impossible for any of the human race.

Adam, the living soul, by creation, in the order of creatureship, was the son of God. — See Luke iii: 38; Gen. i: 26. As the whole seed, male and female, was in one man, the sonship embraced them all, so in the order of creation we are all the sons of God; but while our accountability, natural obligations, guilt and condemnation, result from this relation and man's unreasonable rebellion in it, we must look

elsewhere for salvation. In illustration of another relation in which alone salvation is revealed, the apostle shows us that Adam, the living soul, was a "*figure of Him that was to come; even of Him as the last Adam, a quickening Spirit.*" — Romans v: 14.

We will now consider the force of this *Figure*. First, Adam was, by *natural creation* the son of God; Christ, by a *spiritual creation*, is the beginning of the creation of God, and His Son; the first born of every creature, in the *spiritual order*. — See Rev. iii: 14; Col. i: 5.

Second, Adam was made a living soul, possessing all the natural parts and mental faculties of a *very good natural* man; Christ possessed all the *spiritual* parts and powers of a "*quicken- ing Spirit.*" — Col. i:18,19; Eph. ii: 1. Adam was the first man of all *natural* men; Christ was the first of all *spiritual* men. Adam, with all natural men actually created in him, as a seed, was blessed of God with all natural blessings in earthly places; Christ, with all the spiritual family, actually created in Him, as a seed, was blessed of God with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Eph. 1:3, 4. also ii: 10. This **seed** shall serve Him, and He shall see it and be satisfied. Adam's seed, though actually IN him, was dormant (undeveloped) except by his action; Christ's seed, which was actually eternally in Him, was also dormant except by His action. Adam received the blessing and the law of God in reference to all *natural* things, before Eve or any of his seed were separated from his person. Christ received all *spiritual* bless-

ings and the law of the Lord God, before the church or any of His spiritual seed were separated from the *unity* of His Person. When every blessing and every natural faculty, with every prerogative to govern the natural world, and every right and every prohibition was given to Adam, his wife was IN him, as an *actual* part of his composition, and she was as perfectly bound and as accountable as he. So also was the wife or church IN Christ, when every spiritual blessing promise, gift, divine faculty, prerogative to govern all things in the spiritual kingdom, and when every right and prohibition was given, she, as a vital part of Him, was as perfectly bound and responsible as He. Adam was bound to leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, after she had taken her distinct personal mode of existence, although she was still "*bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.*" Christ was bound to leave Father and mother, and cleave to the church, after she had taken her distinct personal mode of existence, though she was still in the spirit, identified as His body, His flesh had His bones. — Eph. v: 20-33; 1 Cor. Xii: 27. Adam's wife was deceived, and was in the transgression, and Adam was involved by her act, and bound to have his father, God, and his honorable station with his mother, earth, and cleave to his wife; and this he did of choice, for the union could not be dissolved. Christ's wife, the church, was also deceived, and in the transgression, and Christ, the *last Adam*, was involved by her act, and legally bound to lay aside

the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and cleave to His wife, the church. This, Justice required, and the *unity* legally bound Him to do; and He willing, through His love to her, not being deceived, did.

Cleaving to her, Christ came forward to suffer the curse, and bear her sins. The seed which was created in Adam was afterwards developed by natural generation in a multiplication of distinct forms, or persons; but still was and ever must be the very same seed that was first created in Adam. The spiritual seed, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, was afterwards by spiritual generation, or regeneration, being born again, by an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God (Christ,) developed in multiplication of distinct forms, or persons, but still are, and forever must remain, no more nor less than the seed which was first created and chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Much more might be said on this Figure, but this must suffice. In the natural Adam, the living soul, and in all the relations in this order, there is ***nothing spiritual***. Natural powers, natural susceptibilities, and natural obligations, all of which are properly required to be in subjection to God, our Creator, as our reasonable service, and this obligation grows out of our relation, as the creature of His creation; but in this relation we have all become sinners, and under the reigning power of death, without one ray of hope for salvation to cheer the gloom that shrouds us in the darkness of eter-

nal night. All the religion and religious schemes that are based on this relationship, with all the means, money, tracts, Bibles, preachers, works and schools, with every other engine and power, mental or physical, that ever was or ever can be brought to bear upon any of our natural organs, senses, powers or sympathies, nor all the zeal, logic and pathos of others in our behalf, can ever produce one vital spark or spiritual motion. Just as sure as it is that nature cannot produce an effect above itself, so sure it is that all the compunction of soul, penance, repentance, reformation, fear, duty, sorrow, hope, joy, zeal or obedience that can arise from this natural relation, or that can be produced from any of the resources of it, upon any of our natural faculties, can never result in anything more than natural religion; and all belongs to the *first man, Adam*, which was not spiritual, but natural only. It therefore remains an irrefragable Truth, that we must be born again, or we cannot see the kingdom of God. We must be born of an incorruptible seed; not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God, before we can see or have one single spiritual sensation or emotion.

The children of God IN Christ, from of old, or eternity, in their spiritual relation are *wholly of a right seed*, but when put forth in Adam, they became *partakers* of flesh and blood, and here they stood in both the spiritual and natural relations. In the spiritual relation they are one WITH Christ, and in

the natural they are one WITH Adam. Christ, to whom all these children of God had been given (John 17), seeing them now in the flesh and blood, lost, and legally condemned, willingly took part of the same flesh and blood; and with the whole seed of Abraham upon Him, was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.

Here, then, was a full flesh and blood relationship, legally tangible and capable of suffering the legal penalty, and of obeying the precepts of the law. Sin was a transgression of the law; the penalty was legal; Christ was made under the law, to legally fulfill it by a legal righteousness for our legal justification. This was the righteousness wrought out by Christ; and as to His spiritual, personal righteousness, that was always their's, as they were always one with and in Him. He that was "brought forth," "set up," "ordained," and "appointed Heir of all things," and given to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, was in the fullness of time made manifest in the flesh, for us, in a nature capable of obeying and suffering legally all that the law could demand. "*He bare our sins in His own body on the tree,*" and put them away by the sacrifice of Himself; and through death destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, the devil. Therefore He could not be holden of death; but risen again, has brought life and immortality to light. (not the old, natural life of Adam, but immortal life.) The suffering body now

becomes a glorious spiritual and immortal body; and here the resurrection of the bodies of all the saints, to a glorious, spiritual and immortal state, is clearly and fully established.

This long letter contains only a hint at the two Adams and their respective families. Our evidences that we are of the natural Adam are, that we are born of the flesh, and feel the effect and fruits of that relationship; so too, our evidences that we have a standing in the spiritual Adam are, that we are born of the Spirit, are led by the Spirit; that we bear the fruits of the Spirit, and that we worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, nor in any fleshly or natural system of religion. May these fruits of the Spirit be in us all, and abound.

Wilson Thompson. 1848.

PSALM 95; 1-5.

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and meake a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

MEETINGS

HIGH POINT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The High Point Primitive Baptist Church will have a fifth Saturday meeting on March 30, 2013. Would you announce it in the Signs? The meeting will start singing at 10:30 and preaching service at 11:00 o'clock. We invite all our brethren to come and meet with us. We would like to send a special invitation to our preaching brethren.

Those coming business 85, take Main Street north to State Avenue, turn left and go about 1/4 mile to church. Those coming south on 311 (Main Street) take a right on State Avenue go about 1/4 mile to the church. Those coming interstate 40 take exit 210, take 68 south to 311 (Main Street) south to State Avenue and turn right go about 1/4 mile to church.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
Brother Dan Medlin, Clerk

NOTICE

The Signs will still publish a church of our faith. Please send a picture and brief history to the attention of Elder Cleo Robertson, 111 Livingstone Dr, Cary, NC 27513.

Editor

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Fifth Sunday Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, March 31st, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Thomas' Grove Church will host the meeting. Directions for those that do not know the location: the meeting house is at 1390 Morning Dew Lane, Floyd, Va, 24091. Coming north or south on Va #8, turn north on Blue Ridge Parkway at Tuggles Gap, go about 1 3/4 miles. Turn right at Soapstone Hill Sign. Immediately turn left on Morning Dew Lane (no sign). Go 200 yards to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

ROMANS 8: 6-7

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

SKEWARKY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarky Union on the fifth Sunday of March 31, 2013. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30 a.m.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

**STAUNTON RIVER
UNION MEETING**

Due to the weather, Staunton River Union Meeting was cancelled, at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, December 29, 2012.

The Lord willing, Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, (Route 29 Business,) 708 South Main Street, Gretna, Va. will be host of the Union Meeting, March 30, 2013.

Singing will start at 10 o'clock AM.

All ministers and brethren of our faith and order are invited to be with us; as well as friends.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday Meeting on March 31, 2013. Singing begins at 10:00 AM and preaching service at 10:30 AM.

From I-40, take Hwy 87 South at Graham towards Pittsboro. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From Hwy 64, take Hwy 87 North about 7 miles and turn left on Castle Rock Road. Church is about 5 miles on left.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Joann Self, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2013

Gorman Perkins, AL	5.00
Eunice P. Soyars, NC	5.00
Estelle Thompson, VA	5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA	5.00
Charles Alders, TX	25.00
Tommy Wall, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

BOBBYE LOU JONES

Sister Bobbye Lou Jones was born February 13, 1937, and left this life on October 18, 2012. Sister Bobbye was a dear sister, a caring and thoughtful woman who was kind to everyone, and a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. Everyone who knew her said she was dear in spirit, compassionate, considerate, and helpful to all. She will be missed by all.

Sister Bobbye joined Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1990. She and her beloved husband, Elder Theron Jones, later moved their letter to Mount Olive Primitive Baptist Church of Ringgold, Louisiana, where he was co-pastor.

Sister Jones leaves to cherish her memory Elder Jones, her husband of fifty-seven years. Together Elder Jones and Sister Bobbye traveled many miles to serve our surrounding churches.

Also left to grieve her passing is her son Randy Jones and his wife Reba; Sister Bobbye's daughter Judy Wilson, with her husband Ray Wilson; one brother, Billy Clark; two sisters, Betty Houston and Elaine Graham; one grandson, three granddaughters, four great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Sister Jones funeral was con-

ducted by Elder C. C. Morris and Elder Truman Bradshaw. Our Lord gave us a beautiful day for our last goodbye.

This is written at the request of her husband, Elder Theron Jones, at the hand of one who loved her.

Patsy Lankford, Church Clerk
Union Primitive Baptist Church
Union Parish, Louisiana

PSALM 118:28-29.

Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

ELDER JAMES CLETUS TURNER, SR.

We bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God in the passing of our beloved Pastor, Friend and Father in Israel, Elder Cletus Turner. Brother Cletus, fondly known as the pumpkin scotcher preacher, was near and dear to all that knew him. He joined Spoon Creek Primitive Baptist Church and was found looking out for the welfare of the Church. The Church saw this gift and he was ordained a Deacon. His love for the Lord, the Church and the Brethren was manifested to the end. While sick in the Martinsville Hospital, he received a command to "Preach" and "Comfort My People". He was Ordained an Elder in

1991 and served as pastor of Spoon Creek, Aarons' Fork and Russell Creek Churches along with serving as moderator of the Lower Mayo Primitive Baptist Association. He often spoke from the 40th Chapter of Isaiah, his favorite scripture, to the edification of all that heard him. God gave him true humility and this was recognized wherever he was blessed to travel. He traveled many thousands of miles to visit God's humble poor and enjoyed every mile. When Spoon Creek Church disbanded, he moved his membership to Russell Creek Church. We miss him greatly, but feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Elder Turner was born May 1, 1917 to the late Sam and Pearl Joyce Turner. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his first wife, Dovie Harbour Turner; two sons, Sonny Turner and Sammy Turner; one daughter, Judy Durham; one grandson, Jeff Mays; one brother, Ed Turner and three sisters, Aileen "Teeny" Smith, Lucy Gibson and Dorothy Helmstuttler. He retired from Bassett Industries, built and ran Turner's Grocery in Bassett. He died November 10, 2011 at the age of 94.

Elder Turner is survived by his second wife, Marie Stowe Turner of the Landmark Center in Stuart, Va.; two daughters and a son-in-law, Mary T. Fulcher of Stuart, Va., Marie and Frank Foley of Bassett, Va.; one step daughter, Martha Ann Martin of Stuart, Va.;

10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; two brothers, Harry Turner of Bassett, Va, and Wayne Turner of Church Road, Va.; five sisters, Frances Nelson of Martinsville, Va., Mae Turner of Southern Pines, North Carolina, and Jean Chitwood, Nancy Edwards and Annie Crofts, all of Bassett, Va.

Funeral services for Elder Turner was held on Sunday, November 13, 2011 at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart, Va. with Elder Lowell Hopkins and Elder Mike Young officiating. His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church cemetery, there to await the call to "Come you blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Farewell Brethern, Farewell Sisters, Till We All Shall Meet At Home.

Resolved that copies of this obituary be made for the Church records, the Association Minutes, the Signs of The Times and for the family.

Committee: Donald Moore
Lowell Hopkins

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 03/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Hymn

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are
one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each others flows
The sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.

This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

Fawcett.

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EDITORIAL

“Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.” Amos 7:14-15.



Elder J.B. Farmer

Sometimes a scripture appears which takes hold of my mind and causes me to stop and take notice. We do not know if it is of the Lord or not, but it seems to have such power and meaning that assurance is given that it surely must be from

above. Sometimes the scripture appears to be in such agreement with our experience, that we rejoice in thinking that we may have tasted of those things that the saints of old were blessed to have experienced. Jesus told His disciples to rejoice because they would partake of the same things that the prophets did. He said, **“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”**

Amos was an ordinary person. He was not a religious man, as many think of religion. In his day there were many who called themselves prophets, and they had followers that were called sons of the prophets. I think the things of that day must have been similar to the things going on in the Lord’s day, and to the things we see today. There have been and are religious organizations, where religious men train other men to be religious as they are. They teach them just how to interpret their scriptures, and how to behave themselves in order to command the respect of others. And they are taught how to attract crowds, and how to get their financial support. They are taught just what to say and do and think. They have a certain way of dressing, and a certain way of speaking, and a certain way of deceiving the simple. But they are convinced that they are right. Nev-

ertheless, they cannot even examine themselves and ask, "*Is there not a lie in my right hand?*"

In the day of the Lord, Jesus, some of the men who did such things were called scribes and Pharisees. He said to them, "**But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.**" In this day they are called free-will or works Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. They all have an outward religion with certain carnal rules and ways — all based upon the works of the flesh.

Amos was not this sort of a person. He was minding his own business, and earning a living as a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. Evidently he had noticed the so-called prophets and sons of prophets of his day because he separated himself from them. He said, "**I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit:**" He made it plain that he was not one of them. And while he was attending to his regular occupa-

tion of following the flock, the Lord took him.

At this point we begin to see the parallels to our own experience. We were regular people doing regular things, when the Lord came to us. It has ever been this way. Think of Adam in the garden, when the LORD God came to him and spoke to him after he had transgressed the commandment. Think of Noah, when God came to him and commanded him to build an ark to the saving of his house. Consider Abram, to whom the Lord came and said unto him, "**Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.**" Think of Moses on the backside of the desert, when the Lord came to him and spoke to him from the burning bush to reveal unto him His purpose. Think of Jacob whom the Lord found in a waste howling wilderness, and whom he led about and instructed, and kept him as the apple of His eye. The list of those humbled saints who the Lord found, called, led and taught goes on and on.

Amos said, "**The Lord took me.**" We are assured that the Lord made all things for Himself, and that He owns all things, but in His time He takes possession of His things in a particular way, and uses them in a particular way. The Lord took possession of Amos. And the Lord, Jesus, Christ took possession of His disciples, and He took possession of you, and I hope and trust He took possession of me. He came unto us and found us before we ever called upon His name. We would not

even have known to call upon Him if He had not made Himself known unto us. He called his own out of darkness into His marvelous light. He called us to be a separate people, to come out of Babylon, and to touch not the unclean thing that we might be His people and He might be our God. There is no going back. What the Lord has done is done forever.

Amos said, **"The Lord took me as I followed the flock."** The Lord's people are found following the flock. How was it with you when the Lord came unto you and took possession of you? I can remember many, many years ago, before I ever knew anything of the old Baptists, someone made mention of a group of backward, ignorant, people that were so poor they only had one song book. And one had to read a verse, and then the others would sing it. This was said to mock them and to diminish them, but my heart went out to them, and a great desire was given me to know them. Was I following the flock in my heart and feelings when the Lord took me — even before I knew them? Was not the love of God spread abroad in your heart for the Lord's people when the Lord took you, and set you upon a way that you knew not? This is the Lord's work and not man's. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways and His thoughts are as high above ours as the heaven is above the earth.

The Lord said unto Amos. **"Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."** What a great shock it must have been

for Amos to think he must go and speak in the name of the Lord to the Lord's people. How impossible it must have appeared unto him to go and do this thing he had never done, and to do this thing for which he felt to be totally unqualified and unworthy. I am made to think of Moses, and what he said, and what the Lord said, when Moses was commanded to go and speak to Pharaoh. **"And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."**

And when the Lord came to Jeremiah and revealed unto him that he was foreknown of God, sanctified and ordained a prophet, Jeremiah tried to escape. He said, **"Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord."** So it has always been with those called of God. They feel to be little children, unprepared, unqualified, and unworthy. But no matter how one tries to avoid the calling, there is no other way than to go. God has purposed it, He has ordained it,

and it must come forth as He has already seen it. **“For he spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”** And His people are made to be a willing people in the day of His power. When Isaiah was called, he was blessed to say, **“Here am I, send me.”**

Moses went, Abram went, Amos went, Jeremiah went, Isaiah went, the disciples and apostles went, and so will you go when the Lord calls you and sends you. Some may think that the calling is just for prophets or for apostles or for ministers of the gospel, but all of the Lord's people are called to serve Him, and to show forth His praise. **“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say unto these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”** His calling is powerful, irresistible and sure. He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. It is not up to puny man to fulfill His will and purpose. The Lord God's own almighty arm has brought salvation. All praise honor and glory is due unto Him who alone is worthy.

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

10-2-12

Dear Elder Robertson:

While trying to find in our attic here at home some of the old copies of the Signs, I found some articles that I would like for you to republish if you think well.

Page 138 an article on the resurrection is described the most wonderful that I have read. (June issue 1976)

Also the article of Sister Mildred Dykes of Salisbury Maryland is very good reading.

I met her when my wife and I traveled with the Spanglers in the 1960's I think. She was very blessed to explain her belief in a precious way.

In Christian love,
Burnell Williams

Dear Brother Cleo,

Hope this finds you well and enjoying the season. We have had quite a bit of snow so far.

We have lost two of our members recently so I'm sending you their obituaries. They both have been in the nursing home for quite a long time. The Lord is our shepherd and He knows best.

May God bless us all as time goes by.

Sending my Love,
Mary Poff

VOICES OF THE PAST

BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

In a little group sometime ago, a young sister asked just what the apostle meant by his statement "And ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price," stating she knew we are bought with the blood of Jesus, but what, exactly did it mean in *her* life? Several comments were made, one being that she thought of it as in the days of slavery, when a plantation owner bought a slave, although the slave lived a fairly normal life, he belonged to his master, to serve him in whatever manner pleased him. Someone remarked "But I am not a slave."

This morning, confined to the house because of illness, I've been blest to meditate at some length on "the unsearchable riches of Christ" and the verse "Ye are not your own, etc" has kept coming back to me with a sweetness I am unable to describe. My mortal life is mostly spent and my natural vision is largely gone and at this moment, before it is too late, I would like to leave on record, providing the editors care to publish it, a little something of what this precious verse means to me.

I do not, I cannot know how others feel, but as for me, let me be a slave to Christ, let me be His servant, His prisoner, His anything or His nothing, only let me be His—His to command, His to direct my every step, my

every thought, my every breath, His to shower with benefits or His to humble and afflict, according as it is good in His sight. How delightful it is when blest to "cast all our care upon Him" and then to see that according to His riches in glory, He has supplied, He does supply and we trust He will yet supply our every need as promised in Philippians 4:19.

It means to me that my life and my body are not my own, therefore if I abuse or misuse these gifts, I am not abusing or misusing my own property, but the property of Him who paid so dearly for my redemption and preservation.

It means to me that I am not faced with the responsibility of making my own decisions. My Blessed Owner made them for me before time began and I have only to walk in the path which my Master lays before me. Unbelievers would say what a terrible way to live, but not so with the Lord's people to whom it is a sweet servitude and a blessed privilege.

It means to me that although violence pervades the land and satanic forces are rampant; that although satan "goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," I do not need to fear what men or satan can do to me because my dear Owner's eye is ever upon me to protect me. I am convinced that no harm or no evil can befall me apart from His direct, eternal decree. "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot

against a stone," is the promise of Him whose promises are, like Himself, immutable.

It means to me, as the apostle stated, that "I am crucified with Christ": that I "bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, "that, though I walk in the flesh, I do not walk after the flesh," therefore, sinful as I am, and I'm more aware of my sinfulness as time passes, "sin shall not have dominion over me," "The cross of Christ crucifies the world unto me and me unto the world," I do realize I am speaking with much boldness—I hope not with presumption, but "in the liberty whereunto Christ hath made us free."

It means to me that fear of death and the grave, probably the most universal of all human emotions, has been removed, because my dear Master went before me into death; He lay in the grave, but came forth in triumph, thus robbing death of its sting and the grave of its victory.

"I would not live always, oh welcome the tomb

Since Jesus has laid there, I dread not its gloom."

It means to me that my faithful Master has provided for me "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled WHICH FADETH NOT AWAY, RESERVED IN HEAVEN", an inheritance which I can never assign, mortgage, sell or waste. Although this inheritance is reserved in heaven for me, He sends me supplies of it every day of my life, which neither detracts from nor adds to that which is reserved in heaven. Moreover, the testator of this inherit-

ance will not have to die in order for me to receive it, for in His own words He assures me "I am He who liveth and was dead. Behold, I am alive forevermore" and He holds the key to my inheritance in His hands.

But I think the pinnacle of what this precious truth means to me lies in the last part: "for ye are bought with a price." It lies in the matchless love which motivated the payment of such a price. Love is the strongest of all motivating forces. I am told that demonstrations of love are just as important, indeed just as necessary for the proper growth and development of a baby as is food itself. This crumbling, sin-cursed world has been spared to this moment because its creator loves and protects the members of His elect who remain. It was wondrous love that formed the covenant among the members of the Godhead to pay this unspeakable price. Even in the affairs of men, the purchase price of an object is determined largely by the intensity of someone's desire to possess it. No such price was ever paid as that paid for our salvation.

As Jesus approached John the Baptist, he exclaimed "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Oh, that by faith we may behold Him as He unveiled His deity in humanity, leaving for a while "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was," taking the form of a servant humbling Himself, making Himself of no reputation and became obedient unto death, even death by crucifixion, the most shameful of all

deaths. May we behold Him going forth to meet those who would crucify Him. May we behold His agony of soul as He hung on the cross, and beholding Him, be crucified with Him. May we behold Him as He drank the bitter cup, containing every particle of the loathsome, putrid filth of sin which each of His chosen ones were and are guilty of. Even His holy person must be "made to be sin" that sin might be condemned in the flesh. He was mocked, ridiculed and smitten of men, He was bruised and forsaken of the Father, but He bore it all without a murmur; "He opened not His mouth." He knew He was paying the price that God's holiness demanded for the remission of sin. The purchase price must be paid and it could be paid by no other. This is the awful price with which we are bought. "Ye are bought with a price." I do not think the human mind is capable of conceiving the magnitude of this price. It "passeth understanding." But when we are blest to meditate upon His determination to obtain and possess us, it brings us to His feet in adoration and praise. It creates within my very soul a depth of gratitude which I cannot describe, that He is the potter and I am the clay. May I ever be clay in His hands to mould as it pleases Him. Apart from my dear Redeemer, I'm nothing but clay anyhow. I was formed of the dust of the earth and dust is simply dry clay. "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust." But when it pleases God to implant even a

little faith within this dust, we are sometimes given a glimpse of our Lord "as He looketh forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice." (S. of S. 2:0). At such times, there wells up within my heart a surging wave of response to "His great love wherewith He loved us" and with humble heart and flowing tears, I thank my God that before I was conceived in my mother's body, I was "bought with a price", which divine love alone could afford.

With fellowship for everyone, everywhere who love His dear Name.

Mildred V. Dykes
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51)

Dear Brother Hutchens:

The article in the September number of the Lone Pilgrim on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, by Eld. W. M. Shoemaker, was read with much interest on my part, and to my mind the position he has taken he has fully supported by Scripture testimony, and so can not be confuted by anyone from a Scriptural standpoint.

A few thoughts relative to the same subject, while and since reading his letter, have to some extent occupied

my mind, which I feel inclined to submit to your consideration.

There have been, no doubt, ever since the days of Hymeneus and Philetus, those who have disputed the future resurrection of the dead, and say it is "past already," with all who have died, and they will never know any more resurrection of the dead. I have heard the doctrine assailed by reason and by ridicule. But such I take to be the "vain babblings" Paul the apostle speaks of, when he admonishes Timothy to "shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." (2 Timothy 2:18)

There is no fact of the Scriptures more clearly and positively stated than that Jesus came into the world to save His PEOPLE from their sins. It is His people that have sinned. It is His people that have died, and do die, and "the wages of sin is death." If His people are not raised up out of death, out of their graves, then they are not saved, but lost. And the word of Jesus when He said, "They that are in the graves shall hear His voice; and shall come forth," is not true. Paul, the inspired apostle, to the Thessalonian church said, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faith-

ful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." (1 Thes. 5:23, 24) Now it would be just as much to dispute the word of the apostle, to contend for the annihilation of one of those component parts of the believer as another.

Again, to the Corinthian brethren the same apostle said, "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will (not "hath" nor "doth") also raise up us by His own power. Know ye not that your BODIES are the members of Christ?" (1 Cor. 6:14, 15) Then if these bodies are never raised up, the members of Christ are perished. Death and the grave have the victory. "But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord," they shall be raised up, not any more to "bear the image of the earthy, but the image of the heavenly," for in this resurrection "they shall be changed" (not exchanged) from mortal to immortal; for this mortal shall put on immortality. This corruptible is to be made incorruptible. As Paul says, "this corruptible *must* put on incorruption." (See 1 Cor. 15:53, 54)

Again we read from the same apostle, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself." (Phil. 3:21) It is just as foolish and unscriptural to claim that in the glorified state beyond this life, the saints will be as they are here, knowing each other as fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, parents and children, etc., and to deny the resurrection of

the body at the second coming of Jesus. Both positions are a denial of the teaching of inspiration. Jesus said to the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be counted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

When we go down in natural, or corporeal death, our relationship to this world, to the things of this earthly life, are forever dissolved, and we will never live in our Adamic relationship any more, but our heavenly relationship can never be dissolved. It is in this sense that the believer cannot die; but in Adam all must die. But "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are His at His coming." 1 Cor. 15:22, 23... As Christ the "firstfruits" went down in death, through the tomb, rising again, all the other fruits that follow must do likewise. So Paul says, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead SHALL ALSO quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:11) I do not understand that the saints die as a penalty, for a violated law, for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed

is everyone that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) But death is a necessary part of that change from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible, etc.

It is true that the saints die, and are the subjects of that final resurrection of the dead, when Jesus shall appear the second time "without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28) Again, it is true that saints or believers do not die. Jesus said to Martha, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." John 11:25, 26. Paul said also, Acts 26:10, speaking of what he had done as Saul of Tarsus, "And many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." Here, the saint or believer bears relationship to two headships: the earthly Adam, his seminal head and representative in nature; also to Christ, his spiritual and covenant Head. In the one he dies; in the other he does not die. After being begotten and born from above, there are two in-dwelling lives and natures. Beyond this sphere of action there is only one. By the power of that life from above (Jesus is their life), they are destined to be conformed to the image of Jesus, for "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29)

Jesus Christ is said to be "the first-

born from the dead." (Col. 1:18) He could not be the "firstborn from the dead without others to follow. Paul said, when arraigned before Felix by his persecutors, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:14, 15) When arraigned before Agrippa, Paul asks the question, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8) Further down in the same chapter, in his defense Paul said, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. That Christ should suffer, *and* that He should be the FIRST that should rise from the dead," etc. Verses 22, 23.

Death to us is but a sleep in the Lord. Jesus said of the daughter of Jairus, Luke 8:52 & 53. "Weep not: she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead." Again, He said of Lazarus, John 11:11-15, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of his sleep. Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that He had spoken of taking rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus

is dead." Paul, testifying to the resurrection of Christ, and of His appearance among the disciples afterwards, after mentioning several other witnesses, said, "After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep," or, are dead.

While the word "sleep" is put for other things sometimes, as in 1 Thes. 5:6, 7, yet in the places referred to, it clearly means literal death. It has been asserted that the word as used in 1 Thes. 4:13 is to be understood in the same sense as in 1 Thes. 5:6, 7. But to my mind, a very slight examination of the connection ought to show to any unbiased mind, that it is not used in the same sense. The words "death" and "sleep" are used interchangeably, and evidently mean the same, in the following quotation: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever

be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:13-18) How plain this blessed language. Why a "Hymenaeus and Philetus," or any others, should want to spiritualize, or otherwise explain it away, I can not understand. I know it is a wonderful mystery, and will be a stupendous miracle. But is not Israel's God "equal to the occasion"? He spoke the universe into existence out of nothing. He who created and formed the first man Adam of the dust of the ground into a natural existence, is He not able to raise up a multiplied Adam from the dead into a spiritual existence? "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with us that God should raise the dead?" Just as sure as God's Word is true, Jesus is to appear in this world "the SECOND TIME," and this time, "without sin," and some of His people are going to be living here in the world, and they shall be changed as those that are dead. For says inspiration, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep; but we shall be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death! Where is thy sting? O grave! Where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:51-55.)

It has been said that our visible, material body, when dead, is not a mortal body, and Webster is quoted to show that the word mortal means something subject to death, and so substantially argued that the word could not apply to our body when dead. But let us remember that Paul wrote this to the living, telling them of a most wonderful change that awaited them, whether they were living when the appointed time came, or dead. The living must be changed (die to this life, and awake to the other), as well as the dead. Every one must be changed, the mortal being made immortal; that which is vile and corruptible must be made pure and incorruptible. What a glorious fruition of hope it is to awake in the likeness of our blessed Redeemer. Many times through life we are experimentally raised up, and realize a blessed union, or oneness with our Saviour and Redeemer, but shortly to lapse back into a state of carnality. But in this final resurrection and change, there will be no more lapsing back; carnality is no more. Mortality is swallowed up of life.

The Psalmist said, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness." (Psalm 17:15) The Apostle Peter said, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day," and "For David is not ascended into the heavens," etc. See Acts 2:29-34. Now it is evident that David has ever been with the Lord in

spirit. But David, the person, the individual, was in Peter's day still in the sepulcher, not yet "ascended into the heavens," and was yet to awake in the likeness of His Lord.

The Apostle John, 1 John 2:2, said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

In our finite state here in this life we can not see, nor understand what we shall be, or what heaven is like. We live not by sight, but by faith, and hope to see and know in that sweet day that the Lord has appointed for us. Like Abraham of old, we "look for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God," a glorious habitation, where everyone is in the image of Jesus, the risen and glorified Savior and Redeemer.

In a little hope of that glorious resurrection and change, I hope I am "your brother and companion in tribulations, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

Elder H.B. Jones

(From The Lone Pilgrim December, 1929)

PSALM 40:3.

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

LETTER TO ELDER E.C. STONE BY ELDER FREDERICK KEENE

Dear Brother in the Lord:

Yours came this morning and as I have been pondering over its contents I have thought how similar have been your cogitations, and judgments of things with my own. I never more so than at the present time have seen and felt the difference between the flesh and the spirit, and the mere letter of things, and the excellency and power of the things of Christ. As to the letter knowledge and external observance of matters pertaining to Christ's gospel, there is an amount of it in my possession. I am sufficiently acquainted with the Holy Scriptures to see standing out in all clearness this and that point of doctrine: That God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are all-mighty, all-wise, immutable, working all things after the counsel of God; Jehovah the Father, Son and Holy Ghost in their persons three, eternally so, and yet in a sublime mystery our One eternal Jehovah; Jehovah's election of the church in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, His predestination, His redemption, His sanctification of the elect, their resurrection to immortality and incorruption, and ultimate eternal glorification with Emmanuel. All these matters, and all associated divine matters, as I have already mentioned, I can see very clearly taught in the word, and in my mind, and if need be with my tongue I can trace them, and declare them.

All this can be in me, with me, in the letter, but the excellency, the power, the divine blessedness therein, is altogether another matter. I cannot bestow this blessedness upon myself, I cannot manufacture it, and it is impossible to impart it to another. It is still, abidingly needful that the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth shall glorify Christ unto my soul, and take of the things of our precious Lord Jesus and show them unto me (John 16:13-15).

I would live in communion, in fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. This is written, wrought in my heart, indelibly so and yet I find it to be no easy matter to so live, and walk with God.

The world from without, all that pertains to my natural life, satan, my corrupt nature, all are hindrances, are opposed to, are in conflict with, and would, were it possible, extinguish the life of God in my soul.

There is with me a daily conflict. I have no time to lay my armor by, for it is so needful, my heart, at times, says, I will not yield, God forbid it. Oh let me continue to press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus, let me fight the good fight of faith laying hold on eternal life. All self-sufficiency, and self-praise will again and again be obliterated in our lives; for we are ever learning that in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us (Rom. 8:37).

The tribes of Jacob of old went into the battle with music and song (Psalm 68:1), and let me quote the language

of one of the songs that my heart (put in tune of the Holy Ghost) sometimes sings: "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." Though I am sometimes cast down, but I am not destroyed, for he who has begun, as I hope, in me a good work, will do the performance of it until the day of Jesus Christ.

I am given streams in the desert, I drink of the brook in the way, there are times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and mine head is lifted up above mine enemies round about me, and sometimes such is my confidence (not in the flesh, Phil. 3:3) in Christ Jesus that like the daughter of Zion I despise all mine enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil, in oneness with Christ my immortal, immutable Friend, I see them all defeated, underneath my feet, I shake my head at them and laugh them to scorn (Isaiah 37:22).

Of late I do not mean the last few days, or months, but for a few years, I have had peculiar support, consolation, encouragement and sweet satisfaction in my soul in the immutability of Jehovah: The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, our Eternal GOD; The Lord God Omnipotent who reigneth. I am so mutable, my soul through many changes goes; His love no variation knows.

In my complaints, and inabilities I am made to cry out some times,

"Changes and war are against me" (Job 10:17). But Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). All the promises of God in Him, are yea and amen and unto the glory of God by us (2 Cor. 1-20). Our gracious God is in one mind, and who can turn him, and what his soul desireth even that he doeth (Job 23:13). And God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have the hope set before us (Heb. 6:17-18).

"Will He now His grace deny,
Lay His wonted kindness by?
Will He, can He, say, depart
To the humble, contrite heart?
NO, our Christ is still the same
Endless blessings on His name."

I see, I feel myself so mutable. At times I feel, as though by the power of the Holy Ghost, I am swallowed up in the things of Christ. I am rejoicing in Him, in communion with the Lord, Christ liveth in me (Gal. 2:20); in my heart by faith (Ephes. 3:17); and I talk and walk with God. But like Abraham so it is with me, all appears to be withdrawn, suspended, and I am soon in a barren land. I am then burdened, distressed, tossed about, in a multitude of conflicts, dried up, I am a very wilderness, there is no water in me to drink, nothing in me to eat, remembrances of former banquets and the king's table does not feed me. The smiles of his face are hidden by the

clouds that have come between (Job 36:32). "And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham, and Abraham returned unto his place" (Gen. 18:33). But notwithstanding all the vicissitudes of my soul, all the changing scenes that in God's providence are mine, I am often found triumphing in our precious Christ and am singing,

"I to the end shall endure
As sure as the earnest is given,
More happy, but not more secure
The glorified spirits in heaven."

With love to you, and our sister Stone. I am yours in our sweet Lord Jesus Christ.

ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE,
Raleigh, NC, June 2, 1924
THE LONE PILGRIM, December
1924, Vol. 3, No. 15

PROVERBS 24: 12-14.

If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it*? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it*? and shall *not* he render to every man according to his works?

My son, eat thou honey, because *it is good*; and the honeycomb, *which is sweet to thy taste*:

So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found *it*, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

HABAKKUK 1:12, 13

Signs of the Times,
JANUARY, 1940

My MIND is now being exercised on some wonderful truth expressed by Habakkuk in the first chapter. The first paragraph expresses "the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see." The burden was why he beheld grievance, spoiling and violence, and why there were those who raise up strife and contention. It is evident that the wicked doth compass about the righteous and wrong judgment proceedeth. We are sometimes made to wonder with Habakkuk why these things exist. Some would have us believe that this is the work of the devil over which God does not exercise control. But that god is not Israel's God. Our God works all things. We hear Him saying, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9,10). "He 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.) We see the fact revealed in the second paragraph of the first chapter of Habakkuk that the raising up of the "Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling-places which are not

their's" is the work of God. God declares through the prophet that the heathen will not believe this though it be told them. The heathen of today will not believe that the raising up of the bitter, hasty and wicked people is the work of God. In relating the characteristics and actions of this bitter and hasty nation he also makes plain that, "their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves." They are not forced to do these things, but do them of their own accord. This is their nature and delight. This thought is in harmony with James 1:13,14, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Nay, the Chaldeans could not charge their wrong judgment and actions to the predestination of God, because it was their desire to do what they did do. Neither can man charge God with being the cause of his sins, even though the predestination of God embraced them, for man "is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14,15). Yes, God created the waster to destroy, and the waster has pleasure in destruction. God also created the wicked for the day of evil, and the wicked hath pleasure in wickedness.

The twelfth and thirteenth verses of the first chapter of Habakkuk give sufficient explanation of the purpose of God in raising up the bitter and hasty

nation that deals treacherously and oppresses the righteous. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore it is not for the sake of evil and iniquity that these things are prevalent, but "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O Mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." They are established and ordained for judgment and correction of the chosen of God. The wicked are the sword of the Lord, and they are raised up for that purpose. God hath a noble purpose in all things, and, as Paul states, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. I believe it takes the wicked, the waster and all other things opposing godliness (even our carnal minds) to make up the furnace of affliction in which God's people are chosen. Ye are refined, but not with silver; ye are chosen in the furnace of affliction.

Now let us quote the complete twelfth verse of the first chapter of Habakkuk, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." The first part of this verse is an interrogative affirmation, ascribing all power to God. As He is from everlasting, and beside Him there is none else, let us conclude that nothing has transpired without His establishment and ordination. In the phrase, "We shall not die," "we" embraces all those whom, they, oppose.

There are two classes of people under consideration in this chapter. "They" include the wicked and "we" include the righteous, or children of God. Even though the righteous are oppressed and persecuted by the wicked (whose aim is to harm and destroy the righteous), God hath even established and ordained their wicked acts to the good of His children. He plainly states it is for judgment and correction. Instead of being for the destruction of His people (as the wicked aim) God hath established and ordained them for the judgment and correction of His chosen. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (Prov. 3:12,13) (See Job 5:17). "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). "But if ye be without chastisement . . . then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:8). In Psalms 136:10-15, we read that God smote Egypt in their first-born and brought out Israel from among them with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and divided the Red Sea into parts, and made Israel to pass through the midst of it, but overthrew Pharaoh and his host into the Red Sea. God was using Moses to lead the children of Israel, and the enemy to drive them. The Egyptians were zealously pursuing the Israelites, with a motive in mind different from the purpose of God, which was to drive them to deliverance. Just as soon as Pharaoh and

his army had completed the purpose God had in raising them up (to push the Israelites to deliverances) they were drowned. This brings to mind these two Scriptures: With lovingkindness have I drawn thee, and, as with the horns of an unicorn Ephraim shall be pushed to the ends of the earth. The Israelites were drawn by Moses and the cloud, pushed by the enemy and hedged in by the walls of water.

I know this is considered hard doctrine by carnal reasoning, and does not give any credit or praise to man, but it pleases God to use the furnace of affliction to reveal this fact to God's children. Thus they are, "driven to the ends of the earth." They are driven to the end of their own ability and made willing to comply with that effectual command of sweet deliverance: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). The journey to the "ends of the earth" is extremely unpleasant, and the "furnace of affliction" well describes this process of the new birth. But this well qualifies the child of God to deeply appreciate the paradise which is the result of the remembrance of Jesus Christ being made manifest unto them.

Elder E. J. Lambert

ROMANS 8:17.

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

HEBREWS 2:15.

And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

We confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, Romans ix. 7, 8, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might* be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations."—Romans iv. 16, 17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his "many sons," which he was

to bring to glory, and for whom, "by the grace of God he tasted death." And they are also in this connection called "the children," and "his brethren." These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for everyone of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. And they are exhorted to "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage." — Gal. v. 1. The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And

there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.)

"Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."—Isa. iii. 2.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." - 1 John ii. 15.

THIS is a very wide sentence. It stretches forth a hand of vast grasp. It places us, as it were, upon a high mountain, such as the Lord stood upon when tempted of Satan, and it says to us, "Look around you: now there is not one of these things which you must love." It takes us, again, to the streets of a crowded city; it shews us shop windows filled with objects of beauty and ornament; it points us to all the wealth and grandeur of the rich and noble, and everything that the human heart admires and loves. And having thus set before us, as Satan did before our Lord upon the high mountain, the kingdoms of the world, it says, not as he did, "All this will I give you," but, "All this I take from you. None of these things are for you. You must not

love one of these glittering baubles; you must not touch one of them, or scarcely look at them, lest, as with Achan, the golden wedge and the Babylonish garment should tempt you to take them and hide them in your tent." The precept takes us through the world as a mother takes a child through a bazaar, with playthings and ornaments on every side, and says, "You must not touch one of these things." In some such similar way the precept would, as it were, take us through the world, and when we had looked at all its play-things and its ornaments, it would sound in our ears, "Don't touch anyone of them; they are not yours; not for you to enjoy, not for you even to covet." Can anything less than this be intended by those words which should be ever sounding in the ears of the children of God, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world?"

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The Union meeting of the South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Union Church near Marion, LA on April 27th & 28th, 2013. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2013

Glenna Link, TN	50.00
Polly Sizemore, WV	25.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	5.00
John Ballard, TX	5.00
Gerald Pickral, VA	5.00
Frances Brinkley, GA	5.00
Phillip Jones, TX	10.00
Connie Franco, TX	5.00
Anne Pearson, MI	10.00
Marcus Vickers, FL	5.00
Jerry Cornelius, NC	5.00
Ada Beeghly, VA	15.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER GLADYS AGEE

We at Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head of the River) bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father who in His divine wisdom and mercy removed from our midst our dear beloved Sister, Gladys Agee, 83, of Salem, Virginia. She passed away peacefully in her sleep on Sunday, December 30, 2012. She was a faithful church member, filling her seat as long as she was able.

Her favorite hymn was number 19 in the Goble book, "Sons we are, through Gods election." She deeply believed that salvation was by the grace of God and Him alone. Her membership at Salem Church was 27 years.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Andrew Agee; daughter, Bonnie Agee Kitts; sisters, Lilly Jenkins, Ora Nolley, Mildred Walters and Louise Austin; brothers, Henry, Earl, Jack, Guy, and Everette Walters.

Surviving are her children: Carolyn Agee Perdue of Roanoke, Va., Linda Agee Dickerson and husband Ray of Dublin, Va., Dianne Agee Kelley and husband Bob also of Roanoke, Va.; grandchildren: Penney Britt, Lucas Duncan, Jimmy and Brian Kitts, Scott and Toby Duncan; step-grandchildren: Ro Dickerson, John Kelly II and Seth Kelly; 20 great-grandchildren; and one sister, Garnet Rose of Salem, Va.

Funeral services were conducted at 11:00 am on Thursday, January 3, 2013 at Head of the River Baptist Church by Elders Larry Hollingsworth and Carl Terry. She was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. Her work here on earth is finished and we will miss her greatly but we bow in humble submission to His will.

Written by:
Mary Poff, Clerk
Carl Terry, Moderator

MARGARET B. COKER

June 29, 1927 – January 2, 2013

It is with a feeling of sadness and joy that I attempt to write a memorial to our dear friend, Margaret (Blow) Coker. A sadness knowing we see her no more here on earth; a joyous feeling to remember that God is supreme and makes no mistakes. What a beautiful thought when we can just think of the hope we had for Margaret. I can only have a feeling that she quietly drifted off into the arms of the Savior where she is in a deep peace that we can't explain.

Margaret never united with the militant church, but I am among the many that recognize how much she supported the Primitive Baptist, how much she enjoyed meetings with the brethren and friends, how much she expressed her love for the church by caring for the brethren and friends, how many times she made arrangements to take care of guests overnight who came from far and near to attend meetings, and how many meals she has prepared and graciously fed numbers beyond measure. Her home was just a haven of peace and rest. Yes, we all would have enjoyed calling her sister but that does not hinder the fact that we feel she is safely in the arms of Jesus and He recognized her as a sister in faith, hope, and charity; One of His own is our hope and belief. Rest on Sister Margaret, we loved you, but He loves you more.

She was a keen listener of the

doctrine. Oft times when visiting with her, days after any given meeting, she might ask, "Do you believe that (any given thought she had heard) means (whatever she had heard or thought). That's all it took to get a conversation going. It could have been a point that she did not believe or understand, or perhaps a point she so strongly believed. Whatever the situation might be she got it hashed out to her satisfaction. She just simply was a strong "Old Baptist" and a lovely sister.

Her greatest joys were being with her family and the brethren. Her last week among us was filled with her kind of pleasure. A union meeting of the Eastern Kehukee Union was held at the Tarboro Church, that she loved so much and then she immediately began looking forward to the next Sunday and getting ready for the scheduled meeting time at the Tarboro Church. With the help of a very supportive family she had no problems. Then came New Year's. There was a family tradition whereby all the family, who could, would be in her home on New Year's Eve together with some of the brethren who joined them. At midnight, they met around her tables for breakfast for the family fun and brotherly love.

Her out of town guests left on New Year's day to go home and all was fine. She enjoyed the rest of the day with family coming and going. Then on January 2nd all was fine until bedtime neared. A daughter called on the phone and when she got no answer she immediately alerted other family mem-

bers who came forward. So sad, when they arrived they found her slumped in her chair and they had no success in reviving her.

Margaret was married to Brother John H. Coker for 57 years. He was a deacon of the Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church in Tarboro, North Carolina. She was a true supporter of him in his calling to serve for 52 years before his death in 2002.

Surviving her is one son, John H. Coker, Jr. and wife, Ann. Four daughters: Rebecca Coker, Naomi Coker, Sallie C. Denny and husband, Ricky. Frances C. Liverman and husband, Stanley. Grandchildren: Tracy Winkler and husband, Matt; Julie Mullaly, Kristy D. Roberson and husband Chris, Chad Denny, Stan Liverman and wife, Heather, and Ashley Liverman. Also surviving are five great grandchildren.

Her funeral, with standing room only, was conducted at Carlisle Funeral Home in Tarboro, NC by the pastor of the Tarboro Church, Elder Marvin Brumfield assisted by Elder Harold Pittman. Interment was beside her husband in Greenwood Cemetery, Tarboro, NC, with a throng of acquaintances surrounding the gravesite.

At a family request, this feeble attempt has been done by one who loved, admired and respected Margaret Coker for over 61 years. We shall long miss her.

Respectfully Contributed by,
J. Carroll Williams

BROTHER JOHN S. COLLIE, JR.

On August 23, 2012 the Lord called our dear Brother, of 1620 Hampton Road, Reidsville, North Carolina, from our midst. Brother John was born December 5, 1932 to the late Brother John S. Collie, Sr. and Sister Nellie Dix Collie. He lived in Rockingham County his entire life. He was also predeceased by a sister, Sister Peggy Owens West. Brother John is survived by his wife of 58 years, former Nancy Ellington of the home. He is also survived by two sons, Steven Collie and wife Carmon of Tryon, N.C., Brian Collie and wife Barbara of Pfafftown, N.C., and one daughter, Carol Collie Raiger and husband, David of Kernersville, N.C. There are six grandchildren who survive: Shannon Collie of Charlotte, N.C., Lauren Collie Birdno and husband, Jared of Inman, S.C., Tyler and Laura Collie of Pfafftown, N.C., and Taylor and Adam Raiger of Kernersville, N.C. He is also survived by two brothers, David Collie and wife, Janice of Blairsville, Georgia and Brother Bob R. Collie of Summerfield, N.C.

Brother John's major interests were family and Church, camping with family, woodworking and crafts. He served in the U.S. Navy for 19 months. Brother John graduated from Ruffin High School in 1951 and was valedictorian of his senior class. He attended Appalachian State University and graduated from Elon University with an

AB degree in Business Administration. He also completed one year at the University of Tennessee School of Social Work.

Brother John joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on September 25, 1983. In 1984 he was elected treasurer. In 1997 he was ordained as a deacon. He served as a trustee on the cemetery fund at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Signs of the Times, the oldest Primitive Baptist periodical in America. He served all of these offices well.

Brother John was a believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. I will use this scripture in Ephesians chapter two verses eight and nine, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast." Brother John and I traveled many miles together going to church. One day we were on our way to Moon's Creek Church in Caswell County. He asked, "Don't you think I have been Treasurer long enough?" I hesitated for a few minutes and then I thought, he is handicapped but he still has a good mind. He was walking with two canes. I would walk beside of him until he was seated in church. I also knew that his wife, Nancy, helped him print out records on paper with the computer. After having all of these thoughts, I answered him. I said, "No, I do not think you have been Treasurer long enough." He was Treasurer when he passed away.

Also, on Monday before Brother John passed away on Thursday, Elder Thomas Solomon, his wife, Sister Louise, and I went in to see Brother John. He was very talkative. He said something has happened to me, it may be the progress I have made is back sliding. On Tuesday Elder Jimmy Gray asked me if I would go with him to see Brother John and I did.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, August 26, 2012 at 3 P.M. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church with Elder Thomas Solomon officiating. The burial was at Mt. Carmel United Methodist Church Cemetery there to await the coming of the Lord. In first Thessalonians chapter four verses sixteen and seventeen are as follows: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord." We believe our loss is Brother John's eternal gain.

Written by:
R. Allen Carroll,
Church Clerk

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 04/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ANNA LEE WALTON CONNER

If the Lord will bless me, I will attempt to write the obituary of our sister in Christ, and my sister in the flesh.

Anna was born December 16, 1927 to the late Alonzo and Mamie Walton. She fell asleep in Jesus, January 6, 2013, making her stay on earth 85 years. She was predeceased by her husband Clyde Richard Conner, and her only daughter Anita Dawn Conner.

Left to cherish her memory is her beloved grandson Jared Johnson, his foster parents Jay & Elizabeth Taliferro, and her brothers and sisters: John Walton and wife Joyce, Ezra Walton and wife Jane, Jean Walton Rorrer and husband Sebert and Mary Walton Janney and a special friend Alfred Ratliff.

After a beautiful funeral service by her pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder W.T. Conner, she was laid to rest at Wilson Cemetery in Floyd County.

Anna was a member of The Primitive Baptist faith for more than 40 years. Most of her life was a struggle, with many afflictions, which she accepted with grace and dignity.

We feel she is now resting in that perfect peace. No more sickness, no more pain and suffering. Our merciful God delivered her out of it all. May we bow in humble submission to His will.

In request of Salem (Head of the River Church).

Written with love,
By: Mary Janney

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“ The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ”

VOL. 181

HILLSVILLE, VA., MAY 2013

NO. 5

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
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I AM a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.
When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong.
I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be;
Oh! is there anyone like me?
'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be;
What I desire, I can't attain;
From what I hate I can't refrain.
So far from God I seem to lie
Which makes me often weep and cry,
I fear at last that I shall fall;
For if a saint, the least of all.
I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things come in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know—
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?
So by experience do I know
There's nothing good that I can do;
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope nor comfort from it draw.
My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace, I know I'm lost.

Primitive

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EDITORIAL

REVEREND OR ELDER

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Reverend is a title commonly given to ministers by many other faiths. Other titles include The Very Reverend, The Right Reverend, The Most Reverend and even Holy Father and Rabbi. The best that I can determine these blasphemous titles started with the Catholic Church and became accepted by other faiths. They are not scriptural and indeed are blasphemy against God. Only God is reverend, righteous and holy. Reverend is in the scriptures only

one time and is the Lord's name for Psalm 111:9 says "... **holy and reverend is His name.**" No prophet, apostle, minister or any other person in the scriptures, other than Christ, is ever called holy or reverend. In Matthew 23:5-10, Christ tells His disciples concerning the scribes and Pharisees, "**But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.**" In Job 32:21-22 Elihu says, "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my maker would soon take me away." Isaiah 57:15 says, "**For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy...**"

The faiths, denominations or organizations that use this designation for their ministers do not believe that one is truly a minister if that person does not have reverend before his name. It has become so universally accepted that most of the world believes this also. These highminded titles are to appeal to the carnal, fleshly natural man in an effort to elevate the

importance and prestige of the titled individual. No title has ever made one a minister.

In the Old Testament "elder" referred to age. These were older men who were heads of families or tribes. They were considered experienced, mature, wise and leaders. They were not novices and they ruled well their own houses. God told Moses in **Exodus 3:16-18**, "**Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.**" In **Numbers 11:16-17**, "**And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit**

which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone." I believe these elders were performing the work of a pastor/bishop. They cared for their people. Elders would sit in the gate of the city and the people would bring their problems to them for counsel and judgment. This title or designation was brought forward into the new testament for the Lord's ministers.

In the new testament "elder" refers to the gospel minister. Those of the Primitive Baptist faith use "elder" for their ministers because it is scriptural. **1 Peter 5: 1-4**, "**The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.**" The Apostle John refers to himself as an elder in his second and third epistles. Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church in the cities of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch according to the 14th Chapter of Acts. And in **Acts 15:23**, "**And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia."**

Acts 16:4-5, "And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." In the 20th chapter of Acts Paul called the elders of the church at Ephesus together and admonished them to feed the church of God as the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. Revelation speaks of the four and twenty elders seated round about the throne of God. The Apostle Paul wrote Titus to ordain elders in every city as he had appointed him. According to the Apostle, elders and bishops are the same. He wrote to Timothy and Titus giving the qualifications as follows: blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, not selfwilled, of good behavior, not given to wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, lover of hospitality, sober, just, apt to teach, not soon angry, no striker, patient, not covetous, ruleth well his own house, not a novice, has a good report of them which are without, holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. You will notice that the qualifications do **NOT** say the wife of one husband and since Christ did not have any female apostles and neither do the scriptures mention any females ordained as elders, we believe that only males are to be ordained as ministers. I certainly fall so short. Of myself I can do noth-

ing. But my comfort is that with God all things are possible. He is our help, our strength, our refuge, our all.

Your unworthy servant,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

2-15-2013

Dear Bro. Tony,

Am sorry to be late sending in my subscription to "Signs of the Times." Thank you for sending it anyway. I enjoy it and I feel like it keeps me in touch since I don't get to go to church anymore.

Use the other money as you see fit.

Love in Christ,
Frances Brinkley

To whom it may concern,

Enclosed you will find a check for \$50.00. I would like to renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times for 2 years for \$25.00 the remaining \$25.00 is my contribution to the church.

I would like to request that you print the full version of Amazing Grace with all verses included.

Thank you,
Sister Polly Sizemore
2805 Turkey Ca. R. Hand Fork
Brenton, WV 24818

February 9, 2013

P.O. Box 209
Pelham, N.C. 27311
March 14, 2013

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is a check for \$15.00 to renew my subscription of the Signs for another year.

I look forward to receiving this special paper each month.

Since God's word is sure and doesn't change, I can depend upon the Signs as a regular source of inspiration and sound doctrine.

May God bless you and all who work to publish this worthy word of truth each month.

With hope in Christ,
Gloria B. Reese
File: Violet M. Barton 3/13

Dear Brother Horton,

My precious wife, Pauline Jones, passed away Sept. 31, 2012. We have been receiving the Signs for quite a few years and I would like to continue.

Enclosed is a check for two more years, use the rest however you see fit. It is a great comfort to me to know there are still God's people out there that still hold to the old path's. May God bless you and all the staff that print the Signs and all that write for it.

Phillip Jones
12555 Farm Rd. 79
Sumner Texas 75486

Dear Elder Cleo,

I have written an obituary for Sarah Barker and would appreciate your putting it in the Signs of the Times.

Sarah was well known all over the country because she traveled a lot with Elder Spangler.

Do hope this finds you well,
Love & fellowship,
B. G. Pryor

Dear Sir,

Please renew my Signs for two years and use the rest – the way you choose. I may not need for two years but someone can. I will be 95 years old 5-22-13.

My Dad was Elder W.T. Clayton, a good old Primitive Baptist Preacher. I read his Signs for years. He passed away in 1954.

I have some Signs back to 1913 – I love to read the old Signs too.

May the good Lord bless and keep you and yours and all of God's children.

This is 32 days later I fell feeding my cats. I got tangled up in some cables and hit some tables and fell on concrete and hurt my leg and arm so I couldn't walk.

I have three boys and one girl. They or one of them stays with me at all times – they have spoiled me. My

wife passed away five years ago, we lived together for 66 years and three months, sure miss her.

My kids are giving me a birthday party on 5-5-13 in Providence, Ky. Seniors Building and all is welcome. And don't send me a Birthday Card unless you really want to.

Love, Raymond Clayton
561 Clayton Rd., Dixon, Ky. 42409

(Sorry about my spelling, writing and thinking, hearing and seeing, and you won't either when you are almost 95 years old.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BELL SPUR CHURCH In the Smith River Association, Va.

September 3, 1860

We, an arm of State Line Church in the Mayo Association, being extended to Bell Spur meeting house for the purpose of receiving members by experience and by letter, this day we constituted into a church by a presbytery of Elders as follows: Samuel Arrington, Claborn Plasters, Daniel Comer. This presbytery was ordered by the Mayo Association.

The members were as follows: Isham Barnard and Sarah, his wife, Willian Blanchett and Statia, his wife, Bartlett Smith and Helen his wife, Jackson McGrady and Hannah his wife,

James M. Blanchett and Sarah his wife, Susan M. Mabry, Isham Pack, Gabriel Sandfer, Rachel Bowman, Rachel Arrington, Polly Bowman, Luwina Stanley, Susan Sandfer, Elizabeth Jane Epperson, Polly Smith, Elizabeth Blanchett, Elitha Barnard, Eliza (colored woman), Lemuel (colored man). Claborn Plasters was chosen Moderator and James M. Jancett, Clerk for the present time. It appears that from reading the old records that there was no special Moderator called until April, 1861, when Elder James Thompson was chosen Moderator and Elder Samuel Arrington his assistant. The records show that prior to this time Elders Samuel Arrington, Claborn Plasters, James Thompson, and Allen Thomas served as Moderator. In October following, James M. Blancett and Bartlet Smith was set apart for the office of deacon, and were ordained in May following. In April 1861 the church was received into the Mayo Association in August 1865.

James Barnard and Jackson McGrady were set apart as deacons, Jan., 1866. The church chose George Smith as clerk. In Sept., 1866 the church joined the Smith River Association. At this meeting (Sept.) Janie M. Blancett was licensed to preach, and in August, 1867 was ordained to the full function of the ministry. At this same meeting Charles Barnard was ordained a deacon. In July 1875 Richard Thompson and I. N. T. Barnard was ordained deacons. In May 1879 James M. Blancett was chosen Moderator; June, 1881 Sister..... was excluded for

bringing a suit against one of her brethren. In September, 1883 the church called for a presbytery of Elders to ordain James M. and Elijah M. Barnard, if found qualified to the ministry, and also E. P. Barnard, deacon. In November, 1902 E. P. Barnard was ordained to the ministry; Oct., 1903 Yancy H. Jessup and Daniel Quesenbury were ordained as deacons. Jan. 1911 A. T. Jessup was chosen clerk. June 1912 our Moderator being old and afflicted asked the church to appoint Elder E. P. Barnard to assist him. May 1915 Elder E. M. Barnard was chosen to serve equally with Elder James M. Barnard to which he agreed to serve for a short time only (Elder E. P. Barnard having been called from the shores of time) and Elder C. A. Vipperman was called as an assistant. October 31, 1915 our beloved Moderator, Elder James M. Blancett passed away at the age of 84. He served the church at Bell Spur 41 years as Moderator and was serving four churches at death. The church then chose Elder C. A. Vipperman and Joel E. Marshall to serve jointly. Aug. 1921, G. B. Terry and T. W. Banks were ordained as deacons. Elder C. A. Vipperman served the church faithfully for 14 years, died Feb. 18, 1930 at the age of 63. His membership was at Dan River Church, Patrick County, Va.

During this time the doctrine of conditional-time-salvation and limited predestination was being advocated by the Moderator, Joel E. Marshall. 9 of the members, including the two youngest deacons and the clerk stood against these things. At the July meet-

ing, 1932 the majority refused to appoint messengers to the Smith River Association and dismissed their meeting, while the minority, kept their seats and prepared a letter and appointed messengers as usual, and was received by the Association at Bell Spur Church in order. The church property was lost to us, and as we had no place of worship, nor a moderator, we continued to meet in a home, and a stand was erected in a grove. All went to work and built a small but comfortable house. The first sermons were preached in the new house on first Sunday in November, 1932 by Elders J. P. Helms and John D. Wood. At our January meeting, 1933 the church by motion gave to Brother S. E. Terry the right to exercise, a public gift. May 5, 1934 J. Sam Hill was appointed Moderator for 12 months. June 6, 1936 J. Sam Hill was reappointed for 12 months. Oct. 31, 1936 Brother S. E. Terry was ordained to the ministry by a presbytery of Elders and deacons as follows: Elders J. P. Helms, J. D. Wood, S. L. Moran, D. P. Helms, E. R. Bryant, G. B. Gunter, J. G. L. Hash, D. P. Jefferson, C.E. Turner, F. T. Sowers, and Deacons P. E. Vipperman, G. W. Wright, T. W. Banks and G. B. Terry. May, 1938 J. Sam Hill chosen Moderator and S. E. Terry assistant. July 1, 1939, Elder S. E. Terry was appointed Moderator. December 15, 1940, our beloved brother, A. T. Jessup passed away. He had faithfully served the church as clerk for twenty-nine years. February 1941, G. B. Terry was ap-

pointed church clerk and T. W. Banks assistant clerk.

The meeting house is now located in Carrol County, just off the Blue Ridge Parkway. We have many seasons of rejoicing. We also entertained Smith River Association in 1948, which was one of the best meetings in the history of the Association.

Approved by the church while in conference on February 5, 1949.

Elder S. E. TERRY Mod.,
Brother G. B. Terry, Clerk

(Present pastor is Elder Alan Terry and the church meets on the 3rd Sunday each month)

North Berwick, Maine, Dec. 31, 1871.

BROTHER BEEBE:—The following letter was written by a young brother, who lives about twelve miles from this place, who was baptized by me last month. Please give it a place in the "Signs," that thousands, as well as myself, may have the privilege of reading it.

WM. Quint.

Acton, Maine, Dec. 24, 1871.

Dear Eld. Quint:—I will try to pen you a few lines, although I feel unworthy to write to one of the servants of God, or to even call one of God's elect a brother. I often fear that you have been deceived in me, for I feel that I am so great a sinner that I fear you think me better than I am. Instead of growing any better, it seems to me I

grow worse every day. When I try to do good, evil is present with me. It makes me feel unworthy of a place among you. I fear that if you knew me as I know myself, that I should have a place among you no longer, for how could you hold in fellowship such a sinful worm of the dust as I am? And yet I must plead for a place among you, for it seems almost a heaven to me to be counted worthy to be called one of your number. I do not know what you see in, or hear from me, to cause you to accept of such a one as me. But I do love to be one among you, and to sit under the sound of the gospel, for it is truly nourishing to me. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

I hope I feel thankful to God for such a people, and for such doctrine as is preached among them; for no other could save so great a sinner as me. If the popular preaching around us be true, and it were left to me to secure my own salvation, by my own faithfulness, or else be lost, then truly there would be no hope for me; for I have already done enough to sink me so low that I could never see the light of my heavenly Father's face. But I cannot believe that he will leave me to sink thus low. I am not afraid to trust all to him; but may his will be done, whatever my lot may be. I would like to tell the church the love I have for them in expressing their fellowship for me, and giving me a place among them, if I could find words; but I cannot. I have always loved them from the time I first learned of them; but to know that that they love me! how different.

Horatio Grant

**1857- CHILDREN OF GOD
AND ANTICHRIST**

Connersville, Indiana,
December 16, 1857.

“Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” – 1 John iv: 2 3.

Brother Beebe:- By request of sister Charlotte Herrick, in the *SIGNS* of the 15th of November last, I am induced to give my views on the text above. This subject is copious, and opens up a wide field for remarks. John is here writing to the children of God whom he addresses as *“little children.”* Little children are the most helpless and dependent of all the animal creation, and therefore the most suitable to illustrate the condition of the children of God, of any, and so they are often called. John, being an old man, and an old preacher, and a teacher of babes, may with great propriety, also claim them as his little children, for whose benefit, information, learning and comfort, he was laboring. To them, he says, *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”* The many false prophets being prompted by the spirit of error to oppose Christ

in various ways and in many things, and by many false prophets or teachers, I suppose is the sense in which it is called *many spirits*. All the different operations and diversity of systems invented by this spirit and propagated by all the false prophets influenced by it, diverse as they may seem, yet they are all against Christ. They are all in the world and of the world, and many of them, from time to time, have for a season had a name in the church; but the church is not their home. They *“have gone out into the world.”* The little children would very naturally enquire, How shall we clearly know these two spirits, and be prepared to clearly distinguish between them, so as, in all cases, to know the spirit of Truth from the spirit of error?

John promptly and in plain words answers this enquiry - *“Hereby know ye the spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God;”* and on the other hand, *“every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God.”* This rule is short and easy to apply, and every way suitable to the capacity of little children who are born of the Spirit of God. The spirit that prompts the teacher or prophet will show of what sort it is, by the teaching of the prophet or teacher. Therefore, every teacher or prophet that does not, in his doctrine confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. *“And this is that spirit of anti-christ whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.”* The world is its place, it is of

that world, and the world will hear and love that which is its own.

Now a few points are presented for our special remark. *First*, What Jesus Christ is, which has come in the flesh? *Second*, What is that antichrist whereof they have heard, &c.? And, *thirdly*, How are the little children to know and overcome the world and this spirit of error, which even now is in the world?

First, Let us ascertain correctly who, or what that Jesus Christ which is come in the flesh, is? "Jesus" signifies a Savior, and this name was, by the Angel, given to the babe of Bethlehem, because He should save His people from their sins. The name "Christ" signifies the Anointed, the sent, the appointed One. The Messiah of the Old Testament is the same as the Christ of the new Testament, and both contemplates a character subordinate to God, in one sense, as the "Anointed," the appointed, the sent, the cut off, &c., yet fully, properly and equally God, as the Father. This character or personage, was not the flesh, but it was that Jesus Christ that is come in the flesh. This Jesus Christ dwelt in the bosom of the Father, before He came to earth and was born of Mary. He was brought forth before the mountains were, or ever the earth was. His goings forth were from of old, even from everlasting. He often appeared in personal form and was visible, as man, to the fathers, to the prophets and saints, and was by them called a "man," a "messenger" or an "angel," and He recognized the truth of the *name*. This was the "*man of God's right hand*,"

even the "*Son of man*," whom God had made strong for Himself -Psalm lxxx. 17. This is the man that spake the promise to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. This man appeared to Manoah and Manoah's wife; and this man, as the Captain of the Lord's host, stood before Joshua with a drawn sword in His hand. Against this man the sword was commanded to awake, and smite, (not God,) but "*the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of hosts*." Who stood then, as now, legally the Shepherd of the sheep? In this heavenly man, the second Adam, it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, and He is properly the Head over all things to His children; as man, but not as flesh, and bones, and blood, but as man, pure, sinless, undefiled; man in essence or nature, the whole fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Him, and for this heavenly man a body was prepared, as a victim for His offering; and when this man came in His flesh, or body, which God had prepared Him, God was manifest in this flesh which this man, Christ Jesus, came in. The Jews denied that the promised Messiah had come in the flesh, and were antichrist; that is, they were against Christ. So atheists, deists, and all who teach that Christ was an imposter, or He was not the Son of God, all are against Christ.

The world of the ungodly, who know not God and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, are all against Christ; but the text seems, more especially to refer to such as makes a profession and claim to be a

church, or churches of Christ, or such as individually claim to be believers of the Gospel, and still do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Some of these will confess that the flesh and bones and body of the son of Mary, is the Jesus Christ in whom they believe, and whom they preach; and they teach that Jesus Christ, as such, never had any actual existence until He was conceived and born of Mary. Here they start the actual existence of the Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, and claim that flesh alone, as their only Christ Jesus, and do not confess that the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, ever came in the flesh; but the flesh is all the Jesus Christ that they will or do confess existing between God and man. They say that He never existed until He was conceived and born of Mary, therefore they do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. They contend that He was the flesh, and not that He came in the flesh. But the Spirit that is of God, teaches that "*Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He, (Jesus Christ,) also Himself likewise took part of the same, or in like manner took part of the same.* The spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. Others again, with most of those already described, deny that Jesus Christ was ever either in heaven or the flesh, or anywhere else. They apply the name to a mere phantom of their imagination that the Scriptures know nothing of, either in heaven or earth, in the flesh or out of it; a Jesus Christ who

tries to save all of Adam's race, and fails to save even the half of them; and of Himself alone fails to save any, and the salvation of one and all must forever fail, after all that He has ever done or ever will do, unless the sinner himself secures his own salvation by some mighty works of his own. This phantom, the false prophets call "Jesus Christ," and they say that it is the Son of God, and that the Father is equally as impotent and dependent as the Son, and quite as liable to fail, unless man will lay to the helping hand. This is really denying the true God, and the true Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent.

Of course, these do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This spirit is not of God; this is that spirit of antichrist, of which ye have heard that it should come, and is even now in the world; *in the wisdom, learning, speculations and institutions of the religious world.*

Second. We are to enquire who, or what this antichrist is, of whom ye have already heard that it should come, and is even now in the world. Ye have heard of the coming and working of this spirit of antichrist, this man of sin, or son of perdition, this mystery of iniquity, by the old prophets and by the apostle Paul, and by the other apostles who had written to these little children, before John wrote this letter. And some say that this letter was not written until after John had written the book of Revelation, in which the coming and reign of antichrist is so fully discussed. At all events, these little children had heard that such a spirit of

opposition should come, and that it was now in the world, and would be more fully developed by an host of false prophets or teachers who should compass both sea and land to make proselytes. All expositors are apt to look to Rome, and when they have found this antichrist so fully displayed in the papal See, they have seemed to have almost forgotten that the same spirit of error that prompted the Romish clergy to all their ambitions and bloody opposition against Christ, in His doctrine, in His government, His ordinances, His people, and His coming in the flesh, and all worldly pomp, power, wealth, learning and pretended benevolence; the various schools, missions, and means of money, &c. All this is as fully exhibited now by the Protestant antichrist, as ever it was in Rome, wherever the law will give them the power, and when that stays the hand of violence and blood, deception, fraud, slander, gimmicks and lying in wait to deceive, is resorted to. All this is the multiform working of the same spirit of antichrist, or against Him, against His Eternal Godhead at one time and place, and against His existence at any time previous to His conception and birth by Mary. Against His being absolute and unconditionally a Savior - Against the justification and cleansing virtue of His blood; for they say that all depends at last on conditions performed by men. This is again against Christ. Their doctrine, ordinances, discipline, and their worldly combinations and amalgamations with the world, show that they are in the

world and of the world, and the world loves and hears them, because they are its own. All these are not only against Christ, but they prove themselves to be antichrist, according to the test that John gave to the children of God in our text. In the world they are heard, loved, received, approved and sustained, and like the world, they confess not that the true and Scriptural Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

Some may ask, Are not some of God's little children deceived by these false "teachers? This is not for me to decide; if they are, the Lord is saying to them, "*Come out of her, My people.*" A plain test is given in the text: and they should try the spirits and obey the Lord. But be this as it may, it makes neither the spirit nor the false prophets or teachers prompted by it, any the better; but if some, even of the children have, for a season, been, deceived by its fair speeches, feigned humility and will-worship, and by its intrusion surely the balance of the little children should, the more promptly and constantly consider and apply the test which is given them in the text, which is short and easily applied.

Thirdly. A few words as to how the little children are to know this spirit and overcome the world, and this spirit which is in the world. On this momentous subject John says, in the verse following the text, "*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.*" If God, who is love, is in these little children; if His Spirit of Truth is in them; if Christ

is in them the hope of glory, surely God will keep them by His power - the Spirit of light and Truth will lead them into all necessary Truth; and Christ, their Shepherd, Husband, Prophet, Priest and King; their Way, their Life, their Shield, their Righteousness and their Salvation - surely thus furnished, even the *little* children who are of God, have in days past, do at this time, and will finally overcome all the spirits of anti-Christ, that are now, ever have been, or ever will be in the world with the world to help them. Not by any motive, power of their own do they persevere or overcome, but because greater is He that is in them than he that is in the world!

Now, my sister Herrick, and your husband and daughter, both of whom I baptized at the last meeting at which I ever saw of you, as I had baptized you many years before, I have given you some of my views on the text which you selected; and I present them for the consideration of all God's little children. While you, and all of them, in your widely scattered situation — far from your former homes, and your old brethren and sisters, ministers and places of worship, feel lonely, like the little children weaned from the breast and thrown among strangers, and in such an inhospitable region, you hear the howling of the spirit of anti-Christ, crying, "Lo here! Lo there!" you have often heard of this opposing spirits being in the world. Yes, you have often witnessed that these false prophets did not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; and you have

often applied the test in the text. But then you know your friends with whom you could mingle in mutual faith, hope and love; where you could hear the Truth, and join in the songs of Zion. If sorrows, manifold temptations, darkness, doubts, fears or unbelief gather over you, and as a thick cloud, hid the smiles of the Savior from your view for a season, still you were among your brethren and sisters, whose company and edifying conversation, and familiarity with such trials, would often comfort and encourage you on your dubious and dreary way. But now, far, far away from those old and long-tried friends, cast among strangers, knowing not who will really confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh - the howl of the prophets of Baal and of the Groves around yea, and no known, tried, confidential brother or sister to confer with, it is then you think of by-gone days. But still when, by the strength of Him that is in you, and with you, the clouds are again dispersed and your way is made plain, you find that you are not alone: still you have a Comforter, even when all earthly comforts have failed. My brother and sister, you, like many others of the little children, have constant need to apply the test which is in the text, to all you hear: for in one way or another, every spirit of error and every false prophet and false teacher will preach and teach against Christ, and labor to whittle down His power, His dignity, or His grace, and to exalt man's power, free-agency and works, and they confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the

flesh. But the true ministers who are separated to the work by the Holy Spirit of Truth, will come to you with Christ's test, and Christ as All in all, and such will be determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This Gospel of His sovereign grace, of His Kingdom, and your salvation, is sweet to the taste of the little children; therefore, *"Eat, O friends; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."*

Yours in Christ,
Wilson Thompson,
December 16, 1857.

GOD IS ABOVE SATAN - TRUTH IS STRONGER THAN ERROR

When I was about 16 years of age I found among the books in our home one very elegantly bound volume. I began reading it, was interested; I might say I was charmed with its beautiful thoughts. I did not at first discern the pernicious tendency and purpose of the whole volume, and even when I did begin to see the drift of this venomous composition, out of curiosity I continued reading to the end.

It was Volney's "Ruins, Reflections upon the Revolutions of Empires" — a notorious classical infidel writer. I thought when I had done reading that it had done me no harm. Indeed in those days I began to think I was so well grounded in the doctrine of Christ, so scripturally fortified in all points that

all the arguments of infidels and atheists, and also American religionist could make no impression whatever upon me. But about six years afterwards I suffered much from these pernicious writings. I was passing through some trying providences, and I was in a very low condition spiritually. The Bible was as a sealed book to me; not a morsel of food, not a word of good cheer could I read. I prayed, and prayed, but the heavens over me were as brass. I became wretched indeed, then hardened, and all the past of my life as a believer appeared as a dream. I doubted its reality, its divine origin. I thought to myself it has all been fanaticism; I have myself made it all, and now it is all at an end. I sighed over it all, just a sigh. Then I became dreadfully harassed with the hellish darts of Satan, who hurled at my soul challenges, and insinuations. "Where is now thy God? If there were a God, would He not hear your prayers? Where is your precious Jesus that you have professed to know, and to be in such intimacy with? It is all a farce, a delusion; the Bible is only cunningly devised fables; there is no God. Christ crucified is all foolishness, like all other religions." Then Satan hurled at me and tormented my soul with sophistries of that cursed book of Volney's. I had no heart and I found no words to pray. I felt they were useless; for how did I know that God is and that Jesus Christ ever liveth to make intercession for transgressors? I found that all my reasoning powers were not sufficient to repel the arguments of Volney, so I was

as one thrust through, cast down in the battle and trampled under the feet of my foes. But I sighed and moaned over my condition, O, sometimes I sighed and moaned unto God, yearned after Jesus. Yes, there would spring up thoughts in spite of satan, in spite of Volney, in spite of all my vileness, hardness of heart, and unbelief, that surely God is, Jesus is, surely my past hope and comfort in Him as my Savior and Friend was not a delusion. I would say to myself, Surely it was a gracious power beyond what is mine beyond all the power of creatures that so wrought in me, moving me, a vile sinner, toward God with a broken contrite heart; and that also wrought such blessedness in me of forgiveness, justification and hope of eternal life through the knowledge of Him, the precious Savior, Jesus Christ. But in a few moments I would sink again in the deeps, bemoaning myself; just about hopeless. I was in this condition about three months. All this time I constantly read the bible, for hours, every day, and I was preaching every Sunday. Some one may ask, How could you do it? I can now see that it was surely of the Lord that I did so. I preached what the Holy Scriptures taught; I declared things according to my past experience; but I was plagued all the time with dreadful fears that there was no divine origin to it, that it was imaginary; an idle tale. To tell all the particulars of this battle, and how out of weakness I was made strong, and was triumphant over all my foes, Volney included, would occupy too much space; but I

must tell you a little of it to the praise of the glory of Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever.

One day as I was walking along a street in the city where I lived, burdened and cast down, I began thinking about what were the scriptural evidences of divine life in the soul. In a sort of theoretical way I scanned the subject. Then I questioned myself.

What proof have I of any such evidences? I said to myself, I have none. All that I can discern are a few faint sighs, and once in a while a few feeble longings after Jesus the Savior. I thought that if there is any spiritual life in my soul it is very low. But would there be, though ever so weak, any sighs and longings after the living God if there were no life? And in the twinkling of an eye my answer was, I am not dead in trespasses and sins. I almost shouted the words out. Then I felt my heart to be warming with fervent longings toward Jesus, the dear Lamb of God; my hardness was gone; I was broken and contrite in heart before the Lord, confessing my vileness, telling Jesus my wretchedness. O my trust was in the blood and righteousness of Christ. This was my breastplate, and for my helmet the Holy Ghost put upon me the precious hope of eternal salvation. I felt God pardoneth all my iniquities; He is my God, my Friend, my Rock, my All; I know that He is, and that He is my Salvation.

I stood and faced my foes. Where were all my sins, all the tauntings of the Devil, all the cunning craftiness, and mighty reasonings of the infidel?

They were fled, they were scattered as the chaff before the wind, they were trodden under my feet; for Christ and His everlasting gospel were now in me, not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. A little while after this I espied in the bookcase the elegantly bound Volney's Ruins, but its elegance stirred no pity in my heart; I took hold of it, and into the fire it went. About nine months ago some unknown person sent me about forty volumes of religious works, all in excellent bindings, and some of them costly books. I glanced through them, that was enough. I burnt and thus destroyed them every one. Could I not have sold them, given them away? No! They were full of false teachings, heresies.

Some of the brethren long ago had a bonfire of books (Acts 19: 19—Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.).

FREDERICK W. KEENE
THE LONE PILGRIM,
March 1925, Vol. 3, No. 30

PROVERBS 18: 21.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

“And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” (Ephesians 4:30)

We have been requested by a friend in Chester County, Pa., to give our views on the above text, through the Signs of the Times. The popular sentiment of Armenians workmongers in general seems to be that the children of men, even in their fallen condition, have power to inflict upon the eternal and unchanging God, the Holy Ghost, disappointment, sorrow and grief; they have therefore supposed that the above text was desired as an exhortation to unregenerated sinners to beware of their liability to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by obstinately refusing to be quickened by his divine operation. They hold that God, the Holy Ghost, operates to some extent upon all hearts, and strives with all sinners to regenerate them; but some sinners are so hardened or careless that the Spirit becomes grieved with them, and gives them over to hardness of heart and a reprobate mind, etc. If by any fair construction of the admonition of the text under consideration, we could arrive at any such conclusion, we would be compelled to yield the ground we occupy in regard to salvation being of the Lord alone, and in this surrender yield also the doctrine of the immutability of God, and of the depravity and consequent inability of men. The absurdity, however, of such notions will sufficiently appear, at least to such as are divinely enlightened,

when we present the true meaning of the subject.

In the discussion of this subject, we take the position that neither the above text or any other part or portion of the epistle was addressed to unregenerate sinners. The whole epistle, by authority of the Holy Ghost, was addressed to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus; such as were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. (Ephesians 1:1-5) Such as were quickened by the Holy Spirit, from a state of death in trespasses and sins; raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together with Christ, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 11:1-6) Paul having fully identified the subjects of address, as the blessed, chosen, predestinated, redeemed, called and quickened people of God, organized into a gospel church, as one body, in one hope of their calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all; beseeches them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Had their calling, like many professors in modern days, been of men, then to walk according thereto would require them to follow the traditions, doctrines and inventions of men; but their vocation or calling was of God, and that according as he had chosen them in Christ before the foundation

of the world; saved and called, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in him before the world began, (2 Timothy 1:9); therefore to walk worthy of such a heavenly calling would require that as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord they should walk in him. Suffer us here to remark, when men exhort unregenerate sinners, they have to present selfish motives, such as their eternal destiny at stake. The terrors of damnation on one hand, and the prospect of eternal happiness on the other, or their exhortations avail nothing; but to the living children of God the apostle would present no more powerful incentive than the nature of their vocation; the eternity of God's love toward them in Christ Jesus, their election, safety and identity with Christ Jesus as the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Ephesians 1:23)

If by the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed, etc., we are to understand God himself, as a Spirit, infinite, eternal, independent and immutable, or the Holy Ghost as God, we would be compelled to consider him susceptible of grief, sorrow, disappointment, etc., which things are quite incompatible with what we have been taught of God; but our Lord told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," as that which is born of the flesh is flesh. So in this text, the Holy Spirit of God appears to mean the spirit of the renewed mind, otherwise called the "New man, which after God

is created in righteousness and true holiness." - verse 23, 24. This Spirit of God, whereby the saints are sealed, is called the spirit of promise, and is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. (Chapter 1:13, 14)

This spirit then we understand to be the spirit of life; the incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever; the seed that remaineth; the spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, and which dwells in all that are born of God. It is here called the spirit because it is born of the Holy Ghost; it is called the Holy Spirit, for that which emanates only from the Holy Ghost must necessarily be holy; it is called the holy spirit of God because it is of God. That spiritual life which was given to the saints in Christ before the world began is called, when received by us experimentally in the new birth, "Christ in you the hope of glory," for in him, the eternal word, was life, and that life is the light of men. When we receive it we receive Christ; for Christ is our life. "He is the Resurrection and the Life; and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." That life which was given us in Adam, and which the apostle here distinguishes from the spiritual by the appellation, "the old man", which is corrupt and carnal, standing connected with law, sin, condemnation and wrath; but this holy spirit or new man is spiritual, incorruptible, undefiled and cannot fade away; for it was and is re-

served in heaven for you who by him do believe in God; and earnest of it is given us when quickened, or after that we believe. As the first operation of the Holy Ghost on our hearts bring us to belief, or in other words, convinces us of sin; of the spirituality of the law; of the impossibility of salvation by works of righteousness that we can do; so after this is effected by the exceeding greatness of his mighty power that brought again our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, the struggle, the labor, the travail of regeneration gives place to deliverance of the new man, which, not after Adam is created a natural, carnal or corruptible man, of the earth earthy; but is created after God (Christ) in righteousness (Christ) and true holiness (Christ). By this renewing of the Holy Ghost a spiritual life is communicated to the child of God, which is the spirit of promise (in distinction from law) and whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4) This spirit in our hearts exerts a transforming influence, by it the saints are sealed. This metaphor teaches two things; first, as the seal makes its full impression on the wax, and which cannot be counterfeited, so the indwelling life born from above makes an inimitable impression upon believers, conforming them to the image of Christ; and secondly, as the seal makes the instrument, covenant, will, testament or promise valid, so this incorruptible seed implanted in the saints is an earnest of their divine inherit-

ances in glory.

This seal of God, instamped on his children, is to serve as an earnest or assurance to his saints, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory; or as in our text, until the day of redemption. That is, as long as the saints are to live by faith upon the Son of God.

The day of redemption in this text means the same as in the first chapter and 14th verse, viz: the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. The possession which Christ purchased with his blood is the flock or church of God. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." The purchase of this possession was a redemption purchase; not effected with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, etc. The day of their redemption, in this case, means their final deliverance from corruption, depravity and death; but our apostle says, even we ourselves, who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:23) Until, therefore, these mortal bodies of the purchased flock of Christ are arrayed in spotless immortality, until these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying is fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up in victory", and the saints prepared to sing the triumphant anthem, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?", this holy spirit, as the signet of our God, shall be to us an ear-

nest evidence and assurance that when this earthly house shall be dissolved, and fall, we have a building of God; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Until that illustrious day shall dawn on us we shall need this earnest, but no longer; for

"When from the dust of earth we rise,
To take our mansion in the skies",

we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Until then may it be our inexpressible happiness, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to stand upon Mount Zion with the hundred and forty and four thousand, and the innumerable multitude redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue; having the seal of our Father God deeply impressed upon us in heart, in life, and in practice.

But the solemn admonition of our subject demands our special attention. "Grieve not the holy spirit." While the eternal God is infinitely above being moved by any such passions as grief, sorrow or disappointment, being of one mind, and none can turn him, that spirit begotten in his saints, which is an emanation from him, can be grieved. In Noah it strove with a world lying in wickedness, and devoted to awful destruction. In Lot, his righteous soul was vexed with the ungodly deeds of those among whom he dwelt in Sodom. This holy spirit, as it has existed in all the holy prophets since the world began, has been resisted by the generation of vipers, who do always resist the Holy Ghost; they fight against God, resist

God, etc., but they cannot grieve nor change the immutable God, for he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and God will hold them in derision; but the spirit begotten of God in his people can be grieved, burdened and sorrowful. For example, witness the case of our blessed Lord in incarnation; he rejoiced in spirit, he groaned in spirit, etc. In all the saints also may be found the same spirit of God which was in Christ, and that susceptibility to sorrow and grief implied in our subject. From the world the saints expect persecution, and in the world tribulation; it does not grieve them when they realize such opposition from that quarter; but they rejoice and give thanks to God that they are accounted worthy thus to suffer for the sake of Christ. The exhortation in our subject is not therefore to the men of the world; let them rage and waste the fury of their spite; but the spirit of God in the hearts of all his saints is grieved when they witness the departure of their brethren from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ; they are deeply afflicted when they see any in whom they have had confidence as Christians giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; or when any who profess to know and love the truth depart from a gospel walk and correct deportment. Christians too frequently inflict deep wounds upon the hearts of their brethren by an unbecoming course in life and deportment. Indeed, examples have not been lacking within the last twenty years in the church of Christ. An awful disregard of the admonition

before us has marked the course of very many who have now gone out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. Christians are often grieved in spirit with the corruptions of their own natures, indwelling sin; and perhaps this is the most prolific source of all their grief.

To avoid grieving the holy spirit, in the sense of this admonition, requires that all the saints should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. That we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. That we walk no more as other Gentiles walk — in vanity of their mind. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths. By indulging in any of those things discountenanced by the apostle, or by neglecting anything enjoined, will necessarily grieve the holy spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption.

O that the Lord may enforce this

important admonition on all his dear children! We feel our need of its special application to our heart, and we would, in the language of the apostle, beseech our brethren to attend to these things.

Let all our arrows be hurled at Babylon, and our artillery thunder against the hidden things of dishonesty; let us fight the good fight, and never, under the pretension of divine influence, cease to contend against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places; but while valiant for the truth, and ever hostile to the spirit of compromise with Zion's foes, let brotherly love continue among all those whose calling is by a vocation from God, to one hope of our calling. And as the apostle closed this chapter, so close we this article in his words; (not that we pretend to write by inspiration as he wrote, but because we wish to be guided and directed by apostolic precept and example;) "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 1, 1840.)

ISAIAH 12:3.

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

LUKE XIII. 34.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not."

A brother in southern Virginia asks our views on the foregoing.

The same language with very little variation is found in Matthew xxiii. 37. This is Jesus speaking. He addresses the scribes as Pharisees, characterizes Herod as a "fox," and so He embraces in this speech the ruling ecclesiastical and civil authorities in Jerusalem who exercised religious and governmental sway over Israel. It was never the will of these ruling powers that the truth of God should be preached in their midst, and persecutions and martyrdoms were the lot of those true servants of God who throughout the generations of Israel's history had faithfully preached the word. Nevertheless, God had in every age his faithful remnant in the midst of Israel despite the fact that those in authority had no use for this believing elect number. If the human will of these authorities could have had their way about it, they would not have allowed a single Israelite at any time to have believed the truth of God. But God's will is never frustrated by the opposition of man's will. It is the will of God to gather his people, and he unfailingly

does this gathering by and through Jesus Christ his Son, unto himself. Not a single child of God has ever been prevented from coming to the knowledge of the truth, no matter what the persecution and opposition waged against the child of God might be. While it was never at any time in Israel's history the will of the natural man that God should select his believing remnant from among them, yet he unfaithfully did it. A hen gathers her chickens under her wings because they are her chickens, and not to make them hers. The chickens run to cover under the mother's wings at the approach of any danger, not to make the hen their mother, but because she is their mother. Likewise throughout the generations of Israel's national life, those who were Israelites indeed by reason of spiritual circumcision and regeneration ran by faith into His name and were safe, not to make Jehovah their God, but because he was their God; not to make themselves his children, but because they were his children by God's own will. All that the Father has given the Son shall come to him, no matter how much the powers that be try to prevent it. The human will, either of individual or of nations, can never thwart the purposes of God in the salvation of his people. Any nation today which arrays itself against the truth of God, against his revealed Lord and against his people will unfaithfully reap in due time national desolation and disaster, even as did Israel for their opposition to Jehovah

and his children. This is the lesson taught in this Scripture.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”— 1 JOHN ii. 27.

Have you ever had a solitary drop of this holy anointing oil fall upon your heart? One drop, if it be but a drop, will sanctify you for ever to the service of God. There was not much of the holy anointing oil used for the service of the tabernacle, when we consider the size and quantity of what had to be consecrated, for Moses had to anoint therewith the whole of the tabernacle of the congregation, as well as all the vessels, with all their various appurtenances. When he went through the sacred work, he touched one vessel after another with a drop of oil; for one drop sanctified the vessel to the service of the tabernacle. There was no repetition of the consecration wanted; it abode. So if you ever had a drop of God's love shed abroad in your heart, — a drop of the anointing to teach you the truth as it is in Jesus; a drop to penetrate, to soften, to heal, to feed and give light, life, and power to your soul, — you have the unction from the Holy One; you know all things which are for your salvation, and by that same holy oil you have been sanctified and made meet for an eternal inheritance.

J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2013

Helen Bailey, ME	10.00
Marjorie Cook, TN	25.00
J.D. Neely, AR	10.00
Raymond Clayton, KY	10.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Mary Poff, VA.....	5.00
Judy Ravan, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

HENRY CLINTON LANIER

Asheboro: Henry Clinton Lanier, age 91, of Asheboro, passed away Saturday, November 24, 2012 at his home. Brother Lanier was born July 6, 1921 in Seagrove, N.C. the son of Nathaniel (Nate) Lanier and Louise (Lou) Buie Lanier. He was a native of Randolph County and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He was stationed in the Panama Canal Zone where he earned the rank of T-5 Corporal. He was a member of Rock Hill Primitive Baptist Church where he served as a deacon, trustee and clerk. He retired from Union Carbide Corp. after thirty five

year of service. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his Brothers, Clifford Lanier, Phillip (Jack) and Newman Lanier.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 66 years. Rachel Trogdon Lanier, Son, William N. Lanier and his wife Trudy of Asheboro, N.C.; Grandsons and their wives, Bradley and Kristen Lanier of Charlotte, N.C., Jeremy and Sarah Lanier of Asheboro, N.C. Great-grandsons, William and Weston Lanier of Charlotte, N.C.: Sisters, Alma Trucker of Seagrove, N.C., Ruth Benbow of Denver, N.C., Wanda Lee Slawter of Cartersville, Ga. He was laid to rest in Oaklawn Cemetery, Elder Ralph Gaines, Elder Jimmy Gray officiating. To know Him was to love Him. May God comfort his family.

A sinner saved by Grace I hope,
Carolyn C. Gaines

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 05/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

HEBREWS 11:6.

But without faith *it is impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

SARAH WALTON BARKER

After ninety-nine years and twelve days our dear Lord gathered unto himself one of his most precious lambs, Sister Sarah Barker. Weary of the nursing home she was anxious to join her heavenly friends in the heavenly home.

Born February 4, 1914 in Anson, NC, she was a daughter of the late Thomas and Betsy Harward.

She retired after 34 years from Dan River Mills, Inc. where she was the last surviving member of Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church.

Sarah was blessed with many talents that she enjoyed sharing with others. She had a love of flowers, gardening, basket weaving, painting and quilting, becoming known as the "Quilt Lady" of Callahans Hill, having quilted more than 300 quilts.

I was privileged to have her go with me to the Association of Primitive Baptist in Memphis, two times. We bonded a great friendship from these trips. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord".

On November 25, 1939 she married Quincey James Walton, who died August 6, 1966. She later married Ballard Barker who predeceased her November 27, 1975.

Sarah is survived by a son, Dr. Geary Walton, wife JoAnn of Hickory, NC; four daughters, Darlene Bass, and husband Ray of Chester, VA, Florence

Giles, and husband Russell, of Danville, Nancy Carpenter, and husband Tim of Danville, and Sarah Welch and husband Steve, of Blairs, VA; a daughter in law, Sandy Walton of Colonial Heights, VA; a sister Nancy Vannoy, of Hudson, NC; a sister-in-law Lillian Powell, of Whitmell, VA; 15 grandchildren, Jim Walton, Shanna Miles, Brad Giles, Greg Giles, Jeff Giles, Tim Carpenter, II, Joe Carpenter, Kathy Oswald, Sandy Rubin, Kevin Walton, Michelle Crain, Chas Bass, Andrea dough, Misty Brown and Scott McBride; and 26 great grandchildren.

In addition to her husbands, she was predeceased by a son, Albert Walton, 9 brothers and 3 sisters.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, February 19, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. from the Wrenn-Yeatts Westover Chapel with Dr. Geary Walton and Minister Hershel Stone officiating. Interment at Danville Memorial Gardens.

We surely miss her, but that Spirit, which the Heavenly Father placed in her has returned unto God who gave it and her body laid to rest to await the resurrection morn and those lovely most welcoming words, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May the gentle Shepard bless her family and all of us who miss her so much.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly.

B.G. Pryor

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“ The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ”

VOL. 181

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AMAZING grace (how sweet the
sound!)

That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to
fear,
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and
snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus
far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall
fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vale,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like
snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

“And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.” Exodus 21:5-6.



Elder J.B. Farmer

of the Creator, the cre-

There is one book above all books, which is the Bible. It is given to the family of God for instruction, edification, learning, comfort, and the knowledge of Spiritual things. What

ation, the kingdom of God, or of the life, suffering, death, resurrection, and second coming of the Lord and Savior Jesus, the Christ without the Bible and His revelation of it? What would we know of heaven or hell? And, apart from the written word of God, what would we know of ourselves and what kind of creatures we really are? We would know nothing, as we ought. But God has been merciful to His children to leave His word on record that traces His works through all eternity. And it has all been to His praise, honor, and glory as it should be, for He alone is worthy to be praised.

Over time there have been multitudes that have spent their lives trying to enter into and take hold of the things of God, but it has all been in vain. **“They are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”** God has hidden His things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes, because it seemed good in His sight. The things of the Holy Spirit are given only to those who God loved with an everlasting love, and are given only by revelation. Jesus said, **“It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them, it is not given.”** He told the Pharisees, who stand for all the false religious professors of all ages, **“Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.”** The scriptures were given to His elect people to testify of Jesus, His finished work, and His kingdom.

The scripture listed at the head of this article is the account of a servant being brought into the master's house. And after having served an allotted time, he was given opportunity to go out free if he so desired. But if he had been given a love for his master and his family, he would be received into the house as a member of the family to serve his master for the remainder of his life. But upon his declaration of love for them and his willingness to stay with them, he must be brought before the judges and to the door and door post. He then must suffer his ear to be bored through with an awl by the master. This would serve to all as a visible sign of his being accepted into his master's house and a sign that he would be a loving and willing servant forever.

Since the scriptures contain Spiritual meanings hidden in the natural description of events, may it please our Heavenly Father to open to us the mysteries of His written word, and of His eternal kingdom? Knowing that these things are too high for mortal men to grasp or to understand, we beg for wisdom and understanding to be given in order that the word of truth might be rightly divided, to the praise and honor of our God, and to the comfort and edification of the Lord's people.

The servant under consideration was bought for a price and brought into the master's house to serve him for a period of six years. In the seventh year he could go out free according to the judgments that God gave to Moses.

Here we see the figure of one brought into the Church, not at first as a member, but as an observer. Many come to the Church and watch and listen and judge for a period of time. After they have taken in as much as possible, they are either convinced of their love for God and His doctrine and order, and their love for His people and their holy ways — or not. If they are not drawn by cords of love and captured in the net of love, they may go out free, with no obligations for what they have witnessed. But they are without excuse, having heard and rejected the gospel. The apostle said concerning some, **“They have judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.”**

But if one is overwhelmed by the love of God, and the love of His Church, and is given a desire for a Spiritual home with them while on earth, that one may remain in the house as long as he lives. This heavenly love is evidence that one is of the elect family of God. **“Hereby ye may know that ye have passed from death unto life, because ye love the brethren.”** This love of God, His people, His doctrine, and His order gives us much assurance in the things of the Spirit. It causes us to hope and trust that we have not been deceived, but have actually been brought out of darkness into His marvelous light.

This natural servant, I believe, was given as the figure of a Spiritual child of God. The natural master, I believe, stands for the Lord and Master Jesus, Christ. The wife given to the servant by his master, and children of the ser-

vant, all belonged to the master according to the law given unto Moses. This seems a strange thing in our natural thinking. We would naturally assume that the wife of a man and his children would be his, and not belong to the Master. But this shows us our inability to reason out the truth by nature. Each one in the House of the Master actually belongs to Him regardless of their natural relations. And those in the house of the master indicate, to me, the members of the Church.

The servant, having been given a love for his master and his master's family, must plainly make his love known to all by his own confession. **"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"** And Jesus said, **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."**

And the servant must also plainly say that he would be a servant of the master forever, and that he would not go out free. The children of God, after having been shown the true Church, have no desire to go back into the world, and to be once again entangled with the wickedness and confusion of it. They are given a desire to abide with the people of God in love and peace all their days. Those who separate themselves indicate their true identity. The apostle said, **"They went out from us for they were not of us, if they had been of us they no doubt**

would have continued with us." Rahab the harlot and her family were commanded to stay in the house when Jericho was destroyed that they might remain safe. And they did, and were spared. This is an example for all saints.

Then the master shall bring the servant to the judges, which I believe, also stand for the members of the Church, who shall witness all that is said and done. And he shall bring the servant to the door, or unto the door post, which I trust is a type of Christ, who is the door of the sheepfold, and the door of eternal life. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl. The yielding to the boring of his ear, to me, manifests the servant's willingness to suffer with Christ all that must be endured through life. **"If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him."** And the scar left by the boring cannot be erased. It shows that the servant shall be a servant forever.

The servant was given a visible sign that he is no longer free in the world, and that the world is not his home, and that he has been given a great desire to become a loving and willing servant forever. The visible sign given to all Church members is baptism. When a servant is blessed with the experience of the elect, he is given a desire for baptism. He, by grace, must submit to it, even as the servant submitted to having his ear bored through with an awl. As the servant manifestly became a member of his

master's house when his ear was bored through, so when one is baptized in truth, he manifestly becomes a member of the visible Church upon earth. That one then has a part in all the privileges of Church membership. That one may now fully participate with the family of God in all its joys and sorrows while here on earth, and also have hope of eternal life in the world to come.

And being a servant to the Master is no evil bondage, but a willing service in love and adoration. The Lord's people are made to be **"a willing people in the day of His power."** What a blessing it is to love, and to be loved. What a blessing it is to walk with a people who's whole purpose in life is to show forth the praise of Him who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling. And our service of love is forever — beginning in this life and continuing eternally in the life to come.

Some saints live and die with the people of God, never having been blessed with a home in the visible Church. Their names are also written in heaven with all saints. Part of their suffering in this life is that, for whatever reason, they cannot be numbered with the saints by Church membership. But if they have been given a hope in Christ and His finished work, they shall not be disappointed in the day of His appearing. What about their baptism? When Jesus came to be baptized of John, and when John said he had need of being baptized of Him, Jesus said,

"Suffer it to be so for now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." I cannot help believing that Jesus was baptized in water on behalf of all his people, even those who had no opportunity to be baptized in this life. May all true believers be blessed to confess with David by the Holy Spirit, **"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."**

I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J .B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

4-6-2013

Mr. Tony Horton,

Dear Sir,

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times. I continue to enjoy every issue very much, and would never want to miss a copy.

Renew me for 1 year and use balance of enclosed check as needed.

May the good Lord of all mercy and grace continue to bless the Times, Staff, Writers and all His people everywhere.

Sincerely,

Roland G. Allen

4235 3rd Ave.

Columbus, Ga. 31904

Dear Bro. Horton:

4-1-13

Please forgive my tardiness and renew my subscription to the Signs for two years. Use the additional money at your discretion. I have especially enjoyed the articles by Elders Farmer, Robertson, and Chappel that have been published in the last few issues. Please encourage these gifted Elders to continue with their endeavors to feed the flock.

In hope,
Kenneth R. Adams

4-4-13

Dear Mr. Horton,

I will need to ask you to discontinue my Signs. I will be moving into the home with my daughter to help me be able to stay at home. My eye sight makes it very hard to read these days, but I want to thank you for the years of faithful reading you have given me.

I wish you all the blessings of our Lord. We surely need them more than we ever have in my 81 years. I have not been able to go to the Primitive Baptist Church I attended for many years since we moved 20 years ago so your book has been a real blessing.

God bless you all.
Jean Brown

Dear Precious Ones,

The Signs are so precious to us. Thanks be unto God for its publication and for all of you who extend your labor of love. Please renew the following for two years each:
Mrs. Mamie D. Ferguson, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Ferguson and nephew Jackie Jr., Mr. & Mrs. Jackie Paul Ferguson Senior and Lois Ann Ferguson.

May the good Lord help us forever,
Sister Mamie Rose D. Ferguson.

3-30-2013

Dear Bro. Tony,

Please find enclosed check for \$25.00 as payment for a continued 2 year subscription to the Times.

As attendance and membership in the visible church declines, publications such as the Times serve to keep members and believers in touch.

May it be God's will that this good work continues.

Yours in Christ, we hope,
Max & Rhonda Nichols

PSALM 56: 3-4.

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

4-5-13

To the dear ones at the Signs of the Times,

I have for some time now been receiving the monthly, my mother signed us up for our subscription, some time back. She has now gone on to be with our Lord, last Sept. 8, 2012.

It was a glorious event. Our dad, myself and four of my sisters were with her as she was ushered into His very presence, and that quite obvious.

Just prior to that, many days of good conversation and wonderful singing the hymns and praises of our Lord, with Mother, before she went home, for that eternal rest.

She was and is the Mother of eleven children and wife of nearly 55 years to John Sr.

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times, it has been such a blessing to me and my wife Shannon, to read the truth as it is set forth, especially Voices from the past!

Perhaps you can help a few others with their subscription dues if there is such a need, as this money is for ours and for others, to help.

In the love of our Lord,
John & Shannon Schulz
159 Bear Creek Rd.
Cody, Wyoming 82414
307-272-1300

ARTICLES

JOHN NEWTON – AMAZING GRACE

In an effort to comply with the request of Sister Polly Sizemore, we present the information we could find.

The Baptist Examiner of June 29, 1974 had a concise history of John Newton which was printed in the October, 1999 issue of the Signs of the Times. This article included 10 verses of Amazing Grace, but did not include 2 verses found in our hymnals. We found on the internet 13 verses of Amazing Grace which included all the verses in Baptist Examiner's article as well as all verses in our hymnals. It is said that this was a poem by John Newton and that this is the full version. Therefore, we are printing the brief historical information from the Baptist Examiner and all the verses from the internet.

Editor

THE ORIGIN OF THE HYMN, "AMAZING GRACE"

John Newton, the celebrated English preacher and hymn writer, realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Mr. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend

as he read the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the Grace of God I am what I am," Mr. Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan, and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, by the grace of God I am what I am."

John Newton could say that with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught and stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with African slave traders. He went from bad to worse until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a Negro woman who bought him, and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed under the table. He had fallen to the depths of human degradation. And yet the grace of God found him, and delivered him, and made him one of the greatest ministers of Christ, and a writer of hymns that have stirred the hearts of men the world over. Truly, he

could say, "*I am not what I once was.*" And truly he could say "*By the grace of God I am what I am.*"

Knowing this do you wonder at John Newton's message in the grand old hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound.

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found.

Was blind but now I see."

As you will notice, the 13th verse is the same as the last verse of "Jerusalem, my happy home."

Amazing Grace (All the verses)

A poem by John Newton expresses the atonement and its effect on one man more than any other. It has become one of the most well known hymns of all time. This is the full version of that song:

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound!

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost, but now am found;

Was blind but now I see.

In evil long I took delight

Un-awed by shame or fear;

'Til a new object met my sight

And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,

In agonies and blood

Who fixed His languid eyes on me

As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never 'til my latest breath
 Can I forget that look.
 It seemed to charge me with His
 death
 Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience owned and felt the
 guilt,
 And plunged me in despair;
 I saw my sins His blood had shed,
 And helped to nail Him there.

Alas, I knew not what I did,
 But all my tears were vain;
 Where could my trembling soul be
 hid,
 For I the Lord had slain.

A second look he gave which said,
 "I freely all forgive!
 "This blood is for thy ransom paid,
 "I die that thou mayest live."

'Twas grace that taught my heart to
 fear,
 And grace my fears relieved;
 How precious did that grace ap-
 pear
 The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and
 snares
 I have already come.
 'Tis grace hath brought me safe
 thus far,
 And grace will lead me home!

The Lord has promised good to
 me,
 His word my hope secures;
 He will my shield and portion be,
 As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart
 shall fail,
 And mortal life shall cease,
 I shall possess within the veil
 A joy of life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like
 snow,
 The sun forbear to shine,
 But God who called me here below
 Shall be forever mine!

When we've been there ten thou-
 sand years
 Bright shining as the sun,
 We've no less days to sing God's
 praise
 Than when we first begun!

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER JOE SAWYER

I hope the Lord willing, I can tell
 some of the things that brought
 me to the Old Baptist Church and what
 I say may be to the praise and honor
 of God, who has paid the price for His
 people. I was born in Pitt County, North
 Carolina, the oldest of four children. I
 had three sisters. We were raised on
 a tobacco farm. We didn't have a lot of
 the natural things of this world, but we
 lived well in that day. I didn't go to
 church when I was young. I remember
 going once with my grandfather, Elder
 Tillman Sawyer. My parents and old-

est sister were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. One sister loved our doctrine and the other two loved the doctrine of salvation by works. Two of my sisters and my parents are now deceased. While living on the farm, the Lord blessed us to have the things we needed.

My experience of being brought to the Primitive Baptist Church would take a long time to tell. Many things have taken place in my life. I stayed home and played when I was a little boy and didn't go to church. After Doris and I got married, I became concerned about what was going to happen to me. Things just caved in more or less, and I went and joined an Armenian Church. I didn't go there long because I felt it wasn't right. I continued to fight against the Old Baptists and read the scriptures to condemn what they believed. I just couldn't believe that God loved one and hated the other. God made me know along the way that I didn't choose to go among the Old Baptists and I certainly didn't choose to become a preacher. I hope God is the One who brought me to the Old Baptist Church. I tried a long time to prove to my daddy that salvation is by works, not grace. I left the church I first joined and went to Greenville. Experience has been a great part of my life. I couldn't talk before a crowd. I was shy and wouldn't say anything. I wanted to farm with my mama and daddy more than anything else, but things didn't work out. I had to leave the farm and go to the city and get a job as a salesman. I had a wife and three children to support, so I

learned to talk to make a living. I didn't know this was working for my good. I thought it was the worst thing to happen in my life, but I had it to do. I learned how to talk and to meet people. It was a great experience. I was still down on the Old Baptists. I didn't think they were right, but my daddy did. He always believed it, but I thought they were wrong. On the fifth Sunday in March 1958, my parents and my wife's parents invited us to go to Hancocks Church to a union meeting. I had been in a world of trouble and didn't know I was wrong. I had been taught I was a sinner. I knew I had to stand before God's people. I begged Him not to choose me for I was not qualified. I was nothing. I couldn't speak to the Lord's people who I felt were the wisest people in the world. I felt to be a poor sinner and could not speak to His children. I had taught Sunday school that morning, but I told my wife I would go. I continued to criticize that they had the ugliest singing and they thought they were the only people in the world who were saved and everyone else is wrong. When we got to the church, preaching was over and they were singing hymn 322 in the Lloyd's Hymn Book, "Glorious things of thee are spoken." As I sat on the back seat, A voice spoke to me and said, "This is My church, this is My people." I want to tell you something brethren, when that voice spoke it brought tears to my eyes. I thought they were the prettiest people I had ever seen in my life and I wanted to be a part of them. I had thought they were wrong, I had fought

so hard not to be a part of it. God opened my eyes and he showed me this was his people. He didn't tell me I was a part of his people, but He told me that this is My church and My people. When God shows you something, you will never forget it. It is just as plain to me today as it was that day. I assure you the things God brings about in your life you won't need encouragement from man, He will make you willing. God will bring His people in His way and time, not ours. God brought me in this way to show me just what I was by nature and what I must be by the Grace of God. I was blind and couldn't see until He opened my eyes. I fought as hard as I could not to be a part of the Primitive Baptists, but when He showed me that they were a beautiful people; I wanted to be a part of them, if they would have me. I thought, above everything else, that these people must be right. They believed salvation is by the grace of God, it is free and something man can't give you. This comes only from God. You can't get any help for it. None of my children, nor my wife, belongs to the Primitive Baptist Church. I've never encouraged any of them, although some of them believe it. I never told my wife she should join, although I feel she believes this truth. God must persuade them, not me.

In my experiences over the years, if I have had any, the Lord has showed me just how helpless I am. I don't know if I'm a preacher or not, but I sure fought not to become one. I'm not sure if I have ever said anything to praise

God, but when it's my time to stand before the church, I always try to beg Him to put something in my mouth to praise Him and if not, to just sit me down. We didn't have a car when we first got married and we didn't have a whole lot when I joined the church, but there was a great change in my life from that day forward. I went back to the church I had been a member of and told them to take my name off for I had joined another church. They wanted to know where I had joined and I told them I had joined a Primitive Baptist Church. They said that was the nearest nothing they had ever heard of. I told them I would tell them some of my experience why I went to the Old Baptists, but I didn't feel they would understand.

I asked my name be removed and I never went back. I believe the Lord's people are a separate people and I don't believe they uphold the things that are not right. If we do, we are going to have to pay for it down the road.

All things work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. We think sometimes it is working against us, but it is working for our good. I was a route salesman for Frito-Lay for about 15 years. On one occasion I was asked to be a district manager. This position would allow me to have better benefits and my retirement would be better also. I didn't know what to do. I went to Greensboro to talk with the regional manager and the sales manager. I walked into the office that day and told them I hoped to be a Primitive Baptist minister and would that have any effect on

me having the job. I asked if either one knew anything about the Primitive Baptists and Tommy Thompson the regional manager from around Goldsboro said, "that I do Joe. All my family belong to the Primitive Baptist Church, except me, and I belong to the Presbyterian Church." The sales manager said he didn't think much of "jack leg" preachers, they won't work. Tommy told him, "Yes they will work. Old Baptists do what they say they are going to do." So the Lord took care of me there. He has taken care of me all the days of my life. He has watched over me and kept me. I have had some beautiful dreams and experiences and I believe God will continue to give His people more experiences as they live here in this life. Without those Bethel spots in my life, I wouldn't even have a hope. Sometimes I get down low, real low, and I'm like David when he said, "is his mercy clear gone forever?"

Having to leave the farm and getting a public job was all working for my good and I didn't even know it. I dreaded the change. I would read the bible to prove to Daddy that he was wrong. I felt the letter would prove him wrong. I would read the bible until two or three o'clock in the morning and learned to quote the scriptures. I thought I could prove the Primitive Baptists to be wrong, but instead I was showed they are the right people. That's why I'm in the Old Baptist Church today, because I trust He brought me. I told God to get anybody to preach but me, I wasn't qualified. God can make you willing to do any-

thing. This is something between you and your God. As far as preaching in the church of the living God, that's the most sacred thing in the world. To walk among God's people, a people that He has loved and separated and made different is most sacred. We are different by His grace and by His goodness.

My daddy and I were baptized together. I joined at Farmville Church and he joined at the water. It was a rejoicing day. Elder A. P. Mewborn baptized both of us. Elder Mewborn never said anything to me about becoming a preacher. I'm a lot like that. I don't think you should encourage people to be anything in the church. If they are not believers, you will just have a world of trouble. Daddy was a deacon at Hancocks Church and my grandfather was an elder. This is not the reason I became a minister. It has been said that some people only join the Primitive Baptists because their parents did, but I don't believe that. We believe the doctrine because God has given us the faith to believe it and that's why we love it. One of the first experiences I ever had before joining the church was in a vision or dream. I thought the Lord or someone had placed me on the straightest highway I had ever seen in my life. I was in a cart like you used to hitch a mule to and I couldn't get out. I had no control of where I was going. On the dirt walked a black man; he didn't walk on the highway. All of a sudden I was carried into this deep pit of water. I fought with all the energy I had to keep from dying. I finally gave up

and said that I'm going to die and there is no way I can get out of this place. There were high walls and I couldn't get out. I was trying to cling to little pieces of driftwood to hold me up, but that wasn't helping. That was my works and works won't hold you up. An arm and hand reached down and lifted me out of the water and dried me off. I believe it was the arm of Jesus that lifted me out. I was doomed to die and there was nothing I could do about it. I was helpless and we do become helpless when we become God's children and He reveals the truth to us. We have always been His children; we just didn't know it. I asked someone what the dream meant and they couldn't tell me. Over the years I believe the Lord has showed me what it meant. I was depending upon my own works and I was going to die. God lifted me out and gave me the faith to believe that His works would stand and mine would never stand in that world to come.

All the things that have taken place in my life has been a great mystery to me. God has blessed me beyond measure in so many ways. He has left many little purposes along the way for me. There has been some of joy, some of happiness and some of heartache. There have been a lot of trials and tribulations. I think about what the apostle said, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." Pharaoh will always try to destroy the Lord's people if he can. He is still trying to destroy them today, but God will protect His children. I often think about the scripture, "If God

be for you, who can be against you?" I didn't volunteer to become a minister. I used to fall down on my knees in the cornfield and beg the Lord not to choose me I wasn't qualified to be anything, but I didn't have a choice. The apostle said, "Woe unto me, if I preach not the gospel." I want to tell you, He brings you down and makes you willing to be anything in His church.

I asked a home with the church at Hancocks, the second Sunday in May 1958. In August of 1959, I began to speak on the floor at my home church for about a year. I was liberated and spoke among the associations for about 3 years. In August of 1963, I was ordained as a minister. Back then we had a lot of ministers. I never thought I would see it as it is today. We don't know what the future holds. God is able to fill up all the Old Baptist Churches again. It has to come from Him, for anything we bring into the church wouldn't be anything in the first place. I believe all the persuasion we ever need, will come from God. In my experience and calling as an elder if I am one, was by the grace of God. He had spoken to me on many occasions. I can't tell you all that has taken place with me since He first spoke to me at Hancocks Church that day. I know that voice. It will make you afraid and to fear Him. The one I seek to please is God, not man.

That is vanity and altogether nothing. If He has called me to be an elder, I'm just a servant to Him and to the churches in which I've been chosen as

pastor. I didn't choose to be a pastor, He did the choosing. He gives the church a mind to elect whom He has chosen to be there. I believe the pastor will be given something to say and it will be to praise and glorify God.

This is a little bit of the experiences I have had. I've had a lot more, but it would take too long to tell everything that has taken place with me over the years. I want to say hope I love the Lord, love His people and love the things He has put into the hearts of His people. He has written His laws into their hearts and printed them in their minds and they don't need anybody to tell them what to do, but God. He is the leader and teacher. He is everything and He does His own choosing. If I had a choice, I wouldn't have united with the Primitive Baptist Church; would have gone somewhere else, certainly wouldn't have chosen to become a minister. Flesh likes to be someone, to be looked up to, and the Lord's people are just plain and simple. I hope by the grace of God, I have been made to love the church and to love the things It stands for. I believe these things will stand in that world to come. So may God bless you and I hope He will take me one day to a better place. I don't deserve it by anything I've done. I've done all the sinning and He has done all the saving, but just hope He loves me.

Elder Joe Sawyer

3186 Speight Seed Farm Road
Winterville, North Carolina 28590

June 24, 2003

VOICES OF THE PAST

(Excerpts from a sermon preached by Elder W. C. King at Bush Arbor Church, N.C., on December 13, 1959.)

Recorded in the gospel according to St. Luke, 1st chapter, 37th verse, are these words: **"For with God nothing shall be impossible."**

We find in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There was no man to help or to hinder: there was no man upon the Earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep and God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light day, and the darkness He called night. The things that would be impossible with man are possible with God.

The Lord said unto Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." God told him that He would make of him a great nation, and that his seed should be as the sand of the sea. Abram was one hundred years old and his wife Sarah was ninety years old, when the Lord appeared unto him saying, "Sarah thy wife shall have a son." Sarah laughed, realizing she was old and stricken in age. But, according to God's promise, Isaac was born. The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. If I could, I would like

this morning to point out to you some of the things that seem impossible with men but are possible with God: Knowing that He has all power in heaven and in earth, does all things after the counsel of His own will, having seen the end from the beginning.

Men by wisdom cannot understand how that Daniel could be cast into a den of lions and not be destroyed. Yet God had sent his angels and shut the lions' mouths that no harm should be done to Daniel. He having all power even over the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. He could cause the raven to feed Elijah to find him in his desolation and sadness, and feed him meat and bread twice a day. We know by nature the raven would prefer to feed upon his body, but God commanded the raven to feed Elijah. How impossible these things seem to man. God makes a way where there is no way.

When the Hebrew children refused to worship the false gods, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men of his army to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. The king arose early, and in haste said to his counsellors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God."

We cannot understand with the carnal mind how these things can be: without even the smell of smoke upon

their garments. No condition or circumstance is such that our God doesn't have complete power to save from every destruction. Many of the trials and experiences of God's little ones here in this world seem a miracle, yet in God's holy providence all provisions are made for their security and protection.

The angel from heaven appeared unto Zachariah when he was in the temple of the Lord about the duties and customs of the priest's office. When Zachariah saw the angel, fear fell upon him, but the angel said unto him, "Fear not, Zachariah: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord and shall neither drink wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. ...And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." How impossible this must have seemed to Zachariah, knowing that his wife Elizabeth was old, and barren. He asked the angel, "Whereby shall I know this?" The angel answering said, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed." When Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, she brought forth a son. When the cousins and neighbors heard how

the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, they began to talk about a name for the child. Some, of course, wanted to name him after his father, but his mother said, "Not so; but he shall be called John." They reasoned that none of their kindred was called by that name; and they made signs to his father how he would have him called, and he asked for a writing table, and he wrote, "His name is John." Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Do you not sometimes challenge God, dear believer, by asking him to give you some greater evidence of his love and mercy to you, that you might have a greater assurance of his promises.

Sometimes in our meditations and prayers we ask God to grant us certain things. I remember so well in my early experience, where I asked God just to spare my life until a certain time, and if He would do that, I would be submissive to what I felt to be my duty. But I found that I was not able to keep my promise even to God when He had spared my life to see the time requested. My heart was as cold as ice. I was made to weep and cry unto Him for mercy, learning that I was not my own keeper: That without Him I could do nothing.

God sent an angel unto a city of Galilee to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph. This virgin was Mary. The angel said, "Hail, *thou that art* highly favored, the Lord *is* with thee; blessed *art* thou among women. And when she saw *him*, she was troubled and the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou

hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus...He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

"Then Joseph her husband being a *just man* and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and she shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and took unto him, his wife. Knowing her not until she had brought forth her first-born son and he called His name Jesus." How impossible this seems to men; how preposterous for human reasoning to believe that a virgin should conceive of the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son; even Mary pondered these things in her own heart. "For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Bethlehem to be taxed.

While they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The angels of God made the announcement of the birth of the blessed Savior of sinners, to those humble shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night; saying, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ Jesus the Lord." I feel this morning that when the Gospel is preached it is good tidings of great joy, coming from a far country; so far that mortal arms can't reach it, yet so near that it can be felt in every heart that God has touched by the finger of his love.

There was no room in the city of Philippi, although God showed Paul by vision to "Come over to Macedonia to help us." As great as this Roman city might have been there was no place for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find Paul on the Sabbath going out of the city by the river bank, a place where prayer was wont to be made. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not only did she hear but she attended to the things she heard, and was baptized; and said to Paul, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." I want to say to you beloved that there is a love, a power that binds the hearts

of believers together that the world by wisdom can never know. They are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Just as these shepherds were made willing to leave their flocks and every possession; they had to go to where their Savior was. No man will desire to go where their Lord and Master is until they have had his love in their heart. These wise men had the Star of Bethlehem to guide them. I believe that star is still shining. Every poor sin benighted soul has their eyes set on that star and the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and guide them to that City of habitation.

We don't know how many days it took them to travel the distance they covered. I don't know how many valleys they had to cross and how many mountains they had to climb. I don't think they turned either to the right or left. They had their eyes set on the Star of Bethlehem. It is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master that you have your eyes focused on. Every poor helpless sinner has learned there is no where else to go. You can witness with Paul when he said it was better for him to depart. I am so glad he told us why it was better, to be with my Lord Jesus Christ.

So these wise men were so divinely sent; nothing could prevent them from reaching where this child Jesus lay. They found Him in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes, They presented to Him these treasures, gold, myrrh and frankincense. Herod had told them, "When you have found Him, come and tell me that I might go

and worship Him. Herod no doubt thought that he would dethrone Him as king. Oh, how wonderful and past finding out is the great work of our God. He had the wise men to go back another way. You or I can never go over this road but once. How much you would like to have some of your experiences of God's precious presence with you over again! The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. It was never the desire of Jesus to be honored and praised by men for what He did. When men sought to praise Him and to make Him king, we find Him absenting Himself from the crowd, going to the mountains in prayer. The poor, needy souls He never turned away empty. The poor leper that came to Him (who knew he was doomed to be cast into isolation, and there to spend his last and expiring days) had faith to believe that Jesus could heal him. We hear him saying to Jesus, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus had the power to cleanse the leprous. This morning do you not believe that He still has the same power to cleanse you from all sin that your soul can be set free, that the Christ Child would be destroyed? How impossible that decree was, just as God had warned the wise men that they shouldn't return back to Herod, but go back another way. The Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child and its mother and flee into Egypt. The Scripture tells us that they departed in the night. Oh, how much of our traveling seems so dark as in the night! The Lord appeared

again to Joseph when Herod was dead saying, "Arise, take the young child and His mother and go into the land of Israel." The unseen power of the everlasting God was controlling every move to take care of this blessed child.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover every year, and they carried this child Jesus with them, who was twelve years old at that time. When they had fulfilled the days and started on their journey back, Jesus tarried in Jerusalem. After a day's travel they sought Him among some kinsfolk and acquaintances, but they found Him not. So they went back to Jerusalem seeking Him some three days. Later they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. When they saw Him they were amazed. His mother said unto him, "Why hast thou dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" How strong and amazing it must have been to see this lad of a boy, thought to be the son of a poor carpenter, there in the Temple among the most learned and intelligent people of the land, asking and answering questions. Yes, He must be about his Father's business. God's business is a business so important that He can call men from the various occupations of life and cause them to leave all and follow Him.

The Scriptures have but little to say about Jesus from about the age of

twelve until about thirty. "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." John says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." We know the half will never be told. No power that could be formed could take His life until the appointed time of the Father. Every demand of the law must be fulfilled. The church of the living God must be cleansed from all sin! by the one offering of our Heavenly Father, His only Son Jesus Christ.

How impossible it seemed to His own disciples when He began to tell them that He must go away, must leave them that the Holy Comforter may come. When He had eaten the last supper with them, He tells them that I am now betrayed and shall be crucified and put to death, and I shall rise again. In the third day.

I want to say to you that every single soul that has ever come into this blessed fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is brought there by His own glorious power and love. It is an impossibility that men in nature, or natural minds, can know this glorious truth as it is in Christ our Lord. No greater miracle can be performed than to see a poor sinful lost man or woman that seemingly have had no love for heaven or immortal glory, be touched by the finger of God's love and turned about by his Holy Spirit made to come down

in sackcloth and in ashes to beg God for mercy on their poor, sinful souls. What is more impossible than that to human reasoning? Confessing that by the grace of God I am what I am, having no confidence in the flesh. No man can resist successfully this blessed power. It subdues and brings you under subjection and makes you willing in the day of His power; ascribing all power to His Holy name. You and I can't understand the great mystery of godliness unless they are revealed to us. How impossible it must have been for those who would comfort Mary and Martha, to believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days. Mary and Martha didn't believe that he would be raised until the resurrection of the last day. Jesus said unto them, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live." Jesus asked, "Where have ye laid him? They said, come and see." Jesus had only to say, "Lazarus, come forth," and he that was dead came forth.

Oh! What grief and sorrow it brings to us when our loved ones are taken from us. It is impossible for us to call them back. Their spirits return to God, while their bodies rest in the grave to return to dust from whence they come, awaiting our blessed Savior to come again and call them to come forth. I can't tell you, my beloved, this morning how these things shall be, but I can assure you they will come at His command, without blemish, spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, to be

made like unto His own glorious body.

His promise to His dear ones cannot fail. I believe with all my soul that He will come again. He told His disciples before He was crucified: "I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be there also,"

If I never address you any more on this side of eternity, I want to tell you that Jesus reigns. This child Jesus which was born in Judea in the City of Bethlehem is still alive. He is seated at the right hand of God making intercession for His saints upon the earth and that He will at His own time call the jewels of His mercy unto himself. There will not be one of the objects of His mercy that shall not hear His blessed voice to arise and come forth to be like unto His own glorious body.

As we approach this Christmas season we would if we could share our natural resources with those less fortunate, but we know there is a limit. We know we can do but so much, yet I can point you to the one whose eternal power and Love is without limitation or bounds. He is able to reach the most remote parts of the earth and give a gift that far surpasses all the gifts that man can give. So I say to you this morning that the greatest gift that you have ever received or that you will receive as these days come is the gift of His Holy Spirit in your heart as your Savior; who is the anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. Anchored to that within the veil that shall never be severed. This gift will never be obso-

lete or out of date. I am persuaded that as the years go by and we grow older, these precious promises become brighter. We know our shoulders become stooped, our heads silver for the tomb, the time for our departure is near. His promise becomes more precious, that He will not leave nor forsake us, but will be with us always even to the end.

I want to assure you that all things are possible with God. Not one single blessing that God sees you stand in need of will be withheld from you; though He has left you here in a land of trials and afflictions, the eternal God is at the helm. He will do all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and His church shall be brought out from the world by His mighty hand and at last be presented to the Father a glorious Church perfect as Himself.

John saw the Holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. "And I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and shall be their God. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying. Neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

What a glorious hope we have. What a blessed promise that someday we are going to move into this new house made not by hands, from this

old house of clay. One day we are going to leave the cares and burdens of this sinful world to go home to God to appear in His likeness, to see Him as He is, to be like Him; where we can ascribe all honor and praise to His Holy Name forever. Momentarily here in this life we feel that our souls are lifted to the mountaintop soon to find we are again in the valley of despair. We are told that in this glory land there will be no shedding of tears. No sorrow can come, no death to separate us from loved ones. What a glorious Savior we have. One who has power to call us from the ways of this world, into the blessed fellowship of our God and with His saints upon the earth kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last day.

In conclusion let me say, May God bless you, keep and guide you in wisdom's ways, and at last deliver you securely and safely into the fold of God, where sickness, sorrow, and death and separation shall be no more.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."

Elder W.C. King
(Signs of the Times, July, 2000)

1 JOHN 4:4.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

EAST PITTSTON,
Me., Jan. 13, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: - As the time has arrived for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, I thought I would write a few lines for its pages, if you should see fit to publish them. I do not know where to begin. I have taken the paper, off and on, since 1869; besides when I was a girl at home, my elder brother, John F. Little, took it, and I would sometimes read articles that seemed good to me, but thought that I must not think that it was of any importance, as I had always heard this doctrine slanderously spoken of. That was before I was brought to a knowledge of the truth. How glad I am that the dear Lord in his mercy has established me in the truth. It seems strange to me that some Old School Baptists have no relish for that soul-cheering doctrine, the predestination of all things. Why, it just buoys me up as I travel on my way in this world of sorrow and trial. I love the truth as it is in Jesus, our Lord. I think I can say honestly, that I love the Zion of our God, that I prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy, that I wish . Zion well, whate'er becomes of me. I love the assemblages of the saints. I do so enjoy the associations. Why should anyone think that harm could come out of such joyful meetings? We are so glad to see each other's faces, and grasp each other's hands. The most of the time is taken up in talking about what the Lord has done for us, and how he saves his people from their sins, and

what a help he has ever been in times of trouble. Why, it does me good to look around and see the hungry children eating and drinking, while the dear servants of God hand out the bread of life, and the water that comes from that river whose streams make glad the city of our God. Some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent at associations. The Whitefield church, where my membership is, has but few members, but they are strong in the Lord. We try to get together once a month in conference, and during the warm weather Elder Beal comes to us nearly every month, and the past two years, Elder Keene has come in October, right away after our association, and has stayed a few days with us, and we have enjoyed it much. I will not trespass longer on your time and patience. I have not written what I have been thinking of writing. I ought to have known better than to have tried to write, but dear brother Beebe, be faithful. If it is not fit for publication, burn it. Those who are gifted in writing do not know how to appreciate it.

From your sister,
ANGIE MOODY.

[WE greatly appreciated this letter, for its defense of associations. The experiences such as our sister's, at these meetings, are all the defense that they need. We know of hundreds who are like sister Moody, of spiritual mind, who feel the same way with regard to them. At least, it is sure that God has blessed them to many of his children. We have seen ourselves

great good grow out of them, in building up and encouraging the churches. We want to add that we have been intimately associated with the brethren in Maine all our life, and we do not know of any who are, and have been, more steadfast in the faith, than they, or who are more strict and orderly in their walk. They are living witnesses that belief in the unlimited predestination of God, does not lead to a careless life. Though we have lived long away from them, our heart is yet with them in the bonds of the gospel.

Elder G. Beebe

Every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.” — 1 John v. 1.

Where there is love to Jesus, there will be love to those who are his by redemption, his by regeneration, and his by personal possession. The more, too, that we see and the more that we know of the beauty and blessedness of the Lord of life and glory, the more we shall love his image as we behold it visibly marked in his dear people, and the more we shall cleave to them as being Christ's with tender affection. It is our dim, scanty, and imperfect knowledge of God the Father in his eternal love, and of the Lord Jesus Christ in his grace and glory, which leaves us so often cold, lifeless, and dead in our affections towards him; and with the declension of love towards the Head comes on de-

cay of love towards his members. If there were more blessed revelations to our soul of the Person and work, grace and glory, beauty and blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is impossible but that we should more and more warmly and tenderly fall in love with him; for he is the most glorious object that the eyes of faith can see. He fills heaven with the resplendent beams of his glorious majesty; and has ravished the hearts of thousands of his dear family upon earth by the manifestations of his bleeding, dying love. So that if we love him not, it is because we know him not. If, then, to those who know him he makes himself precious, it is evident that just in proportion to our personal, spiritual, experimental knowledge of him will be our love to him.

J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2013

Ted McDaniel, VA	100.00
John Schultz, WY	400.00
Elder Kenneth Adams, KY	25.00
Dan Delp, VA	5.00
Gene Ambrose, VA	5.00
Marilyn Shaw, VA	5.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Mary Janney, VA	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00

MEETINGS

**LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING**

The Lower Mayo Fifth Sunday Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, June 30th, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 A.M. And preaching AT 10:30 A.M. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting. Directions for those that do not know the location: the meeting house is at 242 Moorefield Store Road, Stuart, VA. 24171. Coming North or South on VA #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road, # 653. Go 1 Mile to Moorefield Store Road, # 631. Turn Right, Go 1/4 Mile to church on right. Coming east or west on US # 58, Turn south on Southfork Farm Loop, # 827 to Ayers Orchard Road, # 653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road, # 631. Turn Left, Go 1/4 Mile to church on right. Coming West on NC # 704, turn North on VA-Line Road, # 1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, # 631. Go 2 1/2 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In Bonds of Love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of June 30, 2013. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

April 21, 2013

Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingston Drive
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Elder Robertson,

Please print the following in the next issue of the Signs Of The Times:

There will not be a Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union in June.

**STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church located at the in-

tersection of Music St. and Weatherford Drive, Gretna, VA in Pittsylvania County. The second Sunday and Saturday before in July 2013 the song service will begin at 9:30 a.m. with service at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Sister Pam Betterton
Assistant Clerk Staunton River
Primitive Baptist Association

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the fifth Sunday meeting on June 30, 2013. Singing will begin at 10:00 am. Preaching service at 10:30. Church is located on Highway 700 between Eden, N.C. and Danville, VA. We extend a welcome to all ministers of our faith and order, and all that have a desire to come and be with us in this meeting.

Elder Thomas Solomon
Moderator
R. Allen Carroll
Clerk

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 06/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“ The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

HYMN

GOD shall alone the refuge be,
And comfort of my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

In all his holy, sovereign will,
He is, I daily find,
Too wise to be mistaken, still,
Too good to be unkind.

When I the tempter's rage endure
'Tis God supports my mind;
Too wise to be mistaken, sure,
Too good to be unkind.

What though I can't his goings see,
Nor all his footsteps find,
Too wise to be mistaken, He,
Too good to be unkind.

Medley.

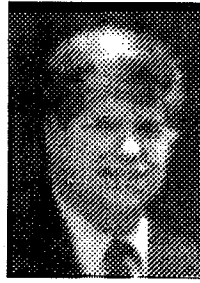
IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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EDITORIAL

“One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.”
 Rev. 9:12-16.



Elder J.B. Farmer

These are perilous times in which we live. These times must be no surprise to the people of God, since they were prophesied by the prophets and apostles, and by the Lord Himself. And these times have been proclaimed to the Lord's children by the true ministers of God through the ages. As the end approaches, and as the family of God has a need to know, surely they will be shown, by revelation, the deep things of the scriptures necessary for their well-being.

Across the world today we see continuing and mounting unrest among the people. In many places, we see rioting in the streets, hatred displayed in violence and bloodshed, and anarchy on the rise. People are against government and any kind of authority, and seem to be glad at calamity. We must be prepared to see such things, since they were foretold in the scriptures. The apostle said by revelation, **“Evil men shall wax worse and worse.”** And he said, **“The whole world lieth in wickedness.”** And he said, **“The love of many shall wax cold, that they would not endure sound doctrine, but would heap to themselves teachers having itching ears.”** And he said that they would be proud, blasphemers, boasters, without natural affection, despisers of government, haters, disobedient to parents, that they would call good evil and evil good. This wickedness has always

been in the world, in a measure, since the fall of Adam, but seems to be getting worse or at least more visible in these last times.

The Lord spoke of such things coming. He explained to His disciples when they asked Him about the signs of His coming and of the end of the world or age, **"You shall hear of wars and rumors of wars."** **"Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There shall be famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places, but these are the beginning of sorrows. But the end is not yet"** Then He spoke of the man claiming to be God, who He called **"the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet"**, and the awful destruction which must follow. He said that the world had never known such a time in all its existence until this time should come.

These last days seem to be approaching. Many through time have prophesied the end of the world on certain days, and they were all found to be false prophets. The Lord said that no man knows the day nor the hour but the Father. But Jesus told His disciples, **"When ye see all these things coming to pass, look up for your redemption draweth nigh."** And when some were saying in the days of the apostles that the resurrection was already past, Paul explained that those days shall not come except there first be a **falling away** and that **the man of sin must be revealed**. The falling away from decency and sound

mindedness is rapidly increasing around the world. And we see a falling away in sound doctrine and in the numbers of Church membership as time goes on.

It now seems evident that way is being prepared for the **man of sin** to be revealed. We know not when the revelation of him shall be, but multitudes are now being made ready to receive him. Most all the carnally minded people that claim the name Christian are falsely saying that Jesus could come at any time and set up His kingdom upon the earth, and that He will reign over the world in it for a thousand years. They are looking for a man who says he is God to gather them together into an earthly kingdom. Similarly, the religious Jews are looking for a Messiah to come and rule the world, and to set up a kingdom for them on the earth. The Muslims are also looking for a man (they call him the twelfth Emam) to miraculously appear and set up a kingdom to rule the world for them. This **man of sin**, I believe, will be so persuasive and deceptive that he shall be enabled to deceive all carnally minded religious people (and there are multitudes of them) into believing that he is God who has come to rule the world for them in a religious kingdom, no matter what their religious preference.

But the fewest of all peoples have been given a different idea about the end of the world or the end of the age. They are not looking for a kingdom to be set up on the earth, because the kingdom of God is already set up in

their hearts, and the Lord of Lords is already reigning in it. They are looking for this world and all in it to be altogether destroyed at the coming of Christ by the brightness of His glory. They are waiting for the manifestation of the children of God at His coming, hoping and trusting to have a part in the resurrection of life. They desire to be changed and to be made like Him, and to be caught up together with all saints, to meet the Lord in the air at His coming, and to ever be with the Lord in heaven and immortal glory.

The children of God have been warned against the anti-christ or false-christ. Jesus told His disciples, and it is on record for us, **"Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold he is in the secret chambers; believe it not."** For when the Son of man appears in the clouds every eye shall behold Him. He shall be like the lightning that shineth from the east to the west. The deception of the anti-christ shall be so strong that if it were possible the very elect would be deceived. But it is not possible because Christ, the Hope of glory, is in them and is keeping them by the power of God through the gift of faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

May the Lord give us understanding of the scriptures concerning the three woes that must have come upon the earth. According to the scripture listed above one woe is past and two more woes are to come. What is a woe, and what is the woe that is past, and what are the two woes to come? In a

general way, I believe a woe is a time of great anguish, sorrow, fear, pain, destruction, and loss. There is no way of escape for the wicked, and there are no prospects for their relief. But the Lord has made a way of escape for His own people, that they should not be tempted above that which they are able to bear. When the Lord explained to His disciples the events preceding His second coming, I believe He laid out the three woes. And I must say the woes shall fall upon all people except the elect, who have the seal of God (the Holy Spirit) in their foreheads.

The first woe appears to me to be the horrors of war, natural catastrophes, and the persecution of the saints through the ages. These troubles seem to increase and abound as time rolls onward. But these things are only the beginning of sorrows. The next two woes to fall upon the inhabitants of the earth shall be unbearable for all except the saints of God, who shall be kept through all in mercy and grace.

The second woe appears to me to be the destruction brought about at the revealing of **the abomination of desolation** in the very last days. According to the Lord, it shall be a time of great tribulation, such was not since the beginning of the world to this time. It shall be so bad that no flesh should be saved except those days be shortened. But the Lord shall be merciful and shorten those days for the sake of His people.

This second woe, I am made to believe, shall be precipitated by the loosing of the four angels bound in the

Euphrates. **“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.”** After preparation is made, they are released to do their destruction in the world. The Euphrates is the river that runs through the heart of the land of the Muslim religion. Certain of their leaders have openly expressed a desire to eliminate the nations of Israel and America and have proclaimed that they will conquer and rule the world by force. I believe the four angels being loosed represents their coming worldwide attack upon the north, south, east, and west parts of the globe. And I believe this will be the great tribulation that the Lord spoke about. This is also, I believe, the time that the **man of sin** should be revealed, even **the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet**. And when those days are at last shortened, they shall be shortened by the Lord's coming in power. The Lord has commanded that this destruction not fall upon those who have the seal of God in their foreheads.

The third woe to my understanding shall be the coming of the Lord in great power and glory when the great day of his wrath is come. This scene is described in Revelation chapter six. **“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men,**

and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” The children of God need not fear the woes to come because God will be with them until the end, and bless them to be faithful unto death that they might receive the crown of life. But the devil and all his angels and all who obey not the gospel shall be taken and cast into the lake of fire, where their worm dieth not and the fire is never quenched.

Jesus told us to fear not because He has overcome the world. All power in heaven and earth has been given to Him and no man is able to pluck the least one of His children from His hand. When destruction falls it shall not come near to the household of faith. It shall be as when the death angel passed over Egypt. Every house covered by the blood of the Lamb was spared. It shall be as when Rahab and her house were saved at the fall of Jericho. It shall be as when the family of Noah was saved in the ark while the whole earth was destroyed. The Lord will never leave nor forsake those He loved with an everlasting love. He said **“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”**

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Tony,

I'm sorry for being so late sending my remittance for extending my subscription. I enjoy the publication and the historical significance. I believe the divine power is involved in the preservation of this help for the little ones who may not be able to travel among the saints of like precious faith.

May God Bless,
James (Butch) White

Enclosed is check for \$20.00 to renew my subscription of the Signs for another year.

I look forward to receiving this special paper each month.

Since God's word is sure and doesn't change.

May God bless you and all who work to publish this paper.

Keep up the good work.

May God Bless,
Randolph Plybon
140 Lynch Dr. Apt 103
Rocky Mount, Va 24151

5-26-2013

The Signs of the Times
Elder Cleo Robertson, Editor
111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

Dear Brother Cleo,

Enclosed is an obituary for Deacon Donald Scott, as requested by New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in conference, April 28, 2013, to be written by the clerk. It was approved in conference, May 26, 2013, to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication. I hope it meets with your approval. Also hope to see you at meetings in the near future.

James L. Shelor, Clerk
Elder Alan Terry, Moderator

May 6, 2013
Elder Cleo Robertson
111 Livingstone Dr.
Cary, NC 38115

Wayman Chapell
1589 Bonnie Dr.
Memphis, TN 38116

Dear Brother Cleo:

Here is another effort that you may or not find suitable for the Signs. It seems that every time I re-read there is something that needs changing. So, as always, look it over and feel free to use it as you see fit – or not at all.

I appreciate the way you are handling your job as editor and enjoy the articles you are selecting from the past writers.

Sincerely;
Elder Wayman Chapell

ARTICLES

THE MIND OF CHRIST

There were problems in the church at Corinth to which the apostle Paul had been made aware. There were such contentions that he wrote in chapter three that "...I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ." And though the letter was one of chastisement it was, in a greater sense, a letter of love and strengthening of doctrine.

In the 2nd chapter the apostle points out, to these same Corinthians that he had chastised, and yet calling them brothers, a vital point of doctrine "**...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have, entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.**" 1 Cor. 2: 9-10. And contrary to this; "**But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.**" 1 Cor. 2:14: The sum of which seems to say conclusively that the work of the Spirit is without any assistance from that of the natural man.

As amazed as the church at Corinth may have been at Paul's news, and still considered by the apostle to

be carnal, at least to some extent, and having heard the apostle say he was glad he had not baptized any of them, but Crispus and Gaius, he closed the second chapter by including himself along with them in this statement of love and fellowship: "But we have the mind of Christ".

It seems obvious that the apostle did not mean that the saints at Corinth, or anywhere else, had the fullness of knowledge and wisdom of the one by whom the world and all that is in it was made, nor the one that has been given all power in heaven and in earth. Mat. 28:18. Nevertheless there is a sense in which the children of God are blessed to have the mind of Christ.

Under the legal covenant, given by Moses, this was obviously not accomplished. "**For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.**" Gal. 3:10. Even so there is a change in the relationship brought about by the application of the finished work of Christ, and with it is given the "mind of Christ". Evidence of this change is seen in the words of Christ in John 15:15, "**Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known to you.**" "**Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But**

after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:24-26.

When the relationship is changed for the child of God, from servant to friend, he is not left to wonder what has happened to him or what manner of person he is. In John 14:15-17 Christ instructs his disciples thus: **"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you"**. The manifestation of this change from "with you" to "in you", seems most clearly expressed on the day of Pentecost when there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind that filled the house where the apostles were sitting. See Acts 2: 2-11. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Jews, from every nation, that were gathered in Jerusalem, came together when they heard this amazing thing and were astounded when they heard them speak the wonderful works of God in their own native language. And thus was fulfilled the words previously spoken of Christ; The Spirit of truth "...shall be in you". This is also the one spoken of by Christ in the 16th chapter of John; verses 13 and 14; **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you**

into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." He will show you a new law — the law of Christ. This is nothing other than the new covenant whereby the law is to be written, not on tablets of stone but: **"...I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them."** Heb. 10: 16. This is a better thing than the law given by Moses. **"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."** Heb. 11:40. This better thing provided is his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ and is immeasurable better than the law of Moses. This is; **"...Christ in you, the hope of glory."** Col. 1:27. But how is this seen and what evidence is available?

This manifestation that gladdens the heart is all of God. **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."** II Cor. 4:6-7. Then should not an examination of this earthen vessel give evidence of what is contained therein? Even when the church comes together to eat the Lord's supper there is the admonition that an individual should examine himself; and so is it here. A self examination is needed.

There is, or has been, a change of what is contained in this earthen vessel of the child of God. This change may be observed, at least in part, by what may be evidenced by seeing and considering a reflection of what is now, as in a mirror, and what was in the past times when nature's darkness prevailed. Consider again the words of the apostle to the church at Corinth; "**Now the Lord is that Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But 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.**" II Cor. 3:17-18

By using the imagery of gazing into a mirror consider what may be seen: The first object to appear will likely be that of the old nature with all of its vanity and pride. But a deeper look will show that something has been added. A new image has been superimposed on the old and the whole of life has been given a new meaning. The veil of darkness has been removed and what in the past had been pleasure now is vanity and vexation of spirit. What had been thought to be good works now appear as filthy rags. The doctrine of free and sovereign grace, scoffed at by much of the world, now appears most dear and lovely. The doctrine, that may be called hard by some, does not seem hard at all. To the contrary a child of God, though fraught with doubts and fears and plagued by the nagging image of the old nature, does not want, and can not "not believe". The witness is too strong,

even; "**The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God**". Rom. 8:16. The name of Jesus has become most dear.

So, the change that is seen in the glass now reflects the glory of the Lord, revealed by the Holy Spirit, as he shows you the mind of Christ. This change that is seen in the mirror is not the work of man, but of Him that has put a new thing in the heart. "**But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord**". 1 Cor. 1:30-31.

Elder Wayman Chapell

PSALM 23.

The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

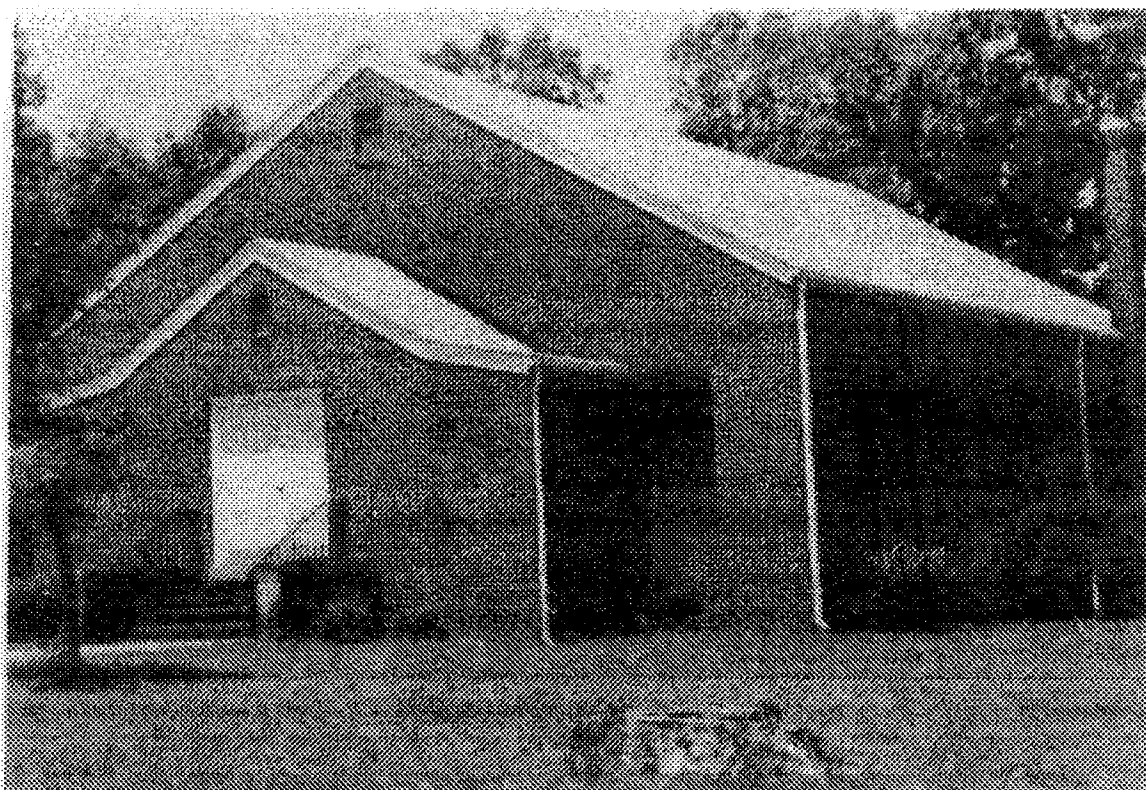
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church was constituted June 11, 1884. It is located on 704 near Madison, N.C. Their meeting time is the first Sunday of each month. Their present Pastor is Elder H.W. Wray who has served the church for 62 years. Elder Thomas Solomon is Assistant Pastor.

PSALM 5: 11-12.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as *with* a shield.

VOICES OF THE PAST

SALEM DEPOT, N. H., Aug. 15, 1934.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: — I am reminded that your last kind letter, was not replied to. Not that I can write anything of value, but just feel a want to express feelings of gratitude for the opportunity of hearing the gospel's joyful sound once more in the old meetinghouse at North Berwick, Maine. We miss some faces as the years go by, but cannot wish them back, as we believe they see and gaze on that dear face that was spit upon for them that they might go free. I feel each year increasingly a delight to be in the company of those dear people at North Berwick, the savory conversation and the hunger for the truth is so noticeable. Though they confess they are sinners, yet how all their hope centers in the dear Redeemer.

Last Sunday morning I trust I heard comfortingly, but oh how much more satisfied I would be for the sweet assurance that I am one of the characters the apostle Paul was writing about in the epistle from which your subject was taken. One cannot take things for granted the word says, so we are told, Take God at his word. No, nothing but a revelation of his love within will completely satisfy. This I crave. The way to Zion is not an easy road some of us find, that is, if we are really in the way.

“While here I walk on hostile ground;

The few that I can call my friends,
Are like myself with fetters bound,
And weariness our steps attend.”

This pathway, Elder, I think you know something about. The word declares; We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.

I do love the people of God and love to be in their company, but sin is so deceptive. We read of many who did unwell and fell away, the root of the matter not being within them. My prayer is, Lord, if I am deceived do undeceive me, make me clear in these solemn matters. How quickly the day slipped away and the farewells for another year had to be said, but already I am looking forward, if spared, to meet again. My dear friends (new friends I call them who came for the first time) were much impressed with the kind hospitality of the friends. One said to me, “It was ‘better than home.’” I believe they had a good hearing time.

Now, dear Elder, I will stop, for you are a busy man, with little time to read long letters with little in them, but I felt I must again let you know how glad some of us are for such opportunities of hearing the blessed gospel of free grace. You are quite willing, and oh so glad, that He shall have all the glory, and so is.

JOHN H. DUNKLEY.

ISAIAH 22:22-25

“And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and; none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it.”

And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder.” There can be no question as to whom the prophet has reference to. The prophecy of Isaiah is a wonderful book, for there is given to you and to me the beauty of Christ. This prophet was one among the many who presented, even before the birth of Christ, Christ in his humility and Christ in his glory. The gospel of Christ would be incomplete, wherever preached, if we did not present Christ both in his humiliation and in his glory. Those who fail to preach a fullness of the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace, fail to present Christ in his glory — in his glory in the sense that when he entered heaven it was with a finished work.

Among the last words the Saviour uttered before he died, as he bowed his head on the cross, were, “It is finished.”

In the courts of the land it is customary to accept the testimony of dying people: much more would we accept the testimony of the Son of God when he was dying. Whatever he had under consideration when he bowed his head and said, “It is finished”, was finished. In another place Jesus said, “I have finished the work thou gavest me to do”; and the work the Father gave the Son to do, was to save his people from their sins.

I awoke this morning with this scripture: **“He shall save his people from their sins”** — a message brought to a fearful person when Joseph was questioning about taking the virgin Mary as his wife, knowing she was a virgin, and with child; for God sent an angel to Joseph, and said, **“Fear not Joseph to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”** So the work of Christ was to save his people from their sins; and, if there had been one sin against any for whom he died that was unatoned for in his redemptive work, his work would not have been finished, and he would not have saved his people from their sins.

Here the prophet presents him as having the key (not keys, but key) of the house of David upon his shoulder. This was an important key, wasn’t it? the key to the house of David. It was

said, "In that day," speaking of the day of Christ when he should come, "In that day shall there be a fountain opened to the house of David" the same house we are talking about here. A fountain shall be opened for sin and uncleanness. The fountain that is spoken of to be opened to the house of David for sin and uncleanness, was the blood of Christ that was to be shed on Calvary's cross: wherein the fountain would be opened, opened to the house of David, to the Church of God, to the ones for whom Jesus came into the world to redeem. It is the same fountain mentioned in the hymn: "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." Isn't that the kind of salvation we long for, rejoice in, and glory in? It is the kind wherein Christ has been presented, and is presented, as the one who has the key to the house of David laid upon his shoulder.

In this same prophecy Isaiah views the work of Christ (before Christ was born) as if it had actually been accomplished. He said, "Unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given." The son was given before the child was born, for Christ existed from all eternity: ever one with the Father. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace." Isn't this a wonderful description of Christ? Do you know anywhere in the Bible where there is any description that exceeds this description which Isaiah gives of him even before he is born? "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty

God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace."

I think that if we could just read that in the scripture sometimes, you and I, it would help us. Wouldn't it?—that the Son of God was all this. The prophet doesn't stop there, but says, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." The government of his people shall be upon his shoulder and he has never divided that authority. "And of the increase of his government there shall be no end." This same prophet, in speaking of Christ with the key of the house of David on his shoulder, said he shall not fail or be discouraged till he sends forth judgement unto victory. No, Christ was to never fail or be discouraged until he sent forth judgement unto victory. These things are described of him before he even took a body of flesh.

In the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, the prophet brings to us Jesus in his suffering and in his glory. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Christ is the arm of God; for God has made bare his arm, and has said in his word, "Mine own arm shall bring salvation." Then he describes Christ in which he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of dry ground to his own nation; that, when they should see him, there was nothing about him that they should desire him. He was despised and rejected of men, but he said again that it pleased the Lord to bruise him. "He hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all". Laid on whom? on Jesus Christ. "And with his stripes we are healed."

And that is the only thing I have ever known that would heal our great disease of sin — the stripes of Jesus Christ.

“All we”, the prophet said, “like sheep have gone astray; everyone turned to his own way; and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.” He does not leave him there, but he shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities.

“And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and shall shut and none shall open.” I wonder how often you and I, in our daily life here, pause to think about the greatness of the power of Jesus. I wonder how often we realize that Jesus Christ has the keys to death and hell; but on this as this prophet present Christ, it is as God laying upon Christ the key — laying on his shoulder the key to the house of David. A key is something by which we obtain an entrance into a building. And the key to the house of David (there is only one key), man has never had. It has never been laid upon the shoulder of a man; but this key was laid upon the shoulder of Jesus Christ. What do we mean by the expression, the key was laid upon his shoulder? we mean that all the power to open salvation to lost and ruined sinners, rested on the shoulder of Jesus Christ. He said in the word of God, that God looked, and of all the people there was none to help: Not that he needed any help, but there was none to help be-

cause God had plenty of help. Therefore, he said, “Mine own arm has brought salvation; and my fury has upheld me.”

Should not each of us have in our heart this morning the deepest interest in one who has the key to salvation; who has the key to death; who has the key to hell? The prophet is speaking here of salvation, when he said “I will lay upon his shoulder the key of the house of David.” No one has entrance into that house only as is provided by the one who has the key; and he shall open and none shall shut — he is the only one who shuts this door, and he is the only one who opens it. He is just as sovereign in one as he is in the other. If God has purposed salvation for a sinner, no power under heaven can prevent that sinner from having that salvation; for he shall open and none can shut. “I am the good shepherd of the sheep.” “The good shepherd layeth down his life for his sheep. “He doesn’t only have the key to the house of David upon his shoulder, to open and none can shut, and shut and none can open, but he himself is the door into the house of David.

“And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place.” I have seen people drive nails into the wall of the home, and sometimes they don’t find a piece of solid timber to place the nail. Put a little weight on the nail, and down comes whatever is hung upon it. For a nail to support a burden, the nail must be fastened in a sure place. And God said of Jesus Christ, “I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place.” I will fasten him as a

nail where I can hang all the glory of heaven upon him. What a wonderful thought! I will fasten him; I will fix it so that he will support all that I lay upon him: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place. I will fasten him in such a way that not one whose salvation depends upon him will ever fall. I will fasten him in such a way that every sin of his people shall be completely put away in his atonement. Have you seen Christ as that, my friend? Has God given you a faith to see all you need in this world; to keep you; to guide you; to save you in heaven in Jesus Christ?

I like to preach Jesus Christ. I have been trying it a long time. I feel to those who are called, that time is too precious for us to talk about anything but the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to preach him; I want to sing to him; I want to pray to him. "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." I will fasten him in such a way that he will support all I lay upon him. God has determined that wherever salvation comes to a sinner, it comes from a sovereign God, and is given him graciously, gloriously through the merits of Jesus Christ. I would like to talk about a few of the things set forth in the scriptures wherein Christ is fastened as a nail in a sure place.

Do you remember when Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh and to cry against the wickedness of that city? Jonah in his trip to Nineveh, was to be a type of Jesus Christ; for Jesus said in the 12th chapter of Matthew, "Ye wicked and adulterous generation, ye seek after a sign, but no sign shall

be given you but the sign of the prophet Jonah, and as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." Jonah was a type of Christ: the type whereof Jesus referred to even before he died and went into the grave; but as he said Jonah was in the belly of the whale this number of days and this number of nights, so must the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth this number of days. You know that when Jonah started to Nineveh, he had decided he would go his own course. He had decided that he wouldn't go to Nineveh where the Lord had commanded him to go; and he entered a ship, and God sent a great storm upon that ship; and the waves tossed the boat to and fro. Why was the storm sent? because Jonah was there; and Jonah was to be the deliverer of all the people upon that ship, wasn't he?

The first thought of these people when the storm overtook them, was that we will just toss out the heavy material on the boat, and we will be all right. There are a lot of people who feel in the first work of grace, that if they just had time things would be alright: they'll live a better life, they'll accept the Lord Jesus Christ, they'll turn over a new leaf; but if Jonah's people travelling with him could have taken the heavy things out of the ship and lightened it, and taken care of the situation, it wouldn't have been like it was. But they lightened the ship, and it did not take care of the situation, for God's

eye was upon Jonah. Finally, when they couldn't take care of the situation, they cast lots to see what the trouble was; and, you know, the lot fell on Jonah — and it didn't fall by chance, either. Jonah is a type of Christ. The lot fell upon Christ to die for us: I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder — and there the lot falls upon Jonah. He's fastened as a nail in a sure place. They looked for Jonah, and he's asleep: he wasn't worried; and they awoke him. You know Christ was asleep on the boat when his disciples were on the sea of Galilee, and they awoke him, and said, Master, don't you care if we perish? And he just rebuked the waves, and there was a calm. They ask Jonah, "Who are you?" "And he said unto them, I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." I'd like to say that truly in my heart this morning, (and you would more than anything you know), I fear the Lord; I fear God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; and people who have the fear of God, have some knowledge of God. He's a type of Christ; and he said I'm causing all the trouble on the boat, just pitch me overboard: The storm couldn't cease until he went overboard.

"For I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." Peace couldn't come to us until Christ goes down into the deep; until the grave received him. Until death receives him, no peace can come to you and me. He must go overboard before the winds will cease blow-

ing, and the tempest is calmed. He said, Put me overboard, and it was calm. "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." He fastened Jonah there in the right place. He handled all the situations: everything was in the hand of God. It even tells us that he had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah; and as Jonah went down into the deep, so Christ our Lord went into the grave three days and three nights.

"And he shall be for a glorious throne in his father's house." It is not natural for us to think of a throne as being a person, is it? We think of a throne as a place where the king sits. But Christ is presented here as a nail fastened in a sure place: he shall be for a glorious throne to his Father's house; and I will hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house. Whatever the Father's house is, and wherever it is, God has said in his word that he would hang all the glory of that house upon Jesus Christ. If this could be divided between him and men, then he would not have all the glory of his Father's house. The gospel of Christ — wherever men preach it, he is preached as the one who has accomplished the work his father gave him to do; he is preached as the one who has accomplished a finished salvation, and entered heaven: been crowned with glory and honor, and been seated at the right hand of God. "And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house."

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed, and be cut down,

and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it." There was a day that that nail was to fall, and was to deliver all that hung upon it; and that day was when Christ died upon Calvary's cross. He was cut down, and all that hung upon that nail, all the depended upon it, are delivered from condemnation. No wonder, then, the prophet could say, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."

If a man owned ten thousand dollars, and he paid every penny of that ten thousand dollars but one dollar, he would still be in debt. If Christ redeemed his people from every sin except one, that sin that is left unatoned for will sink us into hell. It's either eternal redemption accomplished through the blood of Christ, or there isn't any redemption. It's either a doctrine that Christ has saved somebody, or nobody is yet saved. Which doctrine do you believe? Do you believe that Christ has made an atonement and an offering for salvation, and nothing is sure about it yet? If you believe that doctrine, I want somebody to tell me what glory he has in heaven. Tell me what glory the Son of God has in heaven, if nobody has been completely saved yet: if his blood hasn't atoned for sin; if he hasn't put away sin. Suppose we started out to do a job of some kind, and it took fifty years to do it; and after forty-nine years the job was given up. The work is as incomplete, in one way, as it was when we started it. But, "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place."

There are only three theories in the world that men accept religiously:

that Christ has completed a complete atonement for the sins of his people and put them away with the sacrifice of himself, and is in heaven and has been crowned with the glory of a conquering king; or that sin has not yet been atoned for; or that if He saves sinners, they will be saved if they accept his work of atonement. If you believe a doctrine like that, then all the blood of Christ was shed in vain, and that not a single sinner would ever be saved in heaven. The gospel of Christ presents him in his glory. "And I will lay on him the key of the house of David, and he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none can open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place—" He shall be cut down; and when he is cut down those who hang upon his atoning work, are delivered from bondage.

I want to exalt his name, and you who have been taught of him, you want to feel the preciousness of his love in your heart. You want to feel that assurance that he died for you. You want to feel that renewal of your blessed hope that he has given you, day by day. You want to feel what the world cannot give you, and that's the peace that he sent.

When we shall come to quit the walks of men — we don't know when it will be. When we see each other here, we don't know we will see each other any more. How often it is when I go to church, and before I go again, someone is gone. But, my friend, let me say this to you: you will fall where it is the Lord's will to take you, and when it's

his will; and if you have that blessed faith, that blessed hope in him, all is well. If your soul is resting alone in the merits of Him, nothing shall harm you.

(Sermon by Elder D. V. Spangler, Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, February 22, 1959.)

Sent in for reprint by
Burnell B. Williams

– Experience of –
Elder J.P. Helms

Dear Brother Berry: I believe the things I do, not because I willed it so, not because I was brought up in a Primitive Baptist home, and was taken to their services from babyhood. As I grew up, I respected them for their simplicity and honesty, but I verily believed they were wrong. I believed in the free will of the creature, and was in full accord with the doctrine that a man carved out his own destiny, and that Primitive Baptists would soon disappear from the face of the earth. As I read the Bible, I was more established in this way. I marked out my life, and of all of the things I would not do, I would never belong to the Primitive Baptist Church; for this was the church of the poor, and was too far behind the times for me. I did not attend a Sunday School for two reasons. First of all, I was equal to any that did go, and much better than many of them. Second. I did not want to hurt my parents. I fully expected, and was determined to “get

up” in the world, get all the education I could, and then acquire enough of this world’s goods to be secure – and then get right with God. This, to me, was a simple enough matter. All that was necessary was to join any church, but the Old Baptists, and then it was up to God to accept me, or He would be unjust. Then, if I would be particular and not fall, I would in the end, get to heaven. Was I the biggest fool that ever lived on earth? I would not argue this question.

So I lived, so I believed until I was seventeen years old. I was not disturbed; God is my witness, but as I lay in sleep. I saw the day of judgment, and in the east was a light, and in it, a Being who spoke and the graves gave up their dead. I stood amazed, for some were sheep and some were goats, and I was a goat. There was a smile on the face of this Being for some were sheep, and some were goats and I was in tears, and in fear. I saw that I was lost, for all I ever did, said or thought came up before me, and I promised prayerfully, and felt I was able to live a better life, and could, by so doing, please God. In other words, I could change myself from a goat to a sheep. I was very particular for some time, and was well pleased with my efforts. I was making progress, but all at once, my promises were broken, my good intentions gone. I had done worse than ever, making prayerful promises, seemed to help some, but all I wanted was another chance, and I could be a better man. Needless to say, I failed again and again, and I know I grew worse and

worse. Still in all the years of my early life I was sure of one thing, that I would not be an Old Baptist.

These promises continued until my thirty-third year. I came to the end of promises. It came as part of me that I could not keep one promise, and there was only one thing that could reach my case. That was the mercy of Jesus. In all of this, I read my Bible, and finally every time I picked it up, I found something that condemned me. I finally saw clearly that I was lost. I had sinned away the day of grace, for I was not only a lost sinner; I was a blasphemer, and there was no forgiveness for me in this world or the world to come. I would plead my cause no more; no more prayer, no more promises. But in spite of all this determination, my cry by day and by night was for mercy. I decided that the end of life was near and that hell was my portion. Again, God is my witness, I confessed the justice of God in all things. I saw that God had determined the destiny of all men in eternity, and I knew that it was right and righteous, and that Jesus came a Savior and saved His people from their sins with an everlasting salvation. But I am lost, I am a goat, was my cry.

Now I come to the year of 1914, and a day well marked in my life. As I lay on the floor at my home to die, as I believed. I went in the cabin from the field late in the day as the sun set, perfectly reconciled to die and meet my doom. Everything was covered with gloom, and there, while prostrate, I heard a voice speak: "I created heaven and earth, and I am your Savior." I say

there was power in those words, there was life in those words. I was lifted to my feet, and I went out of the house, and Lo, everything had put on a new appearance. I know that it is unusual for birds to sing at sunset, but there were some there that evening, and they were singing. Then I started to the kitchen to tell my wife what had come to me, and then I heard this: Better not do this - you may be deceived. So I did not go. Then I cried, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. On the third day following I had come to the place to say that I was deceived, that I was losing my mind, but all the time, crying and begging. I was alone in the highway near my home when something seemed to say. Wait. Of course, I stopped. I heard singing. It was coming from the east, and as it came closer and closer, I could hear the words of the song. It was, "How Firm a Foundation." The singing came to me, and then in me. At the words, "Fear not, I am with thee" I joined in the song. I suppose men would have said I was crazy. But I was so convinced then that I said, I will never doubt any more. But I did, and still do. The Old Baptists seemed different to me. Their doctrine was not so bad after all. But being a member of them or any other church was not in my mind.

Soon a burden came on me, "You go tell My people." I said, no as determinedly as anything of my life. Then I began to question, Who Are Your People. Some I knew living, and some who were dead; many I did not know, but all were dressed in white, and I was

given to know that they were all Old Baptists, and I loved them. The same voice said, "These are My people." To this day, I believe I know where the true church is. I know where His witnesses are. But at this time I decided I would never unite with the Church. I would not preach. I knew nothing; it would interfere with my life; I could not make a living and preach and I would not. So I went for a few months. One Sunday afternoon. I went to my father's home. There were several Elders and members there on the porch. I remember placing my foot on a stone, and my mind was taken from me literally. How much time elapsed I cannot tell. What I said, I cannot tell. The thing I heard that brought me to my senses were the words of my grandfather: "I move we receive him in the Church." At that time I was glad and thankful that they could receive such as I, but before I reached home, I vowed I would not preach, and poor fool! I finally decided I would die before I would even let anyone know anything about this matter, and I emphatically denied to the deacons and pastor that I was burdened to preach. But affliction came in my home, to my children, and I promised that if the Lord would spare the child I would go. This child was restored to health. Then I rebelled again. Then another of the children was touched, and again I was compelled to beg for mercy again, and to promise, and again the Lord heard me. Then it was different, I said, I will go, but Lord show me, lead me, instruct me. I don't know anything! I don't know anything about the doctrine. Soon af-

terward the deacons and pastor called me to the stand and there I was in the place I had declared I would never be! There I was a member of the Church I had declared I would never join, and there I am to this day, and I can say, "That I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." This is the cause of my belief, and I can assure you and all that I am set in this, if this is what Primitive Baptists believe, I am one of you. I know I tried to believe something else. I tried to be something else, and I tried to keep from preaching, and I failed in it all. What little I know of doctrine or order, I have experienced it. In no sense would I detract from the Bible, or the study of it; in no sense would I say that a church can live without gospel practice. But administer all you can unto me, in one dose, or in broken doses, of "You can if you will," and it will not affect me. Have I learned of Jesus? Have I Christ, then I have all. For He is the teacher of His children, and He does all things for them. Some of the things that I have written have never been written of me before, a poor hint at best, poorly expressed, but I am not ashamed to tell all what I believe. I may be mistaken in the whole matter, but I say not to all, this is what Primitive Baptists ought to believe, and stand for in practice. Yes, the revelation of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.

Your brother,
Elder J.P. Helms

HEBREWS X. 26.

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter sixth, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained farther sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly

be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? and even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a christian, under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their

transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855
Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Direction to the Pigg River Association to be held, the Lord willing; the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before August 3rd, 4th, and 5th. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County, Virginia.

Those coming from the North on 220 after passing Rocky Mount at first stop light, turn left on 619; go 3.7 miles. Turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) Go 1 mile to Church.

Those coming from the South on 220, go App. 13 miles from Bassett Forks, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) App. 2 and one half miles to Church.

We welcome and invite the Ministers of our Faith and order, our Brethren, and Friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2013

Randolph Plybon, VA	5.00
James White, AL	15.00
Tim Barron, TX	10.00
Elder W. L. Gardner, GA	25.00

OBITUARIES

As requested by New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on April 28, 2013, with the guidance and grace of God, our Father, I shall attempt to write an obituary for our Brother, Donald Scott.

It is written that when the body dies it returns to dust from whence it came and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

On March 19, 2013, Donald Winston Scott was called from his station in this life to continue the journey of God's elect. Brother Donald believed in election, predestination, and salvation by the grace of God.

In the covenant from before the foundation of the world, the children of God were chosen in Love by God the Father and the Word. Throughout the generations they receive that natural birth and at God's time in this life they are brought forth from nature's

darkness into the marvelous light of that spiritual birth.

February 13, 1940, was the beginning of life for Brother Donald. On March 19, 2013, he rested from the trials and labors of this life, making his stay on earth 73 years, 1 month, and 6 days.

From my earliest memories, I have known Brother Donald, as our parents attended New Dan River Church and visited the Sister Churches. As children, when not sitting on our parents lap, we sometimes played over the church grounds during associations and communion meetings. We did not realize then that God was preparing us to become part of the membership of this church. From then until his death, there was never a cross word between us.

Brother Donald was a quiet man, of few words and many talents. Having grown up on his parent's dairy farm, he knew about hard work. He loved raising a garden and was a great handyman. He used those talents in caring for the needs of New Dan River Church.

On March 10, 1962, he was married to Thelma Bernice Rakes. To this union was born two children, a daughter, Patricia, and a son, Douglas. He retired from East Hampton Rubber Thread Company in Stuart, Va., after 37 years of service.

He was predeceased by his parents, Dan Kelly Scott and Mary Ethel Vipperman Scott Belcher. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife of 51

years, Sister Thelma Scott, of Meadows of Dan, VA, a daughter, Patricia Vaughn and husband, Brian, of Rocky Mount, VA, a son, Douglas Scott, of Meadows of Dan, VA three grandchildren, Charles Vaughn, and Daniel Vaughn, of Rocky Mount, VA, and James Vaughn and wife, Beth, of Clarksville, TN, a sister, Zella Bellina, of Cana, VA, and a host of friends and Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

When his wife, Sister Thelma, joined the church and was to be baptized on the fourth Sunday in August 1974, Brother Donald asked for a home with the church at the water, and was received by experience. They both were baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton.

In conference on the fourth Saturday in July 1977, it was moved, seconded, and passed that Brother Donald Scott be elected to serve New Dan River Church as Treasurer, a position he held until his death. The members respected his opinion and trusted him to handle the business matters of the church.

On the fourth Saturday in December 1980, Brother Donald was elected to serve as Trustee of the Cemetery. On the fourth Saturday in October 1981, a presbytery was called to look into the qualifications of Brother Scott for the office of Deacon. He was found qualified and ordained as a Deacon by a presbytery of four Elders and six Deacons.

Brother Donald graciously served the church in many ways, never expecting praise in any manner. He had a love

of God's people and visited many of our Sister Churches, serving as Deacon in their communion services.

He suffered through the years with cancer and back problems, having to endure many treatments and surgeries. I was able to visit him some while in the hospital. He was not one to complain about his lot in life and never failed to fulfill the duties he had been given to serve in the church. For years he had taken care of the mowing of the cemetery and the church grounds, even when his health was declining.

His funeral was conducted Friday March 22, 2013, at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Alan Terry and Thomas Solomon. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when the children of God will be raised in his likeness. Brother Donald had a blessed hope that on that day he would be found in the number.

He is and will continue to be missed by New Dan River Church and among those near and dear to him, May our loss be Heavens gain. Written by one who loved him, on May 11, 2013.

An unworthy Brother,
James L. Shelor

PEARL IRENE THOMPSON

Valley View Primitive Baptist Church is saddened at the loss of our dear Sister Irene Thompson. She passed on peacefully in her sleep on

Thursday, November 29, 2012. She was born on December 20, 1914. We were all looking forward to celebrating her 98th birthday. She was a member of the primitive Baptist for 64 ½ years. She loved her church. The last time I visited her, she said she wished she could come to church one more time. She was preceded in death by her husband, Gold Thompson, two sons, Kenneth and Johnny Thompson and daughter, Mary Jones.

Her family was so special to her. Her three daughters gave her such loving care and saw that her every need was met. Her son, Kenneth, took her to church with him as long as he lived. She loved to go with him.

She is survived by three daughters, Corrine Vaughn, Betty and C.B. Linkous, Winki and Bud Akers, daughter-in-law, Faye Thompson, 15 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great grandchildren, sisters, Virginia Altizer (deceased since Sister Irene passed), Imogene Teel, Ida Mae Bishop, Jackie Shelton.

The funeral service was held on Sunday, December 2, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. at Horne Funeral Home Chapel with her Pastor, Elder Raymond Goad officiating, Interment followed in the Thompson Family Cemetery.

Written by request of Valley View Church by one who loved and will miss her.

Lena Duncan, Clerk
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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There is a house not made with
hands,
Eternal and on high;
And here my spirit waiting stands,
Till God shall bid it fly.

Shortly this prison of my clay
Must be dissolved and fall,
Then, O my soul, with joy obey
Thy heavenly Father's call.

'Tis he, by his almighty grace,
That forms thee fit for heaven,
And as an earnest of the place,
Has his own Spirit given.

We walk by faith of joys to come,
Faith lives upon his word;
But while the body is our home
We're absent from the Lord.

'Tis pleasant to believe thy grace,
But we had rather see;
We would be absent from the flesh,
And present, Lord, with thee.

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” Matthew 10:16.



Elder J.B. Farmer

The kingdom of God is spiritual, and may only be seen and understood by the spiritual man. The natural man, as hard as he may try to enter into it and understand it, cannot do so. He will always err in his way. This kingdom comes not by observation, and is not of this world. Everything

about it is a mystery to the carnal mind. It is only as it is opened and revealed unto us that we may see it, embrace it, and rejoice in the truth of it. **“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”**

God is wonderfully merciful to reveal unto His little ones the things of His kingdom, and the things He has prepared for His elect children. They are blessed to grow grace in and knowledge of the Lord Himself, and in the knowledge of the things of the kingdom. But all these things are hidden unto those who are wise and prudent, and who are confident in their abilities to sort out the truth for themselves.

Satan has a counterfeit kingdom. Every part of the heavenly spiritual kingdom is mimicked by the devil. He presents himself as God. He has a man, yet to be revealed, who is the fleshly embodiment of Satan, who is the very antichrist. He has ministers who transform themselves into angels of light. He has servants that obey him. He has false churches, which are actually the synagogues of Satan. He has a counterfeit gospel, which is so close to the true gospel it is mistaken for truth by all who are not led of the Holy Spirit. Satan’s kingdom is like counterfeit money, which only those who have been trained in its detection are able to identify. The kingdom of Satan is of

this world, and appeals to all who love this world and are at home in it. And only the children of God are given the wisdom to see it for what it is, and to reject it as false, and avoid its pitfalls.

As the Lord sent forth his disciples into the world with all its dangers and snares, so you also are sent. But he has promised to never leave you or forsake you, and that He would be with you even unto the end of the world. His little ones have always, from the beginning of the world unto the present, been found in an apparently weak way compared to those surrounding them. They are like sheep among wolves. We know that a sheep is defenseless against wolves. It is not equipped to fight. It cannot help itself, and would certainly perish if left alone. But the sheep are not left to fend for themselves. They have a Shepherd, and He is mighty to save. He is much stronger than the wolves, and very well able to drive them away, and to protect His sheep. And He has always kept His sheep, and always will. They are the ones **“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”** And the blessed apostle said, **“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”**

Since the sheep are only a remnant, and are so weak in comparison to wolves, they must walk in a certain way to survive. They are made to be watchful, and to look to the shepherd for their help and protection. King

Solomon, by the wisdom given to him said, **“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.”** The sheep are bound to their shepherd as the disciples are bound to Jesus. When many were offended at the words of Jesus, and walked with Him no more, He asked the disciples if they would also go away. And they replied, showing their dependence upon Him, **“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”** We have nowhere in this world to look for help, but unto Jesus, who made the world.

The sheep are commanded to **“be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves”**. The wisdom of God’s children is to wait upon the Lord, and to look unto Him for all things. To be wise as serpents is not to be wise like serpents in their wisdom, but it is to be aware of the devices of the devil. It means, by the grace of God, to be alert and watchful. It means, by the grace of God, to **“examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves”**. It means to examine, by the Holy Spirit, every thing you say, think, read, hear or see. This is, in accordance with the commandment of God to His children to **“try the spirits, whether they are of God”**. We are to **“earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”**. “We are to reject that which is false and to cleave to that

which is true. We are not to follow what some say. They say, "If we differ, let us differ in love." This is not agreeable to the teaching of the Lord and His apostles. By the grace of God, we are to labor to say the same things according to the true gospel.

The beloved apostle was blessed to leave on record for us these words. **"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace..... Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."** Every man is not to go his own way, and not to have private interpretations of any prophesy of scripture, and not to have his own opinion, and not to take his own position, and not to defend it against all opposition. No. If we lack wisdom or have differences with our brethren in understanding of the scriptures, we must **"Ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."** We are to seek peace and ensue it. And when one goes his own way, and will not be persuaded, but insists on proclaiming false things not believed among the saints, after the first and second admonition, he is to be rejected according to the scriptures. These are those who cause divisions. And the children of God are com-

manded to mark them, to avoid them, and to keep no company with them, neither bid them Godspeed, lest we be partakers with their evil deeds.

God's little ones are not only to be wise as serpents, but are to be harmless as doves. Did you ever know of a dove harming anyone or anything? I have watched them at our bird feeder. They will bluff another bird if it gets too close, but I have never seen one attack and seek to destroy another bird. It is not in them to do that. The saints are made to be truly humble and lowly according to that Spirit that is in them. Jesus said that He is **"meek and lowly in heart"**. As He is, so are His own. Their principal thought is not to separate anyone who walks disorderly, but is rather to restore that one in unity. Their hearts are hearts of love and compassion, being blessed with much longsuffering. Many times when I am in the presence of the children of God, I am struck with their genuine love for one another. There is no harm there. Many times when, fearfully, I have been brought to stand before the saints, I have looked out upon them, and have seen the gentle faces of love, and have thought, there is no harm here.

When the Lord commands His little ones, He gives them grace that they might be enabled to obey. We are taught that, **"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."** The steps, the thoughts, the words, and the deeds of the sheep are ordered of the Lord. He who commanded His little ones to go forth into the world, also promised

to be with them and to see to their every need. He who made them sheep is their good Shepherd. He in whom they trust for their very lives has never failed or lost one. All that the Father has given Him are safe in Him. The wolves fear Him and flee from Him. The same One who commanded His little ones to be wise as serpents, has given them the mind of Christ. By this spiritual mind they are blessed to examine all things, to test all things, and to judge all things. And the One who commanded them to be harmless as doves, has taken out their hard and stony heart and given them hearts of flesh. These are tender hearts of love, with a desire to please Him with whom we have to do.

Through all these things the Lord glorifies Himself, in that He is able to keep His own in a hostile world against all threats, traps, deceptions and fears. And He is able to do that which He has promised: to bring all His own down to the end of their lives in faith, rejoicing in hope of eternal life. And every tongue shall praise Him, of things in heaven, and of things in earth, and of things under the earth, in that of all the Father has given to Him, He has lost nothing, and shall raise it up at the last day. All praise and honor and glory must be rendered to Him, for He alone is worthy.

I trust this was written, in my own weak way, in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

Bro. Horton,

Enclosed is a check for one year of the "Signs".

I would like you to send it to my daughter at the address below.

May God bless you all for writing the truth.

Phil Jones

Paula Hill
1480 Lil Ave. N.E.
Rio Rancho, N.M. 87144

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my renewal for one year. Please use the rest for what you feel best.

I enjoy getting Signs of the Times very much each month.

Thanks to all who have a part in getting the Signs out every month. May God Bless you all.

Gladys Shelton

PSALM 121: 1-2.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

ARTICLES

Experience of Elder Carl Terry

(Recorded as told to Elder Mark Terry, Nellie Terry, Edrie Clifton, Naomi Coker, Ina Wingate, Billy Wingate, Eva Cruise, Carole Cruise, and Bill and Judy Poindexter

On the Evening of August 3, 2001)

I feel like the Lord began working with me at an early age and many of you have heard me relate hearing that voice, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people sayeth your God," when I was only four or five years old, before I was old enough to read anything, and that has stayed with me all these years.

Another experience that most of my kin know about but they don't know the preciousness of it — when I was fourteen and riding on the back of Dad's truck and sitting in a chair on the flat bed lumber truck and he went around a curve and I was thrown off that truck. I went down beside the rear wheels of that truck thinking that the wheels would get me. When I hit the road I was still holding onto the chair and the top post of the back of the chair was what hit the road first, which showed the indent of the gravel that hit that chair. Then I rolled a number of rolls there on the ground or the road, probably 40 or 50 times and when I stopped rolling I got up and I heard a voice say, "Walk", and I started walking back in the direction I came from. "No,

go the other way." so I picked the chair up and I had cut the tip end of one of my fingers off and it was throbbing real hard.

In the meantime, while all this was going on, knowing how children like to pick and tease each other — my sister, Rosalie, was in the front with Dad and Mom and there were some girls on the side of the road just out of sight of where I landed in the road — Rosalie picking on me, or thought she was, turned around to ask me if I wanted to get off there with those girls. When she turned around she saw that I was gone. In the meantime, the Lord gave me to pray and I believe that was the first time that I really prayed to the Lord, and I have to say that I believe I did pray. But I was not praying that He would save my life or save my soul from hell, I was praying that He would show them that I was not on that truck and actually that was about the time I was praying. They turned the truck around and headed back and they saw me walking. I had my hand up over my head because that finger was throbbing so bad, and I was carrying the chair in my other hand. Mama told me she felt like I had broken my arm because I was holding it up like that.

Anyway getting on with the better part, not long after that (probably a couple of weeks) we were gathered in at Grandpa's and Grandma's and all the grandchildren gathered in then, there were probably 40 or 50 of us. All the grandkids were out in the yard playing and the older folks were inside talking about good things. Well, I didn't feel

like playing. I wanted to hear what was being said - Uncle Sam, Uncle Joe, Uncle Ben and different ones were talking spiritual things and I remember just as good as if it were yesterday, Grandma turned to Daddy and said, "Herbert, we would love to hear from you." Daddy just hung his head and couldn't say a word. She turned to you and said, "Edrie, we would like to hear from you and you couldn't say a thing. There I sat over in the corner and I wanted to tell it so bad that I felt like the Lord had given me to pray but I couldn't tell it. I wasn't asked. Children were taught to be quiet.

So I've been made fun of for being thrown off that truck many times by my cousins but it wasn't anything to make fun of. I was skinned from head to toe and I will have to say this, the Lord saved my life in that he gave me to hold onto that chair. If it had not been for that chair and me going off that truck like that, showing that the top part of the back of the chair hit the road first, that would have been my head and would undoubtedly have crushed my skull, but that wasn't God's will. So that is one incident that had taken place. Many others and I don't have a thing in the world to boast of either. It is just the Lord's mercy.

On after I got out of the Navy, I was given feelings I didn't know which way to turn. Our families had split and part of them went one way and part another. In my young mind it upset me greatly. I got out of the Navy in 1952. In the year of '53, I was working with my Father-in-Law saw milling and I

could carry you to the very place where this happened. I was doing the logging and I was on a crawler tractor and I could hear the, not the wheels, but the track, and I had a load of tree-length logs swung up on the logging cart behind the tractor and I was going out down a hillside. And naturally when a load is pushing an engine, the engine will make a different sound from when it is doing the pulling, but that day the engine made a different sound from that. It was singing, "Amazing Grace," going out down that hillside. That is another time that was made precious to me.

In 1954 I had tonsillitis in July. I used to have tonsillitis real bad and I was laying on the bed and I can't tell you whether I was in a trance, delirious or whether I was dreaming or what, but anyway my sins rolled up before me as a mighty wave on the ocean, and I have seen many large waves. Many of you have heard me speak of this in the pulpit. But those waves were coming in and just mounting up like big mountains and coming down to crush me. But my sins was that wave. It was my sins that were about to crush me and it had already gotten to the climax of it and was starting to break and fall down on me and I cried out to the Lord, "Save, or I perish." And I heard a voice that said, "Thy sins, though they are many, are forgiven thee." And certainly I rejoiced in that, but yet I continued to sin. But what I saw was all my sins, I believe my future sins were included and it was a mighty mountain like a wave and if it had not been for the love of God

and His mercies, surely they would have crushed me and cast me into hell.

So while I was in the Navy I developed a very bad habit. You have all heard the term, curse like a sailor. Well I was a typical sailor and even after that experience, I was unable to keep from it, using God's name in vain and all that. In the spring of 55, in March, while working at Stanley Furniture, I dreamed, or whatever it was. It was at night on my bed and I was being pulled into that lake of fire by a power that I could not get out of or get control of. I have explained it that it was as a piece of magnet that you would take and stick to a piece of metal and it would draw that metal to the magnet. That was the feeling that I had of the power that was leading me into that lake of fire. I was fighting it with all my strength but I could not resist it. And I got close enough I could feel the heat of it and I could see the bodies already in that lake all crisscrossed up and I could hear them groaning and it was a horrible place and I cried out to the Lord again, "Save, or I perish." And I got deliverance from that. There was a mighty hand that came down, about that much of a hand (from just below the elbow) and it caught under me and carried me away. I woke up. The cursing and taking God's name in vain was taken away from me from then on, but that is not saying that I am a good person or able to control my temper. That is some of the things I have gone through.

Another - A little later than that in

the same year, Grandpa Terry died and I was real concerned and upset and all the feelings I'd had and I begged the Lord to show me the right way to go. I had a dream right after Grandpa died. He died the 5th day of July and just a week or so after that, I dreamed that I was at a church and saw this big communion ring like they used to have, except it was a ring and I know I haven't told it in the pulpit. But there was Uncle Sam, (Elder Sam Terry), and Elder Cecil Turner was in the dream and my Mama and my Mother-in-Law was in the dream. And in this dream Uncle Sam and Elder Turner were on their knees begging my Mama and Mama-in-Law to forgive them and somehow or other I was made to feel like Dan River Church (they used to set seats out there above the church and it was so lovely) and to me I felt that was the evidence to me to know which way to go since the others were begging them to forgive them, so at the water at the baptizing at Dan River, when they announced the doors open to receive members, I couldn't stay back. I asked for a home and they received me. I went on into the water the same day. It was a joyous time. That was communion day at Dan River. It gave me much comfort. I have never forgotten those precious times. The night before I was received, I dreamed of going into the water with the other three, so when we got ready to go to the church that morning I packed my clothes, not that I could make it happen, but in case it did. I wanted to have clothes to change and I did. There have been many joyous times.

(Inserted by Edrie Clifton) The night before my husband had a dream and in his dream he looked down at his arm and there were four gashes cut in it. He went to that water to do the baptizing fully convinced that there would be another one. He didn't know who, but just as he was getting ready to go into the water, when he opened the doors of the church and I heard somebody say, "Wait" and I looked up and it was Brother Carl with his hand up making his way through the crowd.

(Inserted by Nellie Terry) I carried my clothes to be baptized that day, too, but I didn't go. It wouldn't have been four if I had went. It wasn't my time to go. The others baptized were Charlie and Mattie Sue Moore and Gladys Craddock. And Frank Pegram was supposed to have been but he was sick. So Carl was the fourth one instead of him. It was about two years before I joined.

The following year, (that was the 4th Sunday in September 1955) and the following year about a year later our third child was born. It was born on the 25th of September and there was something wrong, it wasn't right. It was a blue baby and after the baby was three days old they sent Nell home but the baby stayed in the incubator. We would check on the baby each day and it gradually grew worse. When it was six days old they said something would have to be done and they couldn't do anything more for it at Martinsville so they recommended that we carry it to the University Hospital in Charlottesville. We had to carry it up there in an ambulance and we had to

stop several different places on the way to get oxygen for the baby to breathe on the route. I had never gotten to hold the baby until the morning that they sent him to Charlottesville and I let the doctor know that I wanted to hold my baby. He let me hold it for just a few moments and I cherished those times. Anyway, we got to Charlottesville and checked him in and signed all the necessary papers for them to do whatever they thought necessary to take care of him. We didn't have a telephone at that time and I gave them my Mother-in-Law's phone number so they could reach us. We lived a few hundred yards from her house. I got back to the house that night and a little after I got home one of Nellie's baby brothers came out there and said I had a phone call from Charlottesville and they were going to call back in 10 minutes. So I went out there to get the phone call and the doctor from up there was calling to make sure that I still wanted them to go ahead and do whatever was necessary. He said he had gotten progressively worse since we checked him in, so I gave them oral permission again to do whatever they thought was necessary and I went back to the house and laid down, and laying there crying and talking about it and all this. I was given the feeling of needing to pray.

In the meantime the burden to stand before God's children had been working on me and I guess a lot of people would call me crazy or stupid

or whatever, but in my prayer to God that night, I bargained with God for my child's life. I told Him that if He would give me my baby back normal and healthy and not being afflicted and all these things, that I would not refuse him to go and stand before His people. God kept His end of it, but I fought with hands lifted high not to keep mine.

Anyway the doctor was to call back the next morning. So along about 11:00 o'clock that night, I had never been in an operating room or anything like that and didn't know a thing about what they were like, but I was given a vision of an operating room and the big light overhead and the operating table. And I saw the baby laying on that operating table and I saw them take back almost to his backbone and start cutting him open following between two ribs and they come on up about one-third of the way in to, was about what the incision was. I saw that laying there on my bed that night. I could see the doctors and the nurses in the room 165 miles away from home. I saw them take something - the only way I can describe it is something like they use in a tire shop where they spread tires open with to look on the inside of a tire on a miniature scale - and they opened up that baby's ribs so they could get between the ribs and get in there to work on it. What they found in there was that the baby had a hole in the diaphragm and his liver was sticking up through that hole pressing against his lungs and heart and that was what was making him blue. He was not getting enough oxygen.

Well, let me tell Nellie's part on that. I told her what I had seen and we lay there and cried and finally dropped back off to sleep. Then along about 3:00 a voice spoke to her and told her the operation was over with. She told me that and we looked at the time. When the doctor called the next morning we already knew that everything was all right. He said the operation was successful and the baby was doing fine. The time we saw what we saw was the time the operation started and the time it was over with coincided with our time. So that was when the baby was six days old was when that took place. We would check on him each day and when the baby was twelve days old they told me I could come and get him. We brought him back in the car. What I saw in the vision was exactly the way he had been cut. And all that incision in six days time was healed except where they had a drain hole for the fluid to drain out from the incision and they had a Band-Aid over that.

Well, there is more to it than that. We were to carry him back in three months for a check up to see that everything was going okay. In the meantime we hadn't received a bill or anything for the operation. I had paid for the ambulance trip and all that, but when we carried him back, they x-rayed him and checked him over real good and made a \$6 charge for that, and we paid that. I told them we wanted to start making arrangements to pay the bill. We did not have any insurance and just a very modest job not making big wages. They informed me the bill

had been paid for and we didn't owe anything. You cannot tell me God doesn't take care of you. That is just little of what has transpired with me.

Like I said, God kept His end of it, but I fought from keeping mine. He is now 45 years old and that part has not given him any trouble. He has had other problems, but he was pretty healthy growing up.

These are just some of the things I have experienced.

VOICES OF THE PAST

North Berwick, Maine, Jan. 5, 1859.

Brother Beebe:—As I have to write to you on business, and have not any composition of my own to send for the Signs of the Times, I send you a few lines, copied from a letter written by brother Hiram Campbell to a sister of our Church.

WILLIAM QUINT.

Sister Perkins: I have thought much about you and your interesting family, since I have had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with you, and of your firm belief in what I believe to be the gospel of Christ; although I have not had the happiness of spending but a few days in company with you, and the rest of my dear brethren and sisters in Christ in North Berwick and Wells — yet I find my heart is bound to them with a threefold cord. First: because they, hate every doctrine which dishonors the doctrine of free, sover-

eign grace. I often think about the happy moments that I spent in their company: and sometimes I cannot help contrasting those few pleasant hours with the many wearisome, and lonesome months, which I have to spend here in Brunswick, with scarcely any one to converse with, but those who are good, or can be at any time that they set about it in good earnest. I find but a few in this place who will acknowledge that they have a carnal mind which is is enemy itself against God. If I go to meeting, I hear nothing but the works, means and instrumentalities of the creature held forth, as conditions for the creature to perform to obtain eternal salvation; but this will not do me any good now; for such husks will not satisfy hunger and thirst after Christ. I once found myself in that county, and fed swine on such; and then tried with all the power I was master of to satisfy my hungry soul with the same the swine did eat; but alas! I found that there was no longer any nourishment in such for me, there was a great famine in the land, and I was in a starving condition for the want of that kind of bread which could not be found there. I had spent all of my substance with riotous living, and had got in debt, so you can see that I was in very poor circumstances, and especially to purchase that living bread that I stood so much in need of.

I expected nothing but death, but in an unexpected time one of God's watchmen upon the walls of Zion saw me in my poor ragged and starving condition, and told me that there was

bread enough and to spare in our Father's house. I knew that I must die if I continued in that strange or barren country, and I could but die if I left. How I could find my Father's house was more than I comprehended. But in an unexpected moment, when all hopes had fled, of my ever being delivered from my hungry, starving condition, I was met by the Prince Immanuel, who is the friend of publicans and sinners, and he fed and clothed me, and I set down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste, and he brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

**SERMON BY ELDER J. P. HELMS
AT THE PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION
1965**

Again the Pigg River Association has met according to appointment. By rotation I stand before you for the purpose of trying to introduce by what is known as the Introductory Sermon. No man ever stood before you less qualified for this task than I. I realize to some measure that this is the last time I shall ever have the privilege of addressing you in this capacity. During the association here in Rocky Mount seventeen or eighteen years ago, my mother passed away on Friday. I have been blessed to attend all the associations that have been held with this church.

My desire is, above everything else, I have your prayers that God might bless me to proclaim the riches of His grace as I feel it was proclaimed when this association was organized at little Creek Church in the year 1825.

I have been trying to think of something that I might read to you this morning. Recently I heard a man read a portion of the 4th chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Rome, and who began speaking by saying that he wanted to tell us what God would do, and what he would not do. That amazed me, because I have been made to believe, and I desire to earnestly contend for what God has done: and to affirm that what He has done, is done forever.

Last Sunday afternoon our present moderator, Elder Turner, was blessed to preach, and he spoke of one thing that has rested somewhat on my mind; and I will turn to the 5th chapter of Romans, and read one verse: "**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**" If I could be blessed to affirm and to bear record of this eternal truth, I would be blessed of the Lord of heaven and earth, to proclaim the riches of what He has done for his people.

The world is crying what He will do, if we will let him. But I want to lift up my voice here at the opening session of the old Pigg River Association, concerning what He has done — not what He will do, but what he has done for poor, unworthy worms of the dust. Here stands a living witness of his

amazing mercy, because if justice had been dealt out upon me, I would not be here on this occasion.

In my early days in the ministry I remember something in particular in reference to this scripture. I had found where it reads, "Being justified by his blood," and I thought the Lord blessed me in a little measure, to preach the atoning blood of Christ for his people. The following week something attracted my attention and I turned to this scripture I have read; and it didn't read to suit me. I wanted to punctuate it differently, for this wouldn't do; but I found out soon that I was the one that needed punctuating, and not the scripture.

I have read to you, "Therefore being justified by faith." We might pause, and ask, How far reaching is that? Farther than ever the tongue of an individual will be able to tell; farther than the mind of an individual sinner will ever be blessed to fathom. Justification is a doctrine that belongs only to God's humble poor. You know that the head of the government in the State of Virginia, or our national government, can pardon a criminal, and the criminal will come home free from the law; but, let him be a rogue or a murderer, the stain of that thing is in him, for he comes home a pardoned rogue or murderer. But here is something that makes one as clean as though nothing had ever stained him. In other words, something that has cleansed us entirely, and brings us into a wonderful condition. I confess that I can only say I hope that He was born for me; I can only say that I hope He lived for

me; I can only say that I hope he died for me — and not only died for me, but arose for me. And from time to time over a long period, he has visited me, and assured me that he had finished the work he came to do; and that when he bowed his head upon the cross and said, "It is finished," salvation in its entirety for the here and hereafter, was wrought out for every one of his children. This is so far reaching that it embraces all of his children whether infants or aged, whether in the Old School Baptist Church or some other denomination: all of his children are embraced in it.

What is under consideration when the word Faith *is* used? I know it is often spoken of as something we can cultivate, something we can add to, or lose, as though it were a commodity. But let me assure you that if you had all the wealth in the universe you couldn't buy enough faith to put out a chigger's eye: and you know how much that would be.

What is faith? The best definition I have ever found, is contained in this Scripture, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" and then tells the effect of faith when it is granted to an individual. I tell you that it will make him believe in God. By faith the first man that ever fell under the sentence of death at the hands of his brother, offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother. Why? it says, by faith. How did Abraham believe God? by faith. That faith that is once delivered to the saints, is not offered but given

you: When the Babe was laid in the manger; there was the gift of God in its entirety. Paul said in the 4th chapter of Romans, **"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."** It is impossible to find hope where there is no faith. If we have faith, the Lord has us; we haven't got him.

I want to talk to you about something we don't get ourselves. Long ago a colored man said, "If you can get something, you can also lose it." So I want to tell you that my hope is that the author and finisher of faith, the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega found me, (not that he did not know where I was), as he did one of old, in a waste howling wilderness, and brought me by his own hand; brought me to the place I was made to cry unto him, because all of my own works had failed. And I was made to know that faith is the gift of God in its entirety. No wonder the Apostle Paul, in bearing testimony here and there, always adds it to grace: By grace through faith. It is impossible to have one if the other isn't there, for every gift, every good gift, every perfect gift comes down from above in the person of the Lord of glory; and he takes up his abode in your heart. He illuminates in such a way that he gives you eyes to see, and a heart to understand. Don't tell me you have to believe to have faith, for belief is the effect of faith; and not the cause of it, by any means. Faith is the gift of God, it is not of works lest any man should boast. This certainly ought to set

and seal all the work mongers in the universe.

I might say here that in my first going to the association as a messenger from old Republican Church, there were between twelve and thirteen hundred members of this association; now there are not quite eight hundred. What took place? Have the witnesses that God chose to stand and bear record failed? No! for there is no failure with Him. God's purpose is being carried out in this association, as it is everywhere. Sometimes I have been made to think, and to point my finger at myself, and say, you have failed. Yes, I admit I am a failure; but I am so thankful that I can tell you of one that never has, and can never fail; and that one is the author and finisher of every bit of faith that has been or ever will be here upon the earth.

The God that created the universe, who was made manifest and laid in a manger, when it was said to those on the hill that night, "This shall be a sign unto you, you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger." In him was all the gift that God had ever promised throughout all ages to his people. What more do we need today, than Him? He is the only one that ever said he would bring his children from the North, and say to the South keep not back; and that he would bring his sons and daughters from afar, even from the ends of the earth.

I know I have been among you for a long time. When I was ordained there were seventeen Elders above me on the list, and now I am at the head of the

list—seventeen have gone on before; and soon according to nature I will be called to quit the walks of men. But the outstanding thing among our people has always been, and will always be contained in the language of Revelation, "The Lord omnipotent reigneth." Not only does he reign over this or that, he reigns and rules over all things that are. And sometimes I can bear record, because I am given an eye to behold it: that not a leaf has ever quivered, not one has ever fallen that isn't in keeping with and according to the eternal will of God. God has appointed the coming of every one of his children into the kingdom, for there is only one way to come, and that is by the new birth: not by being born naturally, for that which is of the flesh is flesh, and that which is of the Spirit is Spirit.

"Being justified." This man that stands before you has a hope that he is justified fully from everything that ever has, or ever can come against him. In the 8th chapter of Romans it is written, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that justifieth." Who, therefore, can bring any charge before the court of heaven against you. God doesn't look at you as men: my hope is that he looks at me through the Lord Jesus Christ. All of my righteousness: every bit that I can lay claim to as mine, is as filthy rags. Unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the hypocrites and Pharisees, we are gone. How then are we to escape? By faith: "Therefore being justified by faith."

Justified before whom? before God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doesn't he hold everything in his own hands? Is there anything you can think of that is not under his control? Has he ever been surprised? Has he ever come short one iota of his eternal will being done? I feel that if anything has been wrought in me, it is, That God has all the power there is in his own hands. Don't undertake to tell me to fear the Devil — I have long since learned that he doesn't hold the keys to his own kingdom: he can't do anything without the God of heaven and earth. If it is according to God's will, it is going to be done; and if it is not according to his will, it won't be done.

So Jesus came, born of a woman according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. It was according to God's will that he was crucified: he was crucified between two thieves, and gave up the ghost. He was laid in the tomb three days and nights, all according to the counsel of a covenant keeping God. Don't say that man had anything to do with it. We see a movement in Rome, trying to free those from the charge of crucifying the Lord of Glory, as though man was the author of it. But I want to tell you that, regardless of what you may think or say, all of it was according to the eternal will of God. Without his crucifixion, without his death and resurrection, where would you and I be? By him we live, and by faith stand justified before God.

It is more than I can understand; and I go with my head bowed down

most of the time: if I could only know,— if I could have more evidence, has been my cry all these years. I realize that I soon must pass into the great beyond with a little hope which I received long ago in a cabin close to the Town of Rocky Mount. I am resting and abiding upon this one thing: that He came to me where I was. I had finished my work — all of it, for I had come to the place where there was no more praying, no more promises — I had failed in everything. I have tried again and again to tell about it; and I think of what my old grandfather, in his last hours, told me: "I must go into the great beyond with a little hope which sometime I have been ashamed to tell." Here stands another one who must go and face his Maker, with the hope that the Lord of Glory suffered for me — fulfilled every law and all of its demands for me in such a wonderful way; that I stand today, (not will be tomorrow; but now,) justified by faith; so that in the sight of God I stand as pure and holy (not in the flesh, but) in the Spirit as the God of heaven is, Can you receive that? Oh, I know your groans, I know your fears: I know all about them; but nevertheless when we can see Jesus, we see him making an offering for all of our sins, not part of them: putting them away by his own death upon the cross; and being raised for our justification, assures us that our hope is not in vain. God has appointed so many hills for us to climb, so many ravines for us to go into the depths, but in the end the glory land is waiting for you — already prepared.

So away with the idea of telling what God will do and what he won't do. I want to tell you that everything is made ready for you; and you with all of your vileness according to your own judgment, will find where Paul gloried in suffering persecutions: and doubts and fears were his portion. Yet in spite of all that, he was justified fully and freely: so he stands justified before God. So, Old School Baptists, in spite of all that you are surrounded with, in spite of all that you may think or do, if God is for you, nothing can be against you.

Last Sunday Elder Turner was blessed to bring a message to me that lifted me clear up, and made me to realize in a measure, that in spite of all that I am, God loved me, and gave himself for me. He didn't send anybody else — he came himself in the person of his Son: by whom we stand justified— not tomorrow, not some day that is coming, but justified now freely from all sin and iniquity.

If we could only be given to realize this eternal truth, the nights wouldn't be so long sometimes: I wouldn't have to roll and tumble so much; nevertheless you many rest assured that your salvation and everything is prepared for you. Sometimes we can get a little comfort out of the scripture where He said, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

So God has made everything ready for you; and in all you are doing here, he is making you ready for it. I

often try to tell Old School Baptists what is expected of them. This grace, this faith given you does not make you a boastful character of what you have done; never makes you boast of anything you have ever done or thought of in your life. But when we are given to think aright, we cry, "Glory to God in the highest." Yes, we glory in God, and we are glorified in him; for whom he did predestinate, all them he called; and whom he called he justified; and whom he justified he glorified. "What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us."

Let it be remembered by everyone of you, that I stand in your presence, the presence of deacons and elders, and plead my inability, but tell you that God is able, not to do something, but has done it: has finished it, and prepared heaven with all of its glory for you—and is preparing you for it day after day. Oh, if I could preach like I thought I had learned almost fifty years ago, I would be something; but instead of getting bigger, I am shrinking up; instead of knowing more, I tell you ministers I know less than I knew long ago. The growth in grace and knowledge of the truth, brethren, never has exalted one to know more than the least of you, but it brings us all down on one level. I stand before you trying to preach to you the riches of God's grace, when I feel deeply that you know more about it than I do. I am going to give way here, but I would leave this thought with you: God is not going to do anything more for one of his children. When he yielded up the ghost upon the cross,

and said, "It is finished," the atonement was made; and when he arose from the dead, he sealed it. Not only did he seal it, but he is attending to his own affairs today: There is not a home in the mountains of Franklin County that he is ashamed to come to, or ashamed to introduce himself to you and make you know what a vile wretch you are — and what a glorious Saviour he is. How well I know this! I could go now, though the cabin is gone, to the very spot — if I could only feel what I felt that day, and hear what I heard that day, there wouldn't be so much doubt with me: I heard a voice, and it affirmed that He created heaven and earth; and that He was my Saviour. There was life in that word — there was power in it; and for a little while there was no doubt in me.

But it wasn't long before something else came: doubts arose; and doubts have been my portion, it seems, all these years. But I affirm to you, children of the most high God, that the sacrifice was made long ago: you don't have to make it; you don't have to help. It is not by a little grace and a little works: it is either all grace, all grace by faith, or there is none.

Where is He now? He is seated at the right hand of God. What is He doing now? He is making intercession for us. Oh, how often I feel the need of his intercession: He still stands between us and the judgment, the righteous judgment of God; He stands between Him and us, and nothing is ever charged against us.

(The above was the Introductory Sermon by Elder J. P. Helms at the

Pigg River Association, held with the church at Rocky Mount Virginia, in August, 1965. It was recorded, and is edited for publication.)

PLEASANT WORDS

"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24)

None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God's love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God's sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace; all have a peculiar sweetness which the unregenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: **"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."** According to

Proverbs 16:21— **"The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning."** Both bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, **"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."** (Matt. 12:34-35.) Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said **"That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."** If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body; you may change

your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has disheartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you.

There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: "PEACE be to this house." Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is more satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence that everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, "PEACE be unto this house." Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, "**The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.**"

Pleasant words are as an HONEYCOMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his

constant search for the sweet nugget of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is —, Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey, may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits the honey into the honeycomb set in the hive, may I be able to feed wisdom words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey, may I be endowed with special gifts to gather, properly speak, and store in the church special honey-drippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honey-drippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and

make her dwelling place to be theirs the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers, I am including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church dying. Sometimes ants or other insects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreas-

ing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows!!! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown, one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way, the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God's rich providence and amazing grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will. Yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over-emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and

purity. On the other hand, preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is limited to stress the point. It is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand, it is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart, as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be

strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said God is love. If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would choose THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like

unto the first in that they both began with: Thou shalt love. Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where there is ease of conscience there is happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after a while, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessing!

AMEN.

Elder E.J. Lambert

ROMANS V. 3-5.

Agreeable to a desire of sister Peck, we offer a few remarks in regard to the working of tribulation, &c., in harmony with all other things, for the special good of God's people, and the glory of His own great name. The inquiry is made, "How does tribulation work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope that maketh not ashamed?" In reply, suffer us to ask, What could christians know about the grace or the action of patience, if we had not trials or tribulation? Suppose that we were placed in circumstances of perpetual joy and ease, we should know

something of gratification, but in that condition we could never become acquainted with patience. Nothing short of tribulation can call forth into exercise the principle and grace of patience, and it is on that account the apostle says, "Tribulation worketh patience," and in the same connection, of one of the graces of the Spirit working in harmony with all the other graces, that "patience worketh experience." This was illustrated in the case of poor old Job. The apostle says, "You have heard of the patience of Job, and seen the end of the Lord." The end, or design of the Lord, in Job's tribulation, was that in the final issue, Job might have occasion to record his experience of the dealing of the Lord with him, throughout that dreadful conflict. "I have heard of thee, by the hearings of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee." This is the difference between theory and experience. He had heard before, but now he had actual experience. And it is so with us; our patience in tribulation stores our mind with rich experience of the divine goodness. Jeremiah also had tasted the wormwood and the gall, and had, like David, waited patiently for the Lord, and this had given him experience which strengthened his hope. My soul, said he, hath them still in remembrance, therefore, I have hope. Thus his tribulation worked patience, and patience experience, and experience, hope. But what kind of a hope would we have if we were destitute of experience? We remember our experience, and all the way the Lord our God has led us, and our hope is revived, and we say with the poet,

"His love in times past, forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last, in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer still rising to view,
Confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through."

This hope being well grounded, and supported by actual experience of the loving-kindness of our covenant God, will never fail, or make us ashamed. The makers of idols shall be ashamed, and they shall all go to confusion together. But they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. They shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.,
September 1, 1856.

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-sixth session of the Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house, located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming County, about twelve miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia, on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 24 and

25, 2013. Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 A.M. and preaching at 11:00 A.M. each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please phone 606-474-4327.

Sherry Farmer, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The One-Hundred Fifty Seventh Annual Session of the Smith River Assciation will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Union Church located in Floyd County, Virginia, August 30, 31 and September 1, 2013.

From the intersection of Route 8 and 221 in the Town of Floyd, take Route 221 South for 11.7 miles through Willis, then take a right on Route 787 (Indian Valley Road). Go 5.7 miles and turn Left on Route 622 (Indian Valley Post Office Road). Go 7 tenths of a mile and take a right on Route 754 (Macks Mountain Road). Go 2.1 miles to Church on the right.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order and brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing on Saturday and Sunday, September 21 & 22, 2013.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2013

Dorothy Dotson, VA.....	5.00
Gladys Quinn, VA	25.00
Ila Leary, NC	5.00
Arlene Hole, NC	5.00
Gladys Shelton, NM.....	35.00
Roscoe Reed, OH	10.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Bernard Cox, VA	5.00
Sarah Sidbury, NC	5.00
Martha Smith, FL.....	25.00

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
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My dearest friends, in bonds of love,
Whose hearts in sweetest union prove,
Your friendship's like a drawing band,
Yet we must take the parting hand.

Your company's sweet, your union dear,
Your words delightful to mine ear;
Yet when I see that we must part,
You draw like cords around my heart.

How sweet the hours have passed away
Since we have met to sing and pray!
How loath we are to leave the place
Where Jesus shows his smiling face!

O could I stay with friends so kind,
How would it cheer my drooping mind!
But duty makes me understand
That we must take the parting hand.

And since it is God's holy will
We must be parted for awhile,
In sweet submission, all as one,
We'll say, our Father's will be done.

How oft I've seen your flowing tears,
And heard you tell your hopes and fears!
Your hearts with love were seen to flame,
Which makes me hope we'll meet again.

I hope you'll all remember me
If you on earth no more I see;
An interest in your prayers I crave,
That we may meet beyond the grave.

O glorious day! O blessed hope!
My soul leaps forward at the thought,
When in that happy, happy land,
We'll no more take the parting hand.

John Blair.

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Elva Snider Crotts Gurney	
Brother Ronald Crotts Jacks	
Brother Robert E. Lee Moore	

 EDITORIAL



Elder J. B. Farmer

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." "And when

thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to the Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is in heaven*. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts." "...Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*." "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in

heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before him. That which has been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." "Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is none else*; I *am* God, and *there is none like me*, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things that are not yet done*, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "But he is in one *mind*, and who can turn him? And *what his soul desireth*, even *that he doeth*." "For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his purpose*." "What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

What is true prayer? Some think and say that it changes the mind of God, or that it changes things. Nevertheless, since God is in one mind and cannot be turned, it is impossible for anyone or anything to change His mind. And since God declared the end from the beginning, nothing that God

declared can fail to come into existence. Since He is unchangeable and since all His works are certain, where does prayer fit in? And what does prayer accomplish? Some might conclude that prayer is useless, since all things are fixed with God, and since there is no possibility of changing anything. Others are blessed to know that prayer is a necessary part of life.

I am made to believe that true prayer is the very spiritual breath of the child of God. The little one, having no certain dwelling place here in the world, and being made to feel and know his great weakness in the flesh, and his vulnerability to the powers that rage in the world, must look up for strength and wisdom to run the race that is set before him. He is made to look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of his faith for courage to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The world is not his home, and he is an alien here, and he is misunderstood and hated because he is different. Many times he is fearful that he might perish along the way, because of his weakness and because of the strength of the adversary. He presses on often repeating the prayer of the publican, "God have mercy upon me, a sinner." And He finds himself repeating the prayer of Peter, "Lord save, or I perish."

I am also made to believe a true prayer is a heartfelt wish or need of a little child of God directed toward the only true God and Father of us all. Sometimes one cannot express his

deep innermost feelings of sorrow, or fear, or suffering; but God helps his infirmities with groans that cannot be uttered. That little one is comforted in the inward man. Many times one feels to be so sinful that he feels to be unworthy even to come into the presence of the Lord, or to speak His name. Then he hears the words, **"Will you also go away?"** And the answer is given, **"Where would I go? Thou hast the words of life."** I am made to believe that the little one is drawn to the throne of grace by the powerful cords of God's love and mercy, and that he is blessed to trust in the mercies of a forgiving and loving Savior. And I am made to believe that he finds forgiveness and peace there. **"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."**

So what is availed by the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man? I am made to believe the changes that are wrought are not in God, for He is immutable, but the changes that are brought about are in those that are blessed to pray. If we ask for those things that are unprofitable, our request is refused. But if we are blessed to ask anything according to His will, we shall certainly have our request. So the change is made in us. We are taught to pray, "Not our will be done, but may the will of God be done in earth and in heaven." If we are given to pray, in truth for one who is sick, and if it is the Lord's will to raise him up, to the glory of God, it will be so. If we are blessed to pray in the Spirit for something we actually stand in need of, we

will have our request. The Lord already knows what we need and will not deny it. This communication between God and His children is their lifeline and their strength in this foreign land. It is like a parent leading a little child by the hand through unfamiliar territory. It is the small, still voice that we hear saying, **"This is the way, walk ye in it."**

I am made to believe that prayer is a two-way communication between God and His children. When we pray in truth, we are given confidence that He hears us. We are not talking to ourselves. I believe it is as it was with Jacob when he fled from Esau and took stones for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. **"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."** It is sweet to me to think that the thoughts and desires of our hearts are carried to heaven by the angels. And the answers to our prayers are carried, by the angels, to us from the heart of God in glory. I believe this is a picture of the fulfillment of the command to pray without ceasing. It is not our work, but the work of God in us.

Many times the true prayer is offered up in secret. No one on earth sees or knows that the prayer is going up. It may be in thanksgiving for the many mercies of God, seen and unseen. Or it may be in praise to His name for the manifold works of His creation. Or it may be a groan of felt unworthiness because of some remem-

bered sin or shortcoming. Or it may be asking for direction or protection in a difficult way. The lips may not even move, but the lips of the heart are crying out to God. The Lord commanded His disciples to enter into the closet, and then to shut their door, and then offer their prayer in secret. I believe the closet is our heart, and that the door is that which shuts us in from the world and its demands upon us - even the Lord Himself. No matter where we are, for a little space of time, we are alone with Him. The lips of the hypocrite confess Him, but their hearts are far from Him. Sometimes the lips of His servants may not even move, but their hearts are near Him and confess Him in truth.

God loves His little ones much more than we are able to love our children. Every individual thing that comes to be here in this world, is being worked together for the good of His people. Even the things that seem to be against us are for our good. And likewise, every good gift and every perfect gift that God has purposed for us shall come down from above to us without fail. God proved His love in a way that is undeniable. **“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”** Knowing and believing these things, we have full assurance of faith that God hears our heartfelt prayers and will give us our desire when we ask according to His will.

Prayer is the Soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;

The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh;
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of
speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that
reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital
breath;
The Christian's native air;
The watch-word at the gate of
death;
He enters heaven with prayer.

From the D. H. Goble Hymn Book
This, I trust, was written in love and in
hope of eternal life.

Elder Jerry B. Farmer

II CORINTHIANS 2:14-16.

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

CORRESPONDENCE

Bro. Robertson,

Hope this note finds you and yours well. Thank you very much for your work in publishing of the Signs of the Times.

Regards,
J.B. Mitchell, Jr.

July 20, 2013

To: Elder Cleo Robertson

From: George W. Hyslip, Church Clerk
The Bordeaux Primitive
Baptist Church

Dear Elder Robertson,

Enclosed is a copy of the obituary of Brother Tracy Jacks. He passed away May 12, 2013.

Brother Jacks travelled extensively to many parts of the country to attend the Primitive Baptist Churches, greeting friends, visiting, and fellowshiping with the brethren. He was a member of The Bordeaux Church in Nashville, Tennessee which he attended faithfully until declining health forced him to remain at home. Those who knew him will miss his love for, and presence in the Church family.

Please publish this obituary in The Signs of The Times when you can.

A brother in hope,
George W. Hyslip

Dear Brother Tony Horton,

Enclosed is a check for \$50.00 for contribution as you see fit. I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times and hope to believe what I read. As I write this my heart feels heavy and at times I feel I want to shout and praise my Heavenly Father.

I believe God gave you and Brother Cleo Robertson and Brother Jerry Farmer a very special gift and talent putting the Signs of the Times together for his little children. Brother Tony I believe we need each others prayers. I am asking for your prayers for me and my family. God bless you. I feel unworthy at times, but when I feel him in my heart and soul I have a hope inside me.

A Sister in Hope,
Ruby Kincaid

July 8, 2013

Tony R. Horton,

I have a change of address. Although I have not moved to another location the county found it necessary to change some addresses.

My new address:

V. B. Linn
Serenity Care Home
269 Little Sand Run Rd.
Buckhannon, WV 26201

I have enjoyed reading the "Signs of the Times". It has proved to be a source of comfort to me while living my sunset years at this assisted living facility.

The staff here at Serenity are kind to me and render a service sufficient for my natural needs but there is no spiritual communion that can only come from one that has been taught of the Lord.

I thank God for the excellent choice of material that the staff has so faithfully selected for their readers. The editorials submitted by Elders Jerry Farmer and Cleo Robertson and others have served as an answer to a need to this poor and undone beggar of God's mercy.

I pray that our Lord and Master will continue to smile down upon those that have a part in publishing the oldest Primitive Baptist periodical in America.

In a precious hope,
V. B. Linn

EPHESIANS 1:4-6.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

VOICES OF THE PAST

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(The last article on the subject by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written not long before his passing — published in the Signs October 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preachings and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve.

While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the *author* of *sin*. They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to

be restricted to, and beyond which limitation he must not extend his government, without subjecting himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

"The vain race of flesh and blood
Contend with their Creator, God;
When mortal man presumes to be
More holy, wise or just than he."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity*, have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on his adorable perfections, or withhold from him that which he has ordained for the manifestation of his glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of him and of his government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and his name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out.

He keepeth back the face of his throne, the place and power of his government, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite

purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of his own will and pleasure does he himself conform. He "**worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.**" - Eph. 1:11. "**Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.**" - Isa. xlvi. 10.

In this connection he says, "**I am God and there is none like me.**" And in the revelation of the Lamb in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. **The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**" - Rev. iv. 10, 11. "**O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again! For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.**" - Romans xi. 33-34.

When God created the heavens and the earth no other power than his own was employed, no wisdom but his own was consulted, nor was there any

other than his own will to dictate what honor for what purpose anything should be created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to form his vessels as he pleases; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so?

The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, ***What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.*** - Rom.ix.22 23. Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? ***“Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?”***

How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, ***“Hell is naked before him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his***

understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand ?”- Job xxvi. 6-14.

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that he has condescended to let us know of his great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of his predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom? Has he stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in this thick cloud, and ***“given to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment,”*** (Prov. viii. 29,) and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When he set his throne above the heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and with-

out the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that "The heavens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showing his handiwork?"

But, say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure: We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that he has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the heavens, we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass his bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if he has left murderers and blood-thirsty men or devils unrestricted by his predestinating decree? To our mind, either every-

thing or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

"Pains and deaths around us fly-
Till he bids us we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Unless the God of heaven sees
fit."

For death and hell can do no more than his hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make him a sinner, or charge on him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is he amenable to any law above himself? If so, by what law can he be indicted, in what court can he be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is his eternal right to do all his pleasure, "Nor give to mortals an account, of his actions or decrees."

It savors of atheism to deny that he is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for his own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that he had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that he had a right to create them according to his own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge him with error because he did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them

worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge him for not creating them angels, nor angels because he did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made.

Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but because they were precisely what he intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made has been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything he has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided—for event with him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or he would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. **“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”** Acts xv. 18.

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny his determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has made certain by his determinate counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, The living know that they must die; but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of himself, for he has challenged the universe to tell with whom he has taken counsel, or who has instructed him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of his people, **“Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son,”** (Romans viii 29); but that the well beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by his murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God.

Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life, **“I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”** - Acts iii. 17, 18. **“For of a truth against thy**

holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” - Acts iv. 27, 28.

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of his garments, and the lot cast for his seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated.

Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in his all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with food by his determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that “We know that all things work together for good to them that

love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the government of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God’s government extends only to deeds of men, then is his absolute government totally excluded for “**As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one.**” - Rom. iii. 10-12. We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend his designs, dare to say he has no designs.

*“He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his works, the cause conceals;
But, though his methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth sustain his throne.*

*“In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,
He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confess’d
That what he does is always best.”*

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph’s brethren or Poti-

phar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that he can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory. And thus also, "God" willing to shew his wrath" and to make his power known" endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," as in the case of Pharoah and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharoah until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and his own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharoah and his host in the Red Sea. **"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.**

Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it. Why hast thou made me thus? - Romans ix. 18-20.

The apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of his pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity, between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of his own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by his own determinate counsel wisdom and power, according to that eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in himself before the world began, without subjecting himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgressions of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty to which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of his own will and pleasure, and therefore he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of

earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or be the will of men. As he is in one mind, and none can turn him, his purposes are eternal, like himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If he had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before he created the world, we ask what right has he acquired subsequently to execute the orders of this throne? If it had been his pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt his power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of his being and attributes, to believe that God had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us "Be still, and know that he is God." To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring,

but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if he has today the full control, had he not the same control yesterday and forever? If he has not the full control today, is there any certainty that he will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of his own will, and that he is immutable, then we must admit that he has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny his universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that he is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny his eternal power and Godhead. If he has not the power and wisdom to determine events, how can he cause all things to work together for good to them that love him?

But while we hold that he is supreme in power, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we are certain that he reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dis-

solution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and spirit of our God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe—
October 1, 1880.)

BATH, Maine. June 7, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS:-
I have wanted to write you a long time, to tell you how I enjoy your writings in the SIGNS. I like to read of what you think of the happenings around us. I often wonder at them, and ask myself why this and why that, and as far back as February, 1930, I felt I must tell you how I liked the editorial. I wish I might be given words to tell you some of my thoughts of how I think we are affected by things around us. I know it is so, however hard I fight it. When I read what Paul wrote in Romans it is a great comfort to me: "For

the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." There are times when I am very much dissatisfied with the life I live. I would like to be good, but when I look within I find much that is evil and bad. It makes me ashamed, and I know I cannot do one good act. But I have a very bright place to look back to, and I know the sermon Elder Dodson preached was for me. My sins all rolled away and everything was peace and joy; that was a wonderful time. I am a great lover of nature, the outdoors has a great fascination for me. I was reading about the trees of Lebanon, they were of God's planting. I was at Fort Popham the other day and watched the waves roll in, and thought of how they came just so far, and no farther. What a mighty hand held them, and the other night when I saw the rainbow I thought of God's promise. All those things are wonderful, and when I look into the heavens and see the stars and think how they are held in place, and think of this wonderful world, I have a feeling of awe come over me.

How I would love to be with you all at the Association. It brings sad thoughts to me, for sister Agnes and I had planned much on this spring, but it was not to be. She was a good sister to me, but my loss is her gain. I hope I can say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," but it is with a sad heart. We have met at Sister Attie's for meeting as there are so few of us. God's ways are mysterious and past finding out. As long as God keeps my hope

and gives me patience to wait all will be well.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, give you food to eat that will enable you to feed his flock, and give you strength to stand by the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

With fellowship and love for the truth you speak and write, I hope I am you sister,

Rachel Beal Potter.

IMPORTANT THINGS

Each of us use the expression, "I believe."

Do we, however conscientiously ask ourselves why we believe what we believe? Or do we believe — or profess to believe, certain things without substantial ground for believing? The things we believe and practice in everyday life are important; while the things we believe and practice in our religious life are much more important.

Are you a member of an organization called a church? If not, do you lean toward one, or another? In either case do you know what the doctrines of your organization are? Do you know your Articles of Faith? Does your church actually believe and practice its creed? Have you ever inquired into the facts of the history of your organization?

Though there are many organizations, known by different names, there is but one Church of God. There is but one foundation — Jesus Christ. The doctrine of the Church is such as He

and His apostles taught; and these only, which He has caused to be recorded for us. Names mean little except to historians; while the truth means much, or should mean much to each of us. Doctrines firmly held and practiced is the test of a gospel church.

The history of each organization should show how and why it came into existence, and who was its founder; it will show whether its beginning was an attempt to reform an existing organization; whether it was the result of a "new" revelation; or whether it is founded upon rational principles, or upon the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Men have long since ceased to blush at the name "Christian." Though first given in derision to those who believed and followed a "crucified Christ," the stigma has been removed for the "ordinary professor" by the keeping alive of "smooth things, and discarding "hard" sayings. It was not so at the beginning, and it is not so now. For believers then believed all things which Jesus taught; and believers, true believers, still believe and hold fast to those same things. These things have no variations, or different shades; they are not subject to alterations to suit particular times or notions. They are eternal; — they are right for all times or conditions. Believers are conformed to them, rather than they being conformed to believers.

If all "believers" knew the truth, and if "truth" did not take on so many variations in the professions of men, it would not be necessary to "try the spirits." But the chimericals of much of pro-

fessed truth make it necessary to “beware of every wind of doctrine,” and to hold fast to that only which fits the original perfectly. A searching, if prompted of the right spirit, will lay aside the “doctrines of men;” for “he that hath an ear” will hear only what the Spirit says. The Spirit displays the truth in its mysterious splendor; and at the same time brands all its would-be kindred as false.

The Scriptures contain all that God has been pleased to reveal of His eternal will and purpose. Inspired men recorded them; and the same Spirit that inspired acts also to reveal and confirm them to whomsoever they pertain. No further revelations have been made, nor are necessary for the doctrine and order of the church, despite the claims that men make.

The simplicity of the true worship of God, — the worship in Spirit and in truth, has no attractions for “wise and prudent” men. Only babes in Christ are able to understand and rejoice in the completed and fulfilled type and shadow manner of worship, which was formerly proper, but is now comprehended in the “Simplicity that is in Christ.” 2 Cor. 11:3.

We call attention to these things. If any are exercised in them they might well hear the apostle Paul when he says, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” 1 Thess. 5:21.

Elder John Wood

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in Lowland, NC on October 12-13, 2013. As you enter Lowland, take the first road on the right and the Church is located a short distance on the right at 144 Middle Prong Road.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The 2013 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Tarboro Church located in Tarboro, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 5 and Sunday, October 6, 2013. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Travel about 65 miles out of Raleigh and exit off at Exit 485. At the stop sign, turn left. Go over the overhead bridge and turn right at the second stoplight (St. James Street). The church will be about one mile and is located on the corner next to the railroad.

We invite our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

(Our association was originally scheduled to be held with Skewarkey Church, in Williamston, NC. Due to the illness of the dear brother, it was agreed they would not try to have the association this year).

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, September 29th, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30. Roaring River Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location; the meeting house is located at 10060 Austin-Trap Hill Road, Trap Hill, N.C. 28685 From I-77, Exit 93 turn West on Zepher Road. Go about 3

miles and turn right on Mountain Park Road. Go through the 4 way stop at Mountain Park. Go to the next stop sign and turn left on Thurman Road. Go about 200 yards and turn right on US 21. Go 4 miles and turn left on Trap Hill Road. Go 200 yards and turn left on Roaring Gap Church Road. Go to stop sign and turn right on Austin-Trap Hill Road. Go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Eighty-First Annual Session of the Lower Mayo Primitive Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Russell Creek Meeting House, on Friday and Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 2013. Dates being October 4 & 5, 2013. Location: 242 Moorefield Store Road, Stuart, Va. 24171. Coming North or South on Va. #8, approximately 8 miles south of Stuart, Va. Turn east on Ayers Orchard Road, #653. Go 1 mile to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn

right, go ¼ mile to church on right. Coming East or West on US #58, turn south on Southfork Farm Loop, #827 to Ayers Orchard Road, # 653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road, #631. Turn left, go ¼ mile to church on right. Coming West on NC #704, turn North on VA – Line Road, #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, #631. Go 2 ½ miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters, and all believers in Salvation by Grace to join us for this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952-2098

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The two hundred and nineteenth session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Floyd County, VA. This session will be entertained by Indian Creek (P.B.C.) located in Indian Valley on (787) Highway in Floyd, Co.

The Association will convene on Saturday before the fourth Sunday and will continue on Sunday date being 21st & 22nd of September, 2013, the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway 787 in Indian Valley, Va.

Those coming by way of Route 221 or 52 or Route 8 come to Willis, VA. Turn on to Highway 787, go approximately seven miles, church is on left side of road.

We invite all Ministers of like Faith and Order, also Brothers and Sisters, and Friends to be with us.

Thomas Pegram (Mod.)
J.B. Mitchell (Clerk)

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 09/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

**SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)**

Hancocks Church will host the next session of the Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of September 29, 2013. The church is located on Ayden Golf Club Road, near Ayden, North Carolina. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union will be held at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church located on Malmaison Road in Pittsylvania County, Virginia on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in September, 2013. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Sister Peggy Wells, Clerk

**WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING**

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held on the fifth Sunday in September. September 29th, 2013 at Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church, located at corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC. Preaching service begins at 10:30 A.M.

We welcome and invite the ministers of our faith and order as well as our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Mod.
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2013

Greg Webb, IL	25.00
Loy Rodgers, AR	5.00
Eld. James Howard, AL	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
R. E. Bianco, TX.....	5.00
Jimmy Tucker, NC	5.00
Lena Gray, VA	5.00
Amy Lane, VA	10.00
Mary E. Poff, VA	5.00
Judith Ravan, VA	10.00
Ruby Kincaid, OH.....	50.00

OBITUARIES

ALVIS GOLD "SAM" BEACHAM

Brother Sam was a true Friend and Brother at North Creek Primitive Baptist Church. He loved coming to Church and when he came in the door his face was like sunshine on a cloudy day. He loved the hymns that were sung. Upon asking for a home with the Church on May 28, 2011, he was received with open arms. He was born November 17, 1923 in Cape False, Virginia and passed from this

life on May 25, 2013 at his home in Kitty Hawk, NC. Brother Sam was a graduate of Kitty Hawk High School, owner of Outer Banks Contractors, an original member of the Kitty Hawk Fire Department and developer of Kitty Hawk Landing Subdivision. A veteran of WWII, he served his country honorably in the U. S. Coast Guard. He also served in a number of civic and community organizations. During the last five years of his life, Brother Sam fulfilled a longstanding goal by building a custom 32ft boat in his workshop. He was a loving husband, dad and granddad, dedicated to his family and community.

Brother Sam is survived by his wife of 66 years, Gay Dowdy Beacham. Also surviving are three sons: Mike and wife Wanda, Tim and wife Loui and Ricky plus seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

A celebration of life was held at Austin Cemetery in Kitty Hawk on Monday May 27, 2013 by Elder Milton Lupton, Elder Gene Lupton and Mr. Brad Bradshaw.

Be it therefore resolved that three copies of this obituary notice be made, one for the family, one for the Church record and one for publication in 'Signs of the Times'.

Elder Milton Lupton, Pastor
Sister Gail Twiddy, Clerk

GEORGE FRANKLIN BLALOCK

George Franklin Blalock 90, of 2532 John Oakley Road died Sunday June 23, 2013 at Alamance – Caswell Hospice following several years of declining health.

He was born in Prospect Hill September 26, 1922, to James Weldon Blalock and Mary Hasseltine Oakley Blalock, both deceased.

He served for 38 months in the U.S. Army as a medical technician. He retired in 1979 after thirty two years from Western Electric in Burlington. He was a volunteer with hospice and Palliative Care of Alamance–Caswell County.

Survivors include his wife Susan Edwards Blalock of the home, a daughter, Sharron B. Mansfield, three grandchildren Temesia L. Jackson, John R. Mansfield, Jr. and LuAnne C. Mansfield, two great grandsons, one brother Joseph Blalock and one sister Nannie Lou Blackard.

He was predeceased in death by his first wife Louise Simpson Blalock, an infant son George Arnold Blalock, five sisters, Sallie Aldridge, Allie Clayton, Frances King, Margaret King, Lizzie Pritchett and one brother William Blalock.

A funeral service was held at 2:00 p.m. Wednesday June 26, 2013 at Harrelson Funeral Home Chapel in Yanceyville, NC with Elder Jimmy Gray officiating. Burial was in the Blalock Family Cemetery.

Franklin was a person you could count on to help when you had a problem. He will be greatly missed by his brethren, family and friends. A scripture from Revelations 14:13 seems appropriate for Franklin. **“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.”**

Written by request of Moon's Creek Church by one who loved him.

Wayne Edwards

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR SISTER MERTICE S. EVANS

We at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, who called Sister Mertice Evans home on July 14, 2013. Sister Evans was born in Pickens County, AL on February 5, 1941 to Benson & Beatrice Stokes.

Sister Evans was a retired nurse of 42 years and a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Evans was preceded in death by her parents; a son, Gregory Dale Evans; and two brothers. She is survived by her husband of 52 years Bro. Kenneth Evans; a daughter, Tracie (Dale) Holliman; a son, Timothy (Stacey) Evans; four grandchildren,

Tyler Holliman, Zack Holliman, Ross Evans, Bailey Evans; and one sister, Laudice Rushing.

The funeral was conducted at Dowdle Funeral Home in Millport, AL by Elder C.C. Morris and Elder James Pugh.

Sister Evans was laid to rest at the Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Sister Evans will be greatly missed by all. She went to many meetings around the country and kept many visitors in her home. Her great love for the truth could be seen in all that she did for the comfort of all our visitors.

May all who mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of God who makes no mistakes.

Elder James Pugh - Moderator
Sister Jackie Pugh - Clerk

ELVA SNIDER CROTTS GURNEY

God, who is perfect in all His work, removed Sister Elva Snider Crotts Gurney from this world on April 8, 2013. She was born January 14, 1912 making her life here 101 years, 2 months, and 25 days.

Sister Elva was the daughter of Jim and Alice Shoaf Snider of Churchland, N.C. She has seven younger brothers all of whom prede-

ceased her. In her youth, the family attended the Churchland Primitive Baptist Church.

She and her first husband, John Hoyle Crofts had two children, Jackie Cates of Durham, N.C. and John Hoyle Crofts, Jr. of Chesapeake, Virginia. Survivors also include four grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and seventeen great-great-grandchildren.

Sister Elva and her husband, Hoyle moved to Norfolk, Virginia in 1951. She joined the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized in 1962. Sadly, Hoyle died in 1966 after which three years later, she married Hix Mitchell.

Upon moving to Durham, Sister Elva was received into membership of Durham Primitive Baptist Church on June 20, 1993 by letter from Salem Primitive Baptist Church of Copper Hill, Virginia. Her family expressed that she loved and enjoyed the years that she lived in Durham and how she cherished the church.

Her funeral was held at the First Baptist Church of Welcome, N.C. by her minister grandsons, John Crofts and Jeff Crofts and by Elder Cleo Robertson, Pastor of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. Elder Robertson's remarks came from the Song of Solomon from which he lovingly spoke. From remarks gleaned from her grandsons, it was abundantly clear that Sister Elva was a strong believers in salvation by grace and that she had made an im-

pression on her grandsons concerning election and predestination.

Her favorite Bible verse was from **Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 8 & 9.** **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

Sister Elva was not able to attend services at Durham in her later years due to the distance to the church from her home where she lived with family.

We will continue to miss her fellowship and believe that her spirit has returned to God who gave it.

Written by Brother Larry Byrd at the request of Durham Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Sister Betty McPherson, Clerk

BROTHER RONALD TRACY JACKS

Brother Ronald Tracy Jacks of Mt. Olive, Alabama departed this life on May 12, 2013 after an extended illness due to cancer. He was 71 years old. He was born June 23, 1941 in Madison County Alabama to the late Brother Rufus and Sister Wilma Jacks. He is survived by his loving wife Betty Jacks of 51 years, two daughters, Rhonda Jacks Moore and husband Don, Betsy Jacks Harris and husband Bobby, brother Clay

Jacks and wife Sherry, two sisters Carol Holder and husband Jimmy, and Brenda Underwood, three grandchildren, Hunter, Lillie, and David Harris, and many nieces and nephews.

The funeral was held at the Spry Funeral Home in Huntsville, Alabama. His pastor, Elder James Howard, and Elder Jerry Farmer of The Little Vine Olde Association officiated. Internment was in The Miller Cemetery in Madison County near Plevna, Alabama.

Brother Tracy asked for a home with the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee on October 7th, 2001 and was ordained to the office of deacon on November 4, 2007. He traveled extensively attending meetings and associations of The Old Baptist Churches. He dearly loved to be with and visit the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Churches. He was well respected and loved. He will long be remembered and missed by those who knew him.

He retired from The Norfolk Southern Railroad in March of 2000. He loved the game of baseball and took great joy in working with the youth programs in his community. He also enjoyed gardening and continued to pass on his skills for growing an abundance of fresh food to his grandchildren.

Written at the request of The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church while in conference. One copy to be sent to the family, one copy to The 'Signs of The Times' for publication, and one copy for the church records.

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

ROBERT E. LEE MOORE

In loving memory of our Brother;
Robert E. Lee Moore.

We at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, who called Brother Robert Moore home on July 3, 2013. Brother Moore was born on September 30, 1919 in Moore's Bridge AL.

Survivors include his wife of 67 years, Charlean Moore; his daughter Vanessa (Cronin) Davis; his sons, Steve (Cynthia) Moore and Stewart Moore; his grandchildren, Christina (Jeremy) Howton, Brandon (Melissa) Moore, Sidney Simmons, and Kayla Moore; and his great-grandchildren, Josie Perkins, Hunter Harkey, and Macie Moore.

He was born and raised in the Moore's Bridge community and was a deacon at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church. He served in the 4th Infantry Division during World War II. Brother Moore was on the first wave that hit the beaches on D-Day.

Services were held at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church by Elder James Pugh and he was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Brother Moore was a firm believer of the truth and the absolute predestination of all things.

He will be greatly missed. May the Lord reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh - Moderator
Sister Jackie Pugh - Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“ The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ”

VOL. 181

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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WE travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on every hand;
But Jesus guides us through the vale;
The Christian's hope can never fail.

Huge sorrows meet us as we go,
And devils aim our overthrow;
But vile infernals can't prevail:
The Christian's hope shall never fail.

Sometimes we're tempted to despair,
But Jesus makes us then his care:
Though numerous foes our souls as-
sail,
The Christian's hope shall never fail.

We trust upon the sacred word,
The oath and promise of our Lord;
And safely through each tempest sail:
The Christian's hope shall never fail.

Gadsby's Col.

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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EDITORIAL

JOB

Job 1:1-2, "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters."



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Based upon the scriptures and the experience of Job, I am made to believe that he typifies the Church of Jesus Christ. His name means "hated or per-

secuted." So the Church of Christ is hated and persecuted as He was. It always has been and will continue to be as long as it is in the world. It is in the world, but not of the world. As Christ prayed to the Father for His apostles in John 17:14-16, "**I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.**" Then, in John 17:20, He includes all His elect, "**Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.**" He tells us "**If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.**" The command is "**come out from among them, and be ye separate.**" To eschew evil is to "**keep away from or avoid evil.**" The Lord's people have no desire to associate with or follow those who would do evil once they have tasted the Lord is gracious. The Lord keeps and directs His little ones. Psalm 108:105, "**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.**"

Job was perfect and upright. The perfection or righteousness was not of Job in the flesh. He was a sinner as all of the progeny of Adam are for "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "There is none righteous, no, not one." "For all have sinned, and come short

of the glory of God." We all were by nature children of wrath even as others. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in the sight of a righteous, holy God. The perfection or righteousness is Christ in His people, their hope of glory. For "out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God had shined." Christ is their righteousness which is their perfection of beauty. Romans 8:10, **"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."** **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."** Where is this kingdom? Luke 17:20-21 says, **"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."** He is the king of kings. He rules and reigns even this day in the hearts of His people. He has brought down every idol you have setup as He will have no other gods before Him. You are His subjects and He has written His laws in your heart and put them in your mind. He will be to His people a God, and they shall be to Him a people.

The scripture says "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." I am made to believe this day was a gospel day. The sons of God were His ministers. When His ministers, any-

time, come before the Lord's people to preach, they present themselves before the Lord because He is in His people. Many times when we feel so blessed and feel so lifted up in the Spirit to experience such joy at being with a portion of His people in love and fellowship and hearing the gospel preached, it seems that Satan comes among us to bring us down again.

The Lord said unto Satan, **"Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth..."** Satan responded that the Lord had made a hedge about him, and about his house and all that he had. "But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." The Lord told Satan, that all Job had was in his power, but Satan could not touch Job. So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. Then, there was a day when Job's children were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house. A messenger came unto Job and said that the oxen and asses were stolen, servants were killed and only he escaped to tell Job. Immediately, there came another messenger who said that the sheep were burned up as well as the servants and only he escaped to tell Job. Immediately again, another messenger came and said the Chaldeans carried away the camels and killed the servants and only he escaped to tell Job. And while he was yet speaking, a fourth messenger came and said that a great wind from the wilderness smote the four corners of the house where his sons and daughters were and the

young men were killed and only he escaped to tell Job. No mention is made of Job's daughters. I am persuaded to believe these messengers were of Satan. They were Satan's messengers and their reports were lies to tempt and try Job. Christ said that Satan was a liar, abode not in the truth and that there was no truth in him. Therefore, it is impossible for Satan to tell the truth. Satan, in the form of a serpent, lied to Eve in the garden.

The Apostle Paul experienced the messenger of Satan buffeting him as a thorn in the flesh. The Lord told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Consequently, the messengers were not telling the truth. Job experienced great sorrow and distress but he did not charge God foolishly and so sinned not in all his grief.

Again God told Satan that Job was in Satan's hand, but save his life. God set the bounds of Satan and he could not go beyond those bounds. So Satan smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his feet unto his crown. He suffered severe tribulations. The Apostle James writes, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." As the Apostle Paul wrote, "we glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experi-

ence, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Christ said that in the world you shall have tribulation. But He also said "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." He has already gone through more than we will ever experience and He has overcome all of it. Job said "But He knoweth the way that I take: *when* He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Job's wife told him to curse God and die. Job said she spoke as one of the foolish women. Whether she was a child of grace I do not know, but she was not of the same faith as Job. She is not mentioned again in the book of Job.

Job's three friends heard of all that he had gone through and came to mourn with him and to comfort him. Job's grief was very great. These friends were not of the same faith as Job and therefore were miserable comforters. They began to tell Job what he must do to receive the blessings of God. Have you experienced miserable comforters? They tell you of all the works of the flesh that you must do before God will do anything. In this day and time they also think it is comforting to assure you that you will again see and be with your departed loved ones in heaven. They are not of our faith and there is no comfort in that. If we are His, we look forward to seeing our Lord and being with Him. Elihu seems to have been sent by the Lord to set forth the truth, as a gospel minister.

The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning. The latter end of a child of God is from the time the Lord established his kingdom in their heart and they are brought into an understanding of the truth. They are brought out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light. The Lord is their hope of glory. To experience the love and mercy and His grace is far better than the beginning of one's natural life.

In the latter end of Job his children were seven sons and three daughters, exactly the same as in the beginning. So it is with God's elect. Seven is a complete number. God chose (elected) a certain number that constituted the bride of Christ, His body the church. Their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life which is Christ. Not one can be lost and not one can be added. It is complete. Christ said that "this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 10:29, **"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."** How comforting to a child of grace.

His daughters describe the children of God. In all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job. In the Song of Solomon 1:8 Christ the bridegroom calls His bride the fairest among women. There is a beauty in His people that far surpasses anything of this world. It is Christ, the beauty of Holiness. "Out of Zion, the

perfection of beauty, the Lord doth shine."

In Christian love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Aug. 23, 2013

Dear Bro. Tony,

I see it's time to renew our "Signs". May God bless all of you who have a part in publishing this wonderful periodical. May it be His will to raise up devoted brethren in the future as in the past that it can continue.

In love and hope,
Peggy and Randolph Wells

8-16-2013

Tony,

I am sending a check for 2 years renewal to the Signs. Use the rest for what you think best.

I look forward each month to reading it. Sometime I see a hope for me.

Gradie Strader

8-16-2013

Mr. Horton,

Thanks for helping to get the good news out. I enjoy the Signs and the extra is for what you ever.

Rose

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE REFINING POT.

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die: but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.” - Zech. xiii. 8, 9.

“He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.” - Mal. iii. 3.

God's dealings with national, typical Israel are of very much interest to the church of Christ. Therein is discovered to us the attributes of the Lord, and in this nation we have a portraiture of the manifold vicissitudes that pertain to the children of Zion even to the present day. This people were exceptionally favored above all the nations of the earth. To them were committed the oracles of God; blessings peculiar and abundant were their heritage. At times they worshiped God in grateful praises for his sovereign graciousness unto them, but ah, how soon they forgot his works, they corrupted their ways, debased themselves in their forgetfulness and wandered treacherously from the Lord. They knew what it was to flourish beneath the smiles of the Lord, and to fade and

die beneath his rebukes. How often the Lord wrought for his name's sake, (Ezek. xx. 9,) shewing them mercy and delivering them from their adversities. In reading the history of Israel we see that severe indeed were the fiery ordeals they were subjected to. Look at this: **Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead; in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.**

As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger, and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you.” Ezek. xxii 18-22. Ah, though the furnace was so severe there were ever some silver, some that were precious in the eyes of the Lord, a remnant according to the election of grace. So in Zech. xiii 8, 9, **“Two parts therein shall be cut off, and die; but the third part shall be left therein.”** This third part are his very people, and they confess the Lord to be their God. By fiery trials the Lord separated them from their idolatries, uncleanness and

witchcraft. He purified them by the spirit of judgment and of burning from all the foreign mixtures that had become mixed with the pure worship that God had ordained among his people when he redeemed them from the house of bondage. Moab was the Lord's washpot, (Psalms lx. 8,) and Babylon was also the refining pot for Israel. Seventy years they were in that fiery furnace to purify them from idolatry. Though the fires of exile and captivity were painful, their songs were hushed, and in sighing and weeping they spent this long night of affliction, yet all worked together for good. There they bemoaned themselves, and sighed and wept, but the morning came, and they came forth with singing (Isaiah xxxv. 10,) and laughter; yes, the bright shining silver sang, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Are "the third part" his people? Are they silver and gold? Then he will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried. In graciousness and faithfulness, for his own glory and their good, the Lord will bring the third part through the fire.

It is not my intention to recite the narrative in particular, in which is told the fulfillment of this prophetic word in typical Israel, but, the Holy Spirit enabling me, I will present some glimpses of the subject as have ever been and are now experienced by those who are in truth the people of God. "I [Jehovah of hosts] will bring the third part through the fire." "He [Christ, the Word made flesh, the messenger of the covenant,]

shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." By these declarations of the Scriptures the Refiner is no other than God. This being so it is our comfort, as believers in God, to be assured that he is not trifling or experimenting with his people; he is not using them as playthings when he turns his hand upon them (Isaiah i. 25,) and puts them in the refining pot. The little that we know of God persuades us to believe that he is holy and wise, gracious and almighty. All his ways are judgment, just and right is he. When his saints come forth of this and that, and all the fiery furnaces that the Refiner puts them into, will they not be to his praise and honor and glory? In very truth they will; my soul is exultant in truth they will; my soul is exultant in the thought. It is so sustaining and uplifting to have right thoughts of God. The Refiner is the Lord of hosts, the silver is his own elect, his redeemed and regenerated people, whom he hath eternally loved and hath predestinated unto eternal glory. The silver is owned by the Refiner. Who then shall question his sovereign right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight? The sorest chastenings of our heavenly Father are for our profit. (Heb. xii. 10.) Our Refiner knows that there is much dross mingled with the silver in his people; we think we know it, too, but he better knows it than we, and what is more, he knows just exactly what fire and what degrees of fiery trials will separate this and that alloy from the silver, bring it to the surface, and that only his own hand that put us in the cru-

cible and melted as can purge away the dross. Have you not prayed, dear child of God, that you might more brightly shine in the beauties of the Savior? Yes, you say,

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

'Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
And he, I trust, has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair."

O, there is much chaff to be burned up, and tin and dross to be purged away all the days that we are in the earthly house of this tabernacle. Well, child of God, how many times have you been in the refining pot? What fires have you been brought through? and in what furnace of affliction are you now being melted? To tell all your answer would be a long account. The Lord has many fires, and fire after fire to bring his chosen through; some of his dear children are seldom out of the melting pot. The furnace of affliction in which the Lord has his chosen may be, in his providence, some outward earthly trial. It may be the blasting of our temporal prosperity; we are called upon perhaps to see nothing but shattered hopes and blighted expectations. Perhaps by God's dispensation we find our bodily health declining, and wearing and painful sickness is our lot. Then how

sore to meet with bereavements, when strong ties are rent and torn. But there are living troubles which are as a living fire; some such afflictions are never breathed to any other, but are as a continuing furnace to the soul. Then, when it pleaseth the Lord, he can so kindle a fire to melt us that the common cares of life are a daily furnace to us. Or our Refiner's fire may be the fiery darts of the wicked, the buffetings of the messenger of Satan, the devil's cruel insinuations and accusations. What a harassed life some of God's dear children have; all their surroundings are such that we wonder they endure such fiery trials. O they are not utterly consumed, the Lord, the Refiner, loves them, and his invisible and gracious hand sustains them. A child of God cannot always say with Job, "**I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet, trouble came.**" - Job. iii 26. Our circumstances may have been very different when trouble came. Trouble came; unmet? Never. Let us not believe such atheistical stuff. Trouble came, the fire burns, the child of God is in the crucible, and soon he is melted because of trouble. The affliction of the silver is not to destroy the silver, but to refine it. The bush that Moses saw burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed; and Moses said, "**I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.**" Exodus iii. 3. And I am sure if we have eyes to see the elect of God in the refining pot, if we have a heart to enter somewhat into the intimacy between the Refiner and the silver, if we

can view the scene taking place in the crucible, we shall say, This is a great sight, such a sight which if once seen can never be altogether obliterated from memory's vision.

To a right apprehension of what is to be witnessed as we contemplate the children of God in the fire it will be borne in mind that all is not silver in the pot, there is dross there also. The child of God has two natures, one pure silver, the other all alloy, veritable dross, though some of it may very much resemble silver. The silver is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the dross is the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. (Eph. iv. 22-24.) Having this well understood I would that we together might look into the crucible and see the tribulation of the silver therein, and let us know that while we are obtaining some glimpses therein that there is One who sees far more and deeper than we, One who sees all; the Lord, the Refiner, sitteth near by, his heart and his eyes are there perpetually. (1 Kings ix. 3.) He has dominion over the fire, and in wisdom regulates its intensity; nothing is taking place in the refining pot without him. By the heat of the fiery trial the child of God begins to be moved, as silver he is troubled; the varied alloys of our carnal nature also are agitated in affliction's furnace. That one and the selfsame person should be agitated by such contradictory emotions is a mystery. In the refining pot the child of God becomes melted; yes, the new man is molten, and is moved

like melted, boiling silver in the refining pot, and the dross also is put in motion by the fiery ordeal. What strugglings what warfare is experienced by the tried soul. As the silver and the alloy are boiling, at certain stages they are so mixed, there is such confusion of the substances, that the child of God cannot himself determine what is silver and what is of the flesh. O this he learns, that he is frail and sinful. So mixed sometimes are the silver and dross that the poor soul in the furnace cannot determine whether he is a child of God or a child of the devil. "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path." - Psalms cxlii. 3. So our Refiner ever distinguishes, ever knows the sighs and yearnings of the silver. **"The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts."** - Prov. xvii 3. While the child of God is in the crucible he is being tested indeed, for consider what darkness he is in much of the time. The providences of the Lord are often as an impenetrable cloud, and blind unbelief, that foul, God-dishonoring dross, comes the surface, and our tried souls are entombed in its dismalness. Ah, yes, there boils up out of the depths of our sinful hearts murmuring and rebellions, and we pray, but all our prayers are not silver prayers, there are dross prayers, peevish cries; we pray, Take us out of the fire, but we are still kept in, the fire still burns, our Refiner blows upon it and it becomes the hotter. Yes, in affliction's furnace the believer will find thoughts bubbling

up, imaginations of the carnal mind, and in passing through these fiery trials the Lord purposes to separate the dross thoughts from the silver thoughts. Many have been and are our thoughts of God, of his providences and of things that we imagine to be the truth; we cherish them as silver, but they are base alloy. Ah, what misconceptions we are liable to; we sometimes think that God is altogether such an one as ourselves. Silver thoughts are ever according to the testimony of the holy Scriptures, and those that are not sustained by the word of God, no matter how pretentious, no matter how we have gained them, no matter how they appear to shine, no matter how much we hug them to our bosom, they are nothing but very dross and scum, and in the refining pot we shall find it to be so to our soul's discomfiture. God's fires are where the wood, hay and stubble, where heresies are consumed. The false, the counterfeit, that religiousness that originates in our flesh, the erroneous ideas which we thought were right, and were friendly to Christ, are now in the furnace discovered to us to be opposed to that true and vital knowledge of God, (2 Cor. x. 5,) and all such by sore tribulations are separated from the faith which is of the operation of God. Yes, the refining pot is the place for the destruction of inherent Arminianism. Self-righteousness is only wood, hay, stubble, and affliction's fire will burn it up. As the dross comes to the surface we look into the refining pot, and nothing but this offensive scum is seen. We say,

Is this a child of God? Look at Jonah in the refining pot in Nineveh and its vicinity; he is exceedingly displeased, and very angry and even in the face of God he spits forth this: "I do well to be angry, even unto death." As we stand by and look upon this, depicted in the fourth chapter, do we not blush and feel ashamed that such behavior should be in any creature? Surely this is dross. Is there any silver in Jonah? Yes, look beneath this shameful scum, look at him in the belly of the whale, in the second chapter, and there the precious grace of God, the silver, is seen. The Lord of hosts sits as a refiner and purifier of silver, and as the dross comes to the surface it is his work, because of his great interest in the silver, to remove all the base scum away. Let us not overlook this one thing as we consider the elect of God in the furnace of affliction, that amidst all the severity of their trials they are given to prove the unfailing mercifulness of the Lord their God. Our Refiner loves his own, he ever has compassion for his silver. He, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering when he was put to perfect grief for the atonement of our transgressions. He saw the travail of his own soul and was satisfied; yes, for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. So he sitteth as a Refiner and witnesseth the travail of soul of his tried people, his beloved silver ones, in the refining pot. He sees the end, that they shall come forth to his praise, they shall very

gloriously reflect his own image.

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy Head feels the pain.
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain.

Then trust me and fear not, thy life is secure;
My wisdom is perfect, supreme is my power;
In love I correct thee, thy soul to refine,
To make thee at length in my likeness to shine."

The Refiner takes away from time to time the upboiling dross; he has no pleasure in this scum, for it mars the divine excellence of his silver. Yes, tried one, thy Refiner will take away the dross from the silver, and thou shalt come forth from the fires a vessel well pleasing in his eyes. (Prov. xxv. 4.) Though in your trials you find so much that is not pure and gracious and Christlike, though your melted soul is feelingly buried in this all upboiling scum, and your heart aches to find there is so much of it, thy loving Refiner will purely purge away thy dross and take away all thy tin. (Isaiah i. 25.) By divine teaching, errors are swept away, for God's word, his truth, is like fire. The gracious teachings of the Spirit of truth (John xvi. 13,) separates us from our mistaken ideas of doctrine,

and we are made quite willing in our fiery temptations to have all heresies carted away to the dunghill. The people of God are glorified in the truth, but errors dim the lustre of the faith of God's elect. O the grievous scum of the depravity of our flesh, what shall cleanse this away? Only the hand of the once crucified One can purge it from thy aching conscience. Yes, the dear Refiner who sitteth near by will put forth his hand, and the voice of his pierced hand removing the scum will say to the heart of his silver underneath, This is my blood shed for the remission of sins. O blessed removal of the dross by the precious blood of the Lamb! At such a moment as this, the silver, though still in affliction, can look up with smiles unto the face of the Refiner, saying, I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Scum, vain imaginations, delusions, heresies, murmurings, unbelief, atheisms, all such are not evidences of the grace of God; they are not to be exhibited, looked upon or mentioned as evidences presenting us as the children of God; such is in all mankind. Such things are vile, they are not precious, and to be as God's mouth we must in our testimony take forth the precious from the vile. (Jer. xv. 19.) Sin in its every aspect is to be loathed, to be refused, to be condemned; we are not to smack our lips over it as though it were enjoyable, good to eat. O Lord, **"thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."** - Hab. i. 13. And shall we feast

our eyes on sin? Surely If we are of God, born again, born of God, if we are silver, our heart-aching prayer will be, Take away all iniquity, and we shall be ashamed, and mourn, and loathe ourselves for all our iniquities. Can such an one whose conversation is not chaste be found mingling among the saints; who tells, with a grin on his face, an obscene anecdote? Shall I by word or look, or in any other way, be a partaker? God forbid. O God, have mercy upon me. How dare such a person profess the name of Christ? How dare they invade the society of believers in the Lamb of God? Child of God, let that one whose life is such be unto you as a leper; keep no company with such. O pray to God to keep thee from this walking pestilence. O flee, in thy heart, to the pavilion of thy God, in the secret of his tabernacle thou shalt find a refuge, and there pour out thy sighs in the hour of temptation. Thy merciful, succoring God **“shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”** - Psalms xci.4. It is so gratifying, moving our souls in thanksgiving to God, that his grace was so sufficient for the apostle Paul that he could write, **“Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe.”** - 1 Thess. ii. 10.

Many are the conflicting thoughts and the prayers of the elect of God while being brought through the fire, for in the Refiner's fire, of whatsoever nature it may be, we are melted and

sink down in the crucible, and wonder why it is that we have fallen into such temptations. In gloom because of the uprising dross, and agitated by our trials, we know in truth that no chastening is joyous, but grievous, and it is not easy for us to understand that any God-glorifying fruits can come out of such distracting, heart-burdensome, burning dispensations. Look into the refining pot and see the children of God therein; you say, I do, and I see some of them have hard thoughts of men, of things and of God; they murmur, and some in rather loud tones express their peevishness. This surely is dross and scum. Yes, but if you have good hearing incline your ear over the refining pot, and from underneath all this scum you shall hear the sighs and prayers of the melted silver. **“How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?”** - Psalms xiii. 1. **“Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?”** - Psalms x. 1. The very time when he is so much needed we fear he has withdrawn, and has taken away his mercies from us, and amazed and disconsolate we ask, **“Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?”** - Psalms lxxvii. 7-9. Do not these complaints very clearly declare that the Lord is the One so needful, so desired? Look at Job when he was in the fur-

nace, you may see the dross. Ah yes, he spake "words without knowledge." In the day of his grief and desperate sorrow his speech was as the speech of one that was desperate. (Job vi. 26.) The dross came to the surface, but let the dross be taken away from the silver and how affectionately we look at the molten silver, at Job in his afflictions. His bereaved soul cries out, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And then so nourished was his faith and hope in God that he says, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." What a comprehensive view he had of God's providence, and how gracious was his soul's acquiescence to the afflicting dispensations of God when he exclaimed, "**What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?**" - Job ii. 10. All afflictions and chastenings endured by the chosen of God are for their good, and the fruit of it all is God-glorifying; so even while in the fire the silver is found to glorify the Lord God. For however inconceivable to the carnal mind, the child of God spiritually thrives in affliction. Melted in the fires we are separated from fleshly dependencies.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."

"O Lord, by these things men

live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." - Isaiah xxxviii. 16. "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." That is, the melted silver shall call upon the Refiner, I, the Lord, will hear them. He is so near the refining pot.

"He knows how deep their groanings are,
And what their secret sighs declare,
And for their comfort has expressed
That all such mourning souls are blest."

In trouble they visit their God and pour out a prayer while his chastening is upon them. The word prayer here means "a secret speech, a whisper." Yes, the cry of the tried heart is only for the ear of the Lord. So very gracious is our God that when the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I, saith the Lord, will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them. Prayers, silver prayers, from that heart prepared by the Lord are the forerunners of his decreed mercies. Such prayers are not tin prayers; silver prayers are not asking amiss, but asking according to the will of the Lord our Refiner.

"They shall call on my name, and I will hear them." In our affliction we are moved by the Holy Spirit to seek the Lord. No other one can afford us help. Ah, it may be before we were brought into trials we were careless,

wayward ones; but now in our tribulations where shall we go? to whom shall we look? "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God: and they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer." Listen to the silver praying, "**Take away all iniquity.**" - Hosea xiv. 2. Take away this hateful dross that darkens my life, mars my peace and shuts out from view the face of my Redeemer. In the chastening fires we are brought into implicit reliance in the atoning blood of Christ, more and more endeared to us becomes the hope of the gospel, and we look with all desire to the merits of our Savior, and when the Comforter applies the blood of Jesus to our sin-aching hearts, then the scum is gone, and the silver face looks up to the face that looks down, and that look of the Lord, the Refiner, says, Thou art mine, my delight, my Hephzibah, and the happy silver says, The Lord is my God. Many are the sighs and cries of the tried saints for resignation to the divine will, and that they might as dear children bear the indignation of the Lord, endure reproaches for the name of Christ, and that they might be kept ever worshipping the everlasting God. The furnace of affliction most surely brings the children of God into more intimate communion with the Lord; here their faith is purified, errors are purged, and they are brought into the necessity of a deeper and more extended knowledge of the characters that Christ sustains to his own. If passing through the fire is to burn up the dross, then let the Lord

do with me as seemeth good in his sight. Unlike material silver from which all alloy has been purely purged away, and is then pure silver, the child of God becomes while in the world again and again mixed with dross. "**How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!**" - Lam. iv. 1. Ah, it becomes tarnished, corroded with earth's defilements. The dross accumulates, it grows up from our depraved nature and mingles itself with the silver. Ah, some of the dear family of God are only out of the furnace for little moments. These little seasons are quietness and joy, and radiant in gratefulness, they reflect the smiling face of God. Then if needs be the Lord puts them in the refining pot again. Surely his purposes are wise and gracious. Though the silver be tried in a furnace of earth and purified seven times, (Psalms xii. 6,) will the silver in the end find fault? will there be a murmuring thought over any or all the seven fires? O there will be perfect acquiescence, there will not be a lisp of complaint, but this shall be the heart's sweet song: My Jesus hath done all things well. The Refiner in all graciousness clears away the dross, and looking into the furnace he sees the melted silver, sees in his tried ones his own image, and he says, It is my people, and the silver's heart responds, The Lord is my God. Would you see a child of God brought through the fire? then look at this picture. There stands Simon Peter in the palace of the high priest warming himself at the fire. Ah, Peter, the Lord has put you into the refining pot, and underneath satan

kindles a fire, for he has desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat; he has insinuated that you are nothing but chaff, and you have thought you are the finest of wheat, all wheat and no chaff, for you have said, Although all should be offended, yet will not I. The fire is kindled, and Peter In the crucible will soon begin to be dissolved by the vehement heat of temptation, and we shall see what silver and what dross he is composed of. The Refiner is near by. "A damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee." This was a hot fire, and Peter is melting hot within, the silver and the dross are all in commotion, and up to the surface comes the dross, and Peter "denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest." Another who saw him "said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man." What, do you think that an oath for confirmation will end the strife, silence your accusers and cause them to believe your lies? Ah, sinful Peter, this is very dross. The fire still burns, and Peter is boiling with emotions; yes, the silver is in motion and the dross is in motion. About the space of one hour another accuser came, and his accusations and questionings were as a vehement flame under the refining pot. This accuser confidently affirmed, saying, of a truth this fellow also was with him, for he is a Galileean, (the accuser was one of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off,) and he saith, "Did

not I see thee in the garden with him?" O Peter, where is thy vehement courage now? will you cut him down with your sword? Ah, the once brave Peter is now a very coward. "Then began he to curse and swear, saying, I know not the man." What, lying, swearing, cursing? Whom was he cursing, himself, his accusers? Was it that he was cursing Jesus? O execrable scum! This is the very scum of scum. Can there be any silver in the refining pot? Yes, for our Savior told him before he was put in the furnace, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." While he was lying, while he was swearing to confirm his lying denials, yes; even while he was cursing, Peter knew, the silver knew, Jesus; the silver ached, the silver sighed, the silver was ashamed. The silver, deep down in the crucible, hidden from all human view, blushed and dared not lift up its face to the Lord. (Ezra ix. 6.) Three horrible boilings up of vileness; once, twice, thrice, enough: "Thou shalt deny me thrice." Not four times. "And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Look into the furnace, and there to our view is Peter, and we say he is all dross, all depravity, he exhibits the very scum of the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. This is all that is outward of Peter in the crucible, and we say, O Peter, thou art so unlovely. "The Lord

turned and looked upon Peter." It is the moment, the set time for the Refiner to skim away the odious scum. Christ looked, O that look! He looked upon Peter, he looked and looked and looked all the dross, all Peter's dense, corrupt scum away, and Peter is transformed. Jesus looked upon him with eyes of injured love; that look said, I have prayed for thee. He looked in such compassionate forgiveness. O that look was the look of the suffering Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and thus Jesus the Refiner took away the dross from the silver. The Refiner looked upon the silver, and Peter (not scum and dross Peter, but silver Peter,) looked upon the Refiner. Who can tell the story of what transpired in the soul of Peter when his eyes met the eyes of the suffering, compassionate Jesus? The lying, swearing, cursing Peter is transformed. The Lord with his eyes, which are as a flame of fire, so looked into the crucible that all the dross was cleansed away, and Peter went out and wept bitterly. O thou art silver Peter. Thy bitter weeping is sweet to us. O Peter, thou art lovely, thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee, nothing but silver now is seen. The broken-hearted, melted silver is all aglow with the likeness of the Lord, the Refiner, who himself is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Jesus turned and looked upon Peter, and he went out and wept bitterly.

Elder Frederick W. Keene

**THE LAST EDITORIAL ARTICLE
WRITTEN BY
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE
THE CORNER, NAIL, THE BATTLE,
BOW AND EVERY OPPRESSOR**

Dear Brother Beebe: — Please give your views on Zech. 10:4, "Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together". I do not recollect of ever having heard any of the brethren preach from this text, and would be glad to have your views upon it, if agreeable to your feelings to give them and oblige.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,

Jno. R. Martin
Franklin Co., Va. April 4, 1881

REPLY

It would afford us great pleasure to comply with the request of our highly esteemed brother, if we were sure that anything we can say would clearly explain the meaning of the Spirit in the use of the figurative expressions employed in the text. There is danger of running into vain and imaginary speculations when we attempt to elucidate some of the dark metaphors which the Holy Spirit has employed in the scriptures of divine truth. The parables and dark sayings of our God are evidently designed to teach us our dependence on him to reveal to us the hidden treasure which they conceal from the wise and prudent of mankind, that we may the more fully realize our dependence

on him to open the scriptures to our understanding.

The prophet Zechariah was contemporary with Ezra, Nehemiah, Joshua, Zerubbabel and others who prophesied the deliverance of Israel from her seventy years captivity in Babylon, their return to Jerusalem, and restoration of their city and rebuilding of their temple, in all of which the spirit of prophecy evidently pointed to the coming of the Messiah and the setting up of the Redeemer's kingdom under the gospel dispensation. In the chapter preceding the one in which our text is found, the cheering prediction is proclaimed in these words: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass". This prediction is applied directly to the coming of Christ—Matt. 21:1-11 and John 11:15. At the time when the prediction should be fulfilled, the Lord by the prophet adds, "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to the sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth". All this seems to look forward to the breaking up of the old Jewish dispensation, the breaking down of the wall of partition which had separated the Jews and Gentiles. The time indicated by the Lord in these words: "When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up

thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south."

The whole connection of this prophecy seems to present under many metaphors, first, the literal purging of Judah from her idol shepherds and abominations, and the cutting off from Ephraim and Jerusalem the horse and chariot, battle bow, and all the idolatrous defenses in which they had trusted, drive out all their oppressors, and to restore them their city, temple and privileges, and in doing this figuratively set forth the redemption of his spiritual or antitypical Jerusalem from her captivity and bondage.

NOTE: Here the pen that for nearly fifty years had not wearied in its labors of consolation, admonition, and instruction, was laid down never to again be taken up in its editorial labors. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord". And may he enable us to be still and know that he is God.

PSALM 89:1.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

1836 - SONSHIP OF ALL THE SAINTS

Circular Letter, White Water Regular Baptist Association of Indiana

The Regular Baptist Association, called White Water, convened with the Church on Pleasant Run Creek, to the Churches composing our body, sendeth this epistle of love:

Dearly Beloved Brethren in the Common Faith: - So many subjects have been presented as the basis of our former circulars, and so narrow are the limits assigned us, that we do but little more than touch the theme, and leave it for your improvement. In this brief way, we shall now invite the churches of our body, and all the members of them, with all who hope for immortality, to a few thoughts on the SONSHIP OF ALL THE SAINTS. This is an all absorbing subject — in every way suitable for contemplation and gratitude, and we hope that all the children of our Heavenly Father may derive great strength and comfort from a true and sensible knowledge and enjoyment of this filial relation.

Jesus Christ is declared in Scripture to be “the only begotten Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased.” This declaration” excludes all others, for He is the only begotten; or as in eternity, the lone, or solely begotten of the Father; yet all saints are owned of God as His children as being found IN Him, and are taught to invoke Him in the endearing relation of Father. Christ, as Mediator, being

brought forth from everlasting ere the earth was, and the elect church with all its members, and graces set up, chosen, and given in Him, as their Covenant, or Executor of their Father’s testament or will. The purpose, covenant or will of the Father, ordained Christ the Mediator, Surety, and only Performer in fulfilling all the stipulations and terms of this will or testament. He stood bound in this relation to meet every demand, pay every debt, and sustain the whole cost that might accrue in executing the Will or Testament of God. Hence, in Him every heir was chosen, in Him every grace was given, to Him every promise was made, in Him they were all “yea and amen to the glory of God,” on Him the law had its full power, and Justice claimed its whole demand; for He was appointed of God to execute His Will in behalf of all the heirs.

This covenant relation between the Mediator of the Will of God, and the chosen heirs in this Will, constituted all His legal acts in their behalf valid and binding, and so was a lawful and final acquittal in their behalf of all demands. But in addition to this Testamentary relation, Jesus was born of a woman, became man, was made under the law and took on Him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. This seed of Abraham was all the members of the elect church — all the heirs of the Will of God — all the children which God had given Him — all the sons He was appointed to bring to glory. In this relation He is One with them, one Son, one Seed, one

Heir, one Life, one Man, one Head with its proper bodies and members. Here is not the doctrine "of seeds, as of many," but as the promise runs to One, "and Thy seed which is Christ." "Now if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." In this relation all the seed are one body in Christ, and members one of another. He was the only begotten Son of the Father, and they have their sonship in Him; He is the Son of God, the seed of Abraham, the Heir of all things, and He is formed in them, "the hope of glory," the incorruptible seed by which they are born again. They have their sonship, their portion, their life, their light in Him. The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, therefore that holy thing which was born of her, should be called the Son of God. This holy child being formed in each saint, and they receiving His Spirit, His image, His nature and fullness, are distinguished as the "sons of God" by Christ. As He was set up from everlasting in this relation to them, and they were all chosen in Him, ordained and foreknown in Him, so He was the Image into which they were predestinated to be conformed, and this conformity is effected by the Holy Spirit which forms the image of Christ in them, which is the pledge, token and seal of their sonship. He is, therefore, the only begotten Son, and they have their sonship in Him, and His Spirit in them is the testimony, pledge and seal of this filial relation. Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying "Abba Father."

Now, as they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ, so they were also predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is the "spirit of this adoption." So their sonship is in Him, and He, as the only begotten Son of God, dwells in their hearts richly by His Spirit, which is the spirit of their sonship or adoption, by which they cry (the Spirit cries) "Abba Father," Father, for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and if sons then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Him.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, hath richly and gloriously made known His will, revealed His grace and Truth in the person and gift of His only begotten Son, and proclaimed it to all nations in the Gospel of their salvation. In this Will or Testament, the eternal purpose, appointment, council and knowledge of Jehovah, which were all purposed in Himself, hid in Christ, and ordained to the glory of the Church, "now made known by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." This Will was immutable and eternal with God, well ordered in all things and sure in Christ the Mediator; and the promise and oath of the Eternal confirmed the immutability of this council, for the strong consolation of the heirs of promise. This promise is made sure to all the seed, and this immutable Will with all the stipulations, conditions, terms, heirs, guarantees and blessings in it,

were all purposed in Himself before the foundation of the world; they were all IN Christ, in whom the heirs were chosen from eternity, the blessings given, the inheritance bequeathed, and the son-ship confirmed. He was verily ordained before the foundation of the world as Heir of all things; He was to fulfill all things required in the Will, and unfold it to all the heirs of promise. He was manifested in these last times for this purpose. He who came to do the will of God — He to whom all its promises were made — He in whom all its heirs were chosen and blessed with all spiritual blessings — He is the rich Fountain of grace and glory in whom they find their filial relation to God and all their heavenly portion. This Will or Testament, fulfilled in the blood of Christ its Mediator, and published in the form of Testament or Covenant, is the Gospel of the grace of God. — The glad tidings of God's Will is herein revealed, its conditions fulfilled, its guarantees confirmed, its heirs saved, its blessings flowing, its Mediator reigning, its promises free and absolute, its inheritance sure and eternal. The Gospel is a proclamation of the Will of God to the heirs, and by it they are encouraged to come and enjoy all the blessings it reveals, and feast eternally on the rich bounties it bestows without money and without price. Grace is here bestowed to the unworthy, mercy is flowing to the suffering, life is given to the dying, pardon to the guilty, living water for the polluted and thirsty, food for the hungry, rest for the weary laborer, and salvation for the lost.

The Spirit of the only begotten Son of God is sent into the heart of the heirs of promise, and begets in them a filial longing for God, and a godly sorrow for sin; they pant for the living water, they hunger and thirst after righteousness, they confess their sins, renounce their own righteousness, die to the law, are crucified to the world, and come as bankrupt and guilty petitioners to God. They are encouraged thus to come by the Gospel which shows them Christ the Way, opens His fullness to supply all their needs, sets before them the rich bounties of a feast, and says, "eat, O friend, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." This Gospel proclamation of Christ having perfectly fulfilled the Will of God as the appointed Mediator, Surety and Sacrifice, is the Word of faith or of the message to be received by all the heirs. The Spirit of Christ forms His image and nature in their hearts, reveals to them their sonship in Him, or reveals the son of God in them, and seals them as the heirs of the grace of Life. The Gospel furnishes them with all needful instruction, encouragement and testimony. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit of Christ which, enlisting all the power of the soul of the heirs, enables it to take hold of Christ and His righteousness; and the Gospel is a sufficient warrant to the most unworthy sinner to come to, and trust in Him. This faith wrought in Christ when He fulfilled the law and bore the curse, when He died to sin and rose to God; and now this "faith of Christ" works in His members and brings them to Him, and in them claims His obedi-

ence in their behalf, and a portion in the Will of His and their Father. As this "faith of Christ" wrought in Christ in their behalf, it is the substance of things hoped for, and as it testifies in them and brings them to Him; it is the evidence of things not seen. — Faith is the Spirit's evidence which it bears in the soul of us being an heir of New Testament, by which the heir comes to Christ the Mediator, and claims its portion in the Will of God. In this view of our son-ship, we see Jesus exalted as Head over all things to His church, that in all things He might have the preeminence. He is our elder brother, our Mediator and Surety, our Righteousness and Life; in Him we have our son-ship as the children of God. — in Him we are acknowledged as the heirs in His Will — in Him we receive our portion and our crown; by the faith of the Son of God we live, for He liveth in us, and in us and for us He overcomes the world, and gives us the victory.

Now, dear brethren, while such rich grace is so freely bestowed on such unworthy sinners as we are, how humble and thankful we should feel! Why was I made to be an heir of such immortal bliss? O, let all our hearts be dissolved into contrition, and love; let every tongue be vocal in His praise; let every eye be looking to Jesus, and every foot be running the race set before us; let holy devotion, like a hallowed flame, burn on the altar of every renewed heart, and a deep sense of the unparalleled riches of saving grace, call up every ransomed power of our soul to praise the God of love.

This is the work we are called to do, not to save ourselves, or to make ourselves heirs of life, nor to fulfill the conditions of our acceptance, but to serve, adore, and praise "Him who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." In this Gospel plan, the poor, the naked, the helpless, the lost, the guilty, vile and polluted, may take encouragement to come to the Savior with all their crimson sins and guilty stains, and claim the promise of His grace and pardoning mercy; for the Gospel is a sufficient warrant to the most ungodly sinner to come and trust in Christ; and only as such, can any sinner come with acceptance. Our limits forbid us to proceed further.

May we all contemplate this amazing and love-inspiring theme, till the heart of the mourner is filled with joy, the feet of the lame leap as an hart, Zion's pilgrims become inspired with heavenly zeal in their journey, until the tongue of the dumb sing, till the ears of the deaf are charmed into attention; and all the sons of God rejoice in hope of His glory, till the vestment of a glorious immortality adorn the mystic body of Christ, and celestial glories expand every redeemed power to swell the creed of the heavenly throng — "not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee be the glory for ever and ever." Amen.

Elder Wilson Thompson, 1836.

LUKE XIII. 34.

“O JERUSALEM, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not.”

A brother in southern Virginia asks our views on the foregoing.

The same language with very little variation is found in Matthew xxiii. 37. This is Jesus speaking. He addresses the scribes and Pharisees, characterizes Herod as a “fox,” and so He embraces in this speech the ruling ecclesiastical and civil authorities in Jerusalem who exercised religious and governmental sway over Israel. It was never the will of these ruling powers that the truth of God should be preached in their midst, and persecutions and martyrdoms were the lot of those true servants of God who throughout the generations of Israel’s history had faithfully preached the word. Nevertheless, God had in every age his faithful remnant in the midst of Israel despite the fact that those in authority had no use for this believing elect number. If the human will of these authorities could have had their way about it, they would not have allowed a single Israelite at any time to have believed the truth of God. But God’s

will is never frustrated by the opposition of man’s will. It is the will of God to gather his people, and he unfaithfully does this gathering by and through Jesus Christ his Son, unto himself. Not a single child of God has ever been prevented from coming to the knowledge of the truth, no matter what the persecution and opposition waged against the child of God might be. While it was never at any time in Israel’s history the will of the natural man that God should select his believing remnant from among them, yet he unfaithfully did it. A hen gathers her chickens under her wings because they are her chickens, and not to make them hers. The chickens run to cover under the mother’s wings at the approach of any danger, not to make the hen their mother, but because she is their mother. Likewise throughout the generations of Israel’s national life, those who were Israelites indeed by reason of spiritual circumcision and regeneration ran by faith into His name and were safe, not to make Jehovah their God, but because he was their God; not to make themselves his children, but because they were his children by God’s own will. All that the Father his given the Son shall come to him, no matter how much the powers that be try to prevent it. The human will, either of individuals or of nations, can never thwart the purposes of God in the salvation of his people. Any nation today which arrays itself against the

truth of God, against his revealed word and against his people will unfailingly reap in due time national desolation and disaster, even as did Israel for their opposition to Jehovah and his children. This is the lesson taught in this Scripture. Will the nation heed? If not, they, too, shall be desolate.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

“Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him.” — Psalm lxii.8.

Have we not sometimes been enabled to pour out our hearts at a throne of grace, and tell the Lord what we really wanted, what we really asked for, and tell him that nothing but that which he alone could give would satisfy our souls? There have been such times of access to the God of grace. And afterwards perhaps we have forgotten the things we told him of; we have been heedless of the prayers we laid at his feet; and though very earnest at the time in seeking after certain blessings, we left them at the Lord’s feet and forgot them all. But the Lord does not forget them; they are treasured up in his heart and memory; and in his own time he brings them to light, and gives the fulfilment of them. But before he does it, he will bring us into the spot where we want them again; and then we have to tell him, and supplicate and ask him again,

ashamed of ourselves perhaps that we should have asked the Lord for these blessings and been as heedless of them as though we did not care to receive them at his hand; but still, under trouble, under soul necessity, under grief, we go and tell him again. And then the Lord, in his own time and way, brings about the very things we desired of him; opens up ways, lifts out of trials, removes burdens, makes a way in the deep, which no eye but his could see, and no hand but his could open, leads the soul into it, brings the soul through it, - and then hides all glory from the creature, by making us fall down before his feet, and ascribe glory and honour and power and thanksgiving and salvation unto God and the Lamb.

J.C. Philpot

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What wisdom, majesty and grace,
Through all the gospel shine!
'Tis God that speaks, and we confess
The doctrine most divine.

Down from his shining throne on high,
The almighty Saviour comes;
Lays his bright robes of glory by,
And feeble flesh assumes.

The mighty debt his chosen owed,
Upon the cross he pays;
Then through the clouds ascends to God,
Midst shouts of loftiest praise.

There he, our great High Priest, appears
Before his Father's throne;
There on his breast our names he wears
And counts out cause his own.

Stennett.

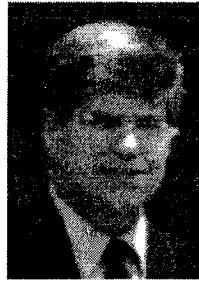
**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/2013
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

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EDITORIAL

“And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What *is* this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.” Exodus 13: 14-16.



Elder J. B. Farmer

Having been given a mind to set down some things, I would love to be enabled to write a little about the good news of redemption to the household of faith - the Lord willing. How to perform this, I find not. The wisdom and ability for rightly dividing the word of truth does not reside within my flesh. Every good gift and every perfect gift must come down from above, from the Father of lights in whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. If there is any light or understanding of the doctrine of Christ, we must wait upon the Lord and trust Him to provide it. We are weak but He is strong. Men have varied opinions and positions regarding the doctrine, but His word is truth and abides forever. May He open our eyes and give us understanding.

Most people that are acquainted with scriptures know the story of the children of Israel who were in cruel bondage in Egypt, and how God raised up Moses to deliver them from their oppressors. God appeared to Moses in a bush that burned with a flame but was not consumed. There, God commanded Moses to put off his shoes for the ground he stood upon was holy. After God appeared to Moses in His great love and power, which was manifested by the flame of the Spirit, Moses was a changed man. He was like Peter and those who were gathered together on the day of Pentecost. They were empowered by the Holy Spirit af-

ter the flame of His presence came upon them, and they were forever changed. God took away their fears and gave them the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind, even as He has done for His children through the ages until this present day, and shall continue to do until He comes in glory.

God commanded Moses to go unto Pharaoh and to tell him to let God's people go. But Pharaoh refused until God brought many grievous plagues upon Egypt, the last one being the death of the firstborn of man and beast. Then, Pharaoh consented to let the people go. But before God brought death upon the firstborn of Egypt, He caused the children of Israel to sacrifice a lamb and put its blood upon the doorposts and lintels of each house. God promised that when He passed over to smite the Egyptians and saw the blood, He would not suffer the destroyer to come into their houses to smite the firstborn, which I am made to believe stands for the elect. God redeemed His chosen people by the blood of the lamb. He purchased their lives with the life of the lamb. The Passover is a reminder unto us of the way in which the lives of the people of God have been spared by the pure and holy sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God.

There are many other pictures of redemption of God's elect by sacrificial blood found in the scriptures. Isaac, God's chosen one, the firstborn of Abraham and his wife Sarah, when he was about to be sacrificed by Abraham according to the command of

God, was spared. God gave a ram that was caught in a thicket to die in his stead – a life for a life. We see mercy extended in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned and were driven out. They were given coats of skins to cover and protect them, which to me stood for the righteousness of Christ, which only is given by virtue of the shed blood of the Lamb of God. We know that no animal skin may be removed without the shedding of blood and the death of the sacrifice. Rahab the harlot and her family were spared when Joshua came to destroy Jericho. There was a scarlet thread or rope placed in her window, signifying that she and her household believed in redemption by the blood of the Lamb. These examples of the deliverance of the Lord's chosen people by virtue of shed blood all stood as figures of what should come in the day that Christ was sacrificed upon the tree – the Just for the unjust.

He laid down His life willingly. No man took it from Him. He kept and fulfilled the righteous law of God to the jot and tittle. He fulfilled the prophecies of God in His life and work. He satisfied the wrath of God against sin in that He that knew no sin (Jesus) was made to be sin for us that we should be made the righteousness of God in Him. He bore the wrath of God in place of God's little children. He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter. He offered Himself up unto God, a Lamb without spot or blemish, in order that He might justify and redeem those that God so loved. And by this one offering He perfected forever them that are sanctified. He re-

deemed His own. He purchased their pardon with His own blood. He gave His life for ours, if we are of that blessed family of God.

According to the scriptures, God's little ones have also been redeemed or purchased out from under the curse of the law. What is the curse of the law? We know that the law is righteous and holy and good. How then can a curse be associated with it? According to the scripture, **"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."** The law is not cursed, but those under it that do not keep it are cursed. They are condemned and are under the just sentence of death. Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, all under the law are under the curse - all are guilty before God. How then, in principle, are God's children redeemed or purchased out from the curse? If we are His, Christ fulfilled the law and satisfied the justice of God on our behalf, and set us free. His children are no longer under law but are under grace.

How does being redeemed from the curse of the law manifest itself practically? According to the blessed apostle, instead of saying, "touch not, taste not, handle not," as was taught under the law, those under grace are taught, "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient." We know, according to experience and according to the scripture, there is a

thing called concupiscence. It is this tendency of the carnal mind in the body of flesh that leads one to desire that which is forbidden. But since the law is now fulfilled, and since no longer is anything forbidden, the child of God is set free from that tendency. Some would say that if nothing is forbidden, then that would lead one to sin. That is the carnal mind speaking, which knows nothing of grace. It is actually sin taking occasion by the law that leads one to sin, and it is grace that leads one away from sin. The apostle was blessed to say, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." And he was also blessed to say, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful." But it is grace that redeems one from the curse of the law, both in principle and in practice. "By grace are ye saved through faith..." Those under grace are led of the Spirit and walk after the Spirit and have been given a desire to please God with all their heart. And at the same time they know they are helpless sinners, and that they are powerless except He is their guide and strength.

The word redeemed also means to be loosed. Those purchased by the blood are also redeemed by being loosed from certain things in this life. God, through the apostle, spoke to us of Christ saying, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a pe-

cular people, zealous of good works." What does it mean to be redeemed or loosed from all iniquity? God has commanded his people to come apart from the world and be a separate people. With His command, He gives grace to obey. "It is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." It is God who chose His people and called them apart to His service. It is God who redeemed them and purified them by His own blood. It is God who made them to be a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a peculiar people and a particular treasure to Himself. It is God who created them in Christ Jesus and before ordained their good works that they should walk in them. So God has loosed His people from the bondage of Satan and sin. He has loosed them from the fear of death by which they were kept captive. He has loosed them from the desire to please men. He has loosed them from all iniquity, and has given them the desire to please God by virtue of the inward man, which is Christ in you the hope of glory.

We know by experience that we still are in a body which is weak and subject to all kinds of doubts, fears and temptations, but thanks be unto God we have been given confidence that He is able to keep that which we have committed to Him against that day — even our very lives. Even though we have been redeemed or purchased by the blood of the Lamb, and even though we have been redeemed or loosed from the curse of the law and from all iniquity, we still groan because

of sin, waiting for the adoption (which literally means son placement), which is the redemption of our bodies. The redemption of our bodies is the complete fullness of the redemption of the mighty God. When Jesus told His disciples what would be the sign of His coming, He said, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." When this redemption comes, there shall be no more weakness, doubting, fears, temptations, and sins. There shall be no more sorrow, and pains and tears. There shall be no more suffering and death. This redemption shall be the culmination of all things, which is the complete revelation of the great salvation of our God. Even though we cannot now know the fullness of the meaning of it, God has been merciful to give us a little glimpse of what it shall be. The saints shall be raised up in His likeness in incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual bodies. They shall at last see Him as He is and realize the fulfillment of the words spoken by David through the Spirit, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in His likeness." This is that eternal redemption.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us

the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain, in the Lord.”

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Board and the Editors of 'The Signs of the Times' are pleased to announce the completion of the digitizing of the entire publication of this Periodical from its beginning in 1832 through 2012. This is a total compilation of every issue for about 180 years. There is also included a prospectus, a history chart, a short written history, and a collection of the brief biographies of the editors.

This material is the sole property of the 'Signs of the Times, Inc.' and neither may be changed, nor annotated, nor copied and sold for profit. Please note that this material may be accessed only on a PC with a disk drive and/or a USB port.

These digitized Periodicals are now being made available at our cost of copying and mailing. The postpaid costs are \$40.00 for a copy on a single flash drive, or \$53.00 for a three-disk

set. Please note that the flash drive has the advantage of faster speed of access, and the capability for future updates to be added. The cost for either format is subject to change as the costs of future printing and mailing change. Requests may be submitted to Brother Tony Horton, Circulation Manager and Treasurer, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, VA 24343. Please be sure to include your complete mailing address.

We would like to express our appreciation for all the help we have received from individuals who have located and supplied to us the issues needed to complete the set, and to the Primitive Baptist Libraries at Carthage, IL and at Elon, NC for their assistance and support.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sept. 4, 2013

Dear Bro. Cleo

The Memphis Church requested me to forward this ordination record to you for publishing in the Signs if it is satisfactory.

Pardon my hand printing. My computer printer is on the "blink."

Elder Wayman Chapell

Tony R. Horton
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Sept. 11, 2013

Please find a check enclosed in the amount of \$30.00 for a 2 year subscription for Gary Whaling.

My wife and I enjoy reading The Times - it brings great comfort to us while traveling through this unfriendly world.

May God shower you with many Blessings. We have a hope!

In Christian Love,

Gary Whaling
598 Laurel Creek Rd.
Valley Fork, WV 25285

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for 1 year use the balance as needed.

Thank all of you for all the hard work. It means so much to be able to receive The Signs each month.

A sister in love and hope.
Carol Lansaw

PSALM 136:1.

O Give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

You will find recorded in the 19th verse of the 7th Chapter of Hebrews this reading: "**For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.**" The 25th verse reads: "**Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.**"

I believe I attended the last Association which was held here in 1924. A man who had been a member of this church signed my credentials. He was the clerk of the church at Spray, North Carolina, A. T. Robertson.

The Lord willing, I would like to speak to you a short while on the subject of the laws of the Bible. Though I have been speaking many years, I do not remember ever speaking on the Ten Commandments until last Sunday. Seems like I would have gotten around to that in all those years, doesn't it? And the various laws I would like to present to you and the purpose of God in these laws. Whatever law is under consideration that I have read, Paul said, it made nothing perfect. This is in accordance with the scripture in the Bible where it is said that if there had been a law given that could have given life, righteousness would have been by the law. Paul has reference in this scripture to the ceremonial and sacrificial law, the law that the priest and

the high priest administered in the House of God. Yet, in all the hundreds of years of legal service, all the lambs that were offered on Jewish alters or ceremonial services rendered by Israelites, nothing was made perfect by them. But Paul said, "The bringing in of a better hope did."

What was the better hope? Christ was the better hope, something better than all legal services has ever been able to accomplish. And the effect of this bringing in of a better hope was that we might have an approach to God in the name of our Lord "by the which we draw nigh to God." This law was effectual in two ways. One of them was, it was renewal every time the high priest went into the most holy place that they were still sinners, the other purpose was, the promise that a saviour was coming and God compelled and required this of the Israelites to continue year after year, and the comers thereof were not made perfect.

And we take the first law that God gave man, in the Garden, when He placed him in the Garden and gave him right to every tree of the Garden except one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and Adam violated that law. The violation of that law made every person that's ever been born in the world a sinner. People don't talk much about original sin any more. They are rather hesitant. I think we should talk about it because it removes man out of the picture.

By the disobedience of one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin for they all have sinned. Every

human being who has been and ever will live sinned in the first man and fell, and man has never been able to redeem himself from that condemnation. Somebody said, did that include everybody? Some of you tell me one that was left out of it. All have sinned, not all will sin. All have sinned. YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam, and YOU sinned in Adam. And YOU FELL.

And Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans said, what the law could not do in that it was weak, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to redeem his people. From Adam to Moses death reigned, the Bible says, over all who have not sinned after similitude of Adam's transgression. All of them from Adam to Moses were dead sinners, falling in Adam, lost and ruined, not able to extricate themselves from a lost and ruined state.

The Ten Commandments portrays two things: Mt. Sinai portrays, what does it speak to you of. It speaks of God's justice and His holiness. When God called Moses upon Mt. Sinai to deliver unto the people — God prepared the stone and He also prepared the writing on it and delivered it to Moses. It was a terrible place to stand, at Mt. Sinai, smoke covered the mountain. A man could not touch, or a beast couldn't touch the mountain unless it had to die. God's justice and His holiness were being brought to view. These laws were given and written by the finger of God. Moses returned from the mountain and he found the people he had left worshiping a gold calf. Somebody said: Was that God's

people? If I had an opinion I'd tell you all of them weren't. Some of these brethren might disagree with me but I read in the Bible where all are not Israel that are of Israel. So to tell you that all of those people were God's chosen people in the realm of grace, I can't do it. It was a mixed multitude. That's what it was.

But for the grace of God we wouldn't have a God to worship today. None of us. None of us! Moses took the first tables of stone and he threw them down, **THREW THEM DOWN**. What does it represent? The first covenant. A broken covenant. He was full of righteous indignation, I might call it. And God called him back upon Mt. Sinai, a terrible place, and then told Moses to take the tables of stone and I'll do the writing on them; and then you take these two tables of stone, the law which is called in the Book of Corinthians the administration of condemnation and the administration of death, that's what it's called, the law of Moses, written on tables of stone. And God had a place for them when Moses returned, there was an ark they were to be placed in and that ark is a type of Jesus. Moses didn't break the last one, did he? And God put them in a safe place for keeping too, didn't he! The side of Jesus was opened for our sins.

Noah entered, the door of the ark was in the side, and God had Noah to prepare the ark for his own protection — from God's own wrath, that's what it was. There were seven days from the time that Noah and others were brought into the ark until it start-

ed to rain. Somebody said, that looked foolish didn't it. He had said, Noah, come thou and thy house into the ark. Our God's word, and hope I received it when he said to me "come", and if He never says "come" to us we'll never come. And if He says "come" we will come. Come thou and thy house into the ark. And the Lord **SHUT HIM IN**. Seven days! Why would the ark stand there seven days and it not raining? It shows the safety of God's people in Christ before they need it. That's what it shows. They were just as safe when God closed the door and sat there seven days — and then it begins to rain. It didn't just rain down from heaven, the depths were broken up, water was everywhere. Talk about stopping it, we can't start it and we can't stop it. But God opened the windows of heaven and He opened the fountains of the deep. And the earth was swallowed up. And there did come a time when upon all that vast water nothing could be seen but a lone ark-floating there.

There was a time my friends in the judgment of God when He judged our sins in His own Son, when none could be seen except Him before the Father, who died in our room and stead. I'm sure that as the Israelites journeyed the most precious possession they had was their ark, the type of Jesus. I remember when Eli died — when Eli the priest died, he had two sons in battle and they brought Eli the word that your sons are dead and what happened. It grieved Eli that his sons had been killed in the battle but when they told

him the ark had been taken he falls over dead. The ark was more important to him than his sons. If Jesus isn't more important to all of us today, where will we land when we leave this world? My Prophet, Priest, my Lord, my King.

I remember one night waking up singing the hymn—

How sweet the name of Jesus
sounds

In a believer's ear!

It soothes his sorrows, heals his
wounds,

And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.

When I came to that verse where
it said—

'Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.

I woke up weeping loud, I couldn't
stop.

What is it that takes care of the law of sin and death? Has man ever taken care of it? Has he redeemed himself? Is there any law that man can perform of works that will save his soul from hell? Any? Then if righteousness came by the law, Christ is dead in vain. The law of the spirit of life in Christ. What was that spirit that did such a wonderful work? The law of the spirit

of life in Christ, the Bible said, has made me free from the law of sin and death. If Christ left one sin of yours unatoned for, hell will be your home when you die. If you transgress in one point, you are guilty of the whole. He stood in the judgement of God for us. To me there will be no judgement for YOU, and YOU, and YOU, after death if Christ stood in the judgement for you. How many sins will it take to land us in an eternal woe? Only one! Only one! But, He has redeemed His people by His precious blood.

He fulfilled the law while He lived. He obeyed every precept and the one blessed thing in it all: His obedience was a delightful work of His. I like to think, a poor sinner like I am, that it is as much pleasure for Christ to save me and joy as it will be for me to be in heaven, for I've sinned. Do you believe that? That's the way it is, my brethren.

And another thing I want to tell you, I don't think I'll ever stand in this association again. If we have been taught and reared by the spirit of Almighty God, God will be glad to receive us in heaven because it is the work of His Son, who lived in our room and He died in our stead. It took both of them. And He could say, I delight to do thy will, Oh God. The law of the spirit of life — life in it was what it was — made us free from the law of sin and death. Law is a rule or judgment and God said in His Word when he was to administer His justice, He said, Judgment will I lay to the line. What did He mean? He meant what He said. He meant that every sin must be atoned for, for one

will land us in hell. That's what He meant. He lays His judgment to the line in His own Son.

The laws of God. Paul had a law that he had learned and he didn't learn it from men. I delight in the law of God after the inward man. You couldn't delight in it unless there is an inward man.

The laws of God. The law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope whereby we draw nigh unto God.

Jesus is the better hope — maybe I just as well quit. I want to leave you with this thought. I shall soon close my eyes in death. Whatever I have preached stands for itself. I have no apologies. I have preached a sovereign God as best I could, who brings the administration of the law to the life of His people to show them their just condemnation and in His own way He rolls away the burden of sin by giving us a view by faith of Christ's blood and that faith that He alone can give us.

Transcribed from tape of sermon preached by Elder David V. Spangler at Smith River Association, Sept. 3, 1983

ROMANS 8:5-6.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Raleigh, North Carolina.

BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD: - You are all pursuing that path that leads to eternal glory. It is a path which none know but the ransomed of the Lord, and they only walk therein by faith, and not by sight. That faith which worketh by love, and which is of the operation of God, clings to, rests upon and walks in the new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. The obedience and atoning blood of the Lamb is the glorious highway through this wilderness to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. I, saith Jesus, am the way. As I contemplate the life of the righteous, and muse upon their blissful and eternal inheritance of glory with Christ, the Head of the church, I find longings flowing forth from my soul, and I join with one of old, saying, "**Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation; that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.**" I gladly admit that our God grants me seasons when I sing with gladness of heart for Jacob. "**For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.**" But oh, at other times I am so beset with enemies, so tossed with internal conflicts, and my sins as a very plague seem to isolate me from the commonwealth of Israel. I am as one

thrust forth from thy tents, O happy Israel! The fretting leprosy of mine iniquities causes me to wander as an outcast from the holy people. Ah! well I know my uncleanness unfits me to associate with the clean. I feel my presence would defile the tents of the beloved nation. Therefore when any of the family of God would draw nigh to recognize and to embrace me as a brother, I inwardly cry outward to forbid their drawing nigh. I am unclean, unclean; I am not fit to be taken into fellowship and companionship with the ransomed of the Lord. And when, notwithstanding my inward protestations, tokens of fellowship have been bestowed upon me by God's dear children, this so humbles me, I feel so contemptibly mean, so vile, so unworthy of their esteem, that I have gone before now in secret to sigh and to weep. I need thy precious blood, O Lamb of God, to cleanse my guilt away. "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The blood of thine atonement apply to my diseased soul. Oh give me the evidences that thou did die for me, and then I shall be clean in thy sight. "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." This shall raise me up from the dust to rejoice in thy salvation. "He sent his word and healed them." This is what I need; not the bare theory of the doctrine, with its proof texts set in array in my natural understanding, but the glorious truth sent by the Lord's gracious power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. When the Lord sends the word it prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it. This I know, for then his

speech distils as the dew upon my soul, and I am refreshed. His doctrine sent to my heart calms all the tumults that my sins and the devil create, and I have peace through the blood of Emmanuel's cross. Sometimes I am as one famishing, and I pine away for want of the fruits of the field. My soul craveth Jehovah's sweet mercy, I yearn again to taste his pardoning love, but the Bible cannot afford it, the letter of the Scriptures cannot bestow it. I have no power to suck honey out of them. Those who can go to the Scriptures and always get what they need, and can close the book well satisfied with what they have got, are altogether different from poor, sinful, helpless me.

I can no more help myself to food out of the Holy Scriptures than a very babe could feed itself at a well laden table spread with all manner of sweet tasting and nourishing food. I well know that the concentration of the natural study yields no sustenance to the quickened soul. By our natural powers we may acquire a natural knowledge that the Bible teaches the doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace, etc., and by the application of the natural mind to these subjects in the perusal of the Bible a person may be well versed, as the saying is, and be able to prove his points, to preach the doctrine in the letter. He may be quite competent to debate with the opponents of the doctrine, and secretly if not openly, pride himself in this line. But what of it all? It may all be, and that man's soul be utterly destitute of the grace of God that bringeth salva-

tion. I have been harrassed with thoughts that I was just such an one, that all I know is the result of natural study of the scriptures, and fears have invaded my heart that after all I know nothing of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I have been brought low and with great searchings of heart. I have fallen at the feet of the Lord so troubled, so weakened, so dismayed at the thought that the secret of the Lord was not with me. Perhaps someone who is fully six feet tall according to his own measurement, may hold one like me in very contempt, and think one like me by this time should be a man, and no more a child. Well, perhaps there are times when I am a man, strong indeed in Christ Jesus. I grow up by faith, by the abundant ministrations of the Spirit of Truth into Jesus Christ in all things. I am strong then in our Redeemer, and the arms of my hands are made strong indeed in Christ by the mighty God of Jacob. Then I can vanquish the foe, and tread down my enemies as the mire of the streets, but my triumphing, and all the exploits are altogether by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit, in the love, and mercy, and faithfulness of God, in the blood and righteousness of God, in the blood and righteousness of Jesus. These are rare times, when I can in truth experimentally triumph and glory in Christ Jesus. But, I am as a sickly babe sometimes, so weak, defenseless, I feel as it were to be dying for the need of some one to care for me, feed me and clothe me, and that one, that only One that can do these things unto me is the glorious everlast-

ing God. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Sickly and faint and ready to die in the filth of my own heart, the Lord in his tender pity has placed me in the arms of Zion, she has borne me upon her sides and carried me in her bosom. I have been dandled upon her knees, and she has drawn out the breasts of her consolations to me, there I have suckled, and have been satisfied with the abundance of her glory. They have breasts in some places that they call "conditional time salvation," but from the description that some of them give of them I am fully satisfied they are not the breasts of the free woman, but the breasts of Hagar the bond woman. However the children of the bond woman may thrive upon Hagar's breasts, Isaac will do well by being suckled at the breasts of the everlasting covenant of grace, even the sure mercies of David. Those who want to suck at the breasts of "conditional happiness," of conditional time salvation, can do so, and they are welcome to all the happiness that they derive therefrom. There is a vast amount of fleshly religious happiness in the world that is of no kin to the joy of the Lord. People may perform their supposed duties, and render their supposed obedience unto God, and compass themselves about with their sparks, and walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled, but I rather walk in the dark with God than walk in their light. (Isaiah 50:10-11). I am pained to think that such teachings are being taught among our people,

teachings wherein the precepts of the law of liberty are mingled and confounded with the precepts of the covenant that gendereth to bondage. The obedience of faith, and commandments of Christ's gospel, are handled in such a way that the joyous, captivating sound of them cannot be heard as they come forth from the lips of conditionalists. Their sweetness, freshness and beauty are departed, and grace, the grace of God, cannot be discerned in the obedience required, and the gracious and almighty operations of the Holy Ghost exercising the hearts of the elect to the obedience of faith are altogether in the background, in the doctrines that are being promulgated in this distasteful phraseology, conditional time salvation. True gospel obedience flows from the constraining love of Christ. A part from the love of God in the soul there is no obedience in the gospel. *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* The Lord delights in that which his Spirit inspires. In order to the true worship of God we need the ministrations of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to revive our faith, and hope, and love, praises and supplications, then obedience to the Lord will be the fruit. **"I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."** - **Psalms cxix. 32.** Oh, what are all the best services that we have ever rendered unto the God of our salvation? To this day I have to say to Jehovah's sovereign grace I owe above what the fiends have in hell. I desire from my very soul to walk holly just and unblameably before the Lord

and his people, but I have not attained unto this. I see very plainly that vanity is stamped upon all that I engage in, the vileness of my flesh is so manifest to me, it intrudes itself, mixes itself with and defiles all that I put my hands unto. That others may not be so beset with sinfulness so polluted I allow, for I see it is only by a miracle of grace that I can be saved, and grace is the only fountain that yields supplies to one like me. I can with all my heart join with Hart, who sings,

*"Jesus gives us pure affections,
Wills to do what he requires,
Makes us follow his directions,
And what he requires, inspires.*

All our prayers, and all our praises,
Rightly offered in his name,
He that dictates them is Jesus,
He that answers is the same. "

"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Thus that dear child of God, that invalid, that deaf and dumb paralytic, when by the sweet communion of the Holy Ghost is instructed and comforted, and filled with love to the Redeemer, is as much obedient unto Christ as any of the ransomed family. That strength and grace by which the believer walks in the commandments of the Lord our Redeemer, is not an ability that we have inherent in us as subjects of the new birth, which it is in our power according to our will to put into exercise, and thus, apart from walk obediently, it is the obedience of faith,

and this comprehends that God's grace is made to abound unto us, and this is our sufficiency. (2 Cor. ix. 8) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Thus the apostle, knowing that believers have no stored up, inherent ability, in themselves, to do the will of their God, says, "**Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**"- Heb. xiii. 20, 21. Though I am, I hope, a subject of Jehovah's grace, and born of the Spirit, and if so even such an one, yet with me there are many times when I have no strength, I am as it were dead, I have not the power to put forth a sigh, or groan; to cry, to pray to God seems impossible. I am so hardened, so frozen up, so stiffened and numbed by the deceitfulness of my sins, and an evil heart of unbelief, that I find it beyond my power to think a thought: Ah, I know by humbling experiences that apart from the unremitting ministry of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, I have no might to worship God. Those who can always sigh over their sins, and pray unto the Lord for his pardoning love, those who can praise God any hour of the day they appoint to do so, are not like me. But I have proved that our God is very pitiful, and his long suffering with such a miserable, unprofitable

worm as I am is a wonder of wonders. "**He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.**" He visits my soul in his love, he chastens me with his rod, he shows me when I am smarting under his reproofs, that mine iniquities have exceeded all his chastenings. (Job xxxvi. 9.) He maketh my heart soft, he gives under this discipline a humble and contrite heart, he smiles with pardoning grace upon me, he speaks kind promises to my soul, he gives me glimpses of the riches of his grace, displayed in the works and merits of Jesus our covenant Head. Oh, then I sigh, then I weep, then I pray, then I praise, then I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

*"I can do nothing without thee,
My strength is wholly thine;
Withered and barren should I be
If severed from the vine."*

I find, dear children of God, that I have to be learning over and over again that "**Christ is all, and in all.** — Col. iii. 11. Oh, that name Jesus, Savior, is so sweet! In him are such transcendent excellencies, and so suitable to a needy sinner like me that at every view that is given me by the Spirit of truth I fall deeper and deeper in love with our altogether lovely Savior. And when his love is shed abroad in my heart I find myself saying within me, He loveth me still, he loveth even me, and what proof of his love I see in his fulfilling all the gracious relations that he sustains unto his people, as the lov-

ing Kinsman, our Brother, our tender, faithful Husband, our Almighty Friend and Redeemer. When the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto the elect, shows them unto me, how can I help loving him and praising and adoring the King in his beauty? Ah, then it is that I would not in word only, but in deed and in truth love him who hath loved me with an everlasting love.

*“Love moved him to die, on this I rely;
My Savior hath loved me, I cannot tell why;
But this I can tell, he loved me so well.
As to lay down his life, to redeem me from hell.”*

Elder Frederick W. Keene

BAPTISM

The subject of baptism has been a subject of great controversy throughout the centuries. Many false and erroneous theories have been advocated which have tended to confuse the minds of God’s little children. This is due to the fact that theologians have attempted to supplant a theological meaning to the term that is foreign to the classical meaning in order to prop up their false theories in trying to hinge salvation on the volition and work of the creature. This has narrowed the conception of the term, baptism, to that ceremonial use of water to admit mem-

bers into an organized body here upon earth termed the church. I do not believe the term is so narrow in its scope. When I think of baptism I like to meditate upon the classical meaning instead of the theological use of the term.

To baptize is to immerse, submerge, envelope, overwhelm or sink; to dip, wash, or drench; to consecrate; to completely subdue. This is the essence of the classical meaning. Even theologians who advocate sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism admit this. I think that baptism in literal water is figurative and typical of the baptism that is essential unto salvation. The baptism in Jesus Christ and into his death is essential unto salvation. No man is able, empowered or authorized to do that. This is the work of God.

I want to call your attention to one scripture that will conclusively prove that water baptism is not meant every time the term is used in the scriptures. Jesus said as recorded in **Luke 12:50** — **“But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!”** The word STRAITENED means PAINED. He was undoubtedly speaking of his baptism in death. He was speaking of the time when death would envelope him, when he would be overwhelmed with suffering and submerged into death. This statement was made approximately two years after his baptism in Jordan. (I think his baptism in Jordan was pointing to and figurative of his baptism in death.)

Now, let us consider **Romans 6:3** **“Know ye not, that so many of us as**

were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Paul did not say or hint at water in this expression. If Paul had said; know ye not that as many of us were baptized in WATER were baptized in Jesus Christ and into his death; then, the modern theorists, would have something to base their arguments upon. Since he did not say this let us take for granted that he said what he meant and meant what he said. He said, "were baptized into Jesus Christ." Can any man immerse one into Jesus Christ? We may baptize in water in the NAME of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost but man cannot baptize into Jesus Christ. I believe that God chose his people IN CHRIST in the annals of eternity before time ever began. **"According as he hath chosen us IN HIM before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4. "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Rom. 8:29.** The entire family of God was baptized into the body of Christ by God, our father. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body: so is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body." Cor. 12:12-13. "We are his workmanship, CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS." Eph. 2:10. If we were chosen IN HIM, created IN HIM, and are baptized IN HIM WE WERE MYSTERIOUSLY IN HIM being bone of his bone as he accomplished the law to a jot and tittle while he sojourned in this world of sin and sorrow. I believe that as

Jesus performed the law to a jot and tittle Jehovah could see the entire family of God performing it as they were members of his body, being baptized in him. The ONE BAPTISM spoken of in Ephesians 4:5 is that performed by God, the Father in the Son through the operation of the Spirit upon his children. This baptism is essential unto salvation but cannot be performed by man.

Yes, God's children were "baptized into his death." They went down with him into death because they were chosen, created, and are baptized in him. If we be children of God we paid the penalty of death IN HIM! We satisfied the just demands of the law IN HIM! But thanks be unto God we arose victoriously over death, hell, and the grave IN HIM! This being true, justice is completely satisfied IN HIM for each and every child of God. Nothing can be charged to them.

We have touched upon the subject of baptism relative to all the family of God being baptized at once together into Jesus Christ and into his death. Now, we want to meditate upon the experimental phase of baptism. We want to consider the individual personal baptism that is experienced by each and every child of God. This experimental phase of baptism is progressive in its application as we shall see, the Lord willing. It begins in regeneration and ends in the immortalization of the body. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins as recorded in Mark 1:4. All those who made manifest that they were in pos-

session of this baptism by confessing their sins he baptized in the river Jordan, (Mark 1:5) which was an outward manifestation of being in this condition. The rule is according to the words of Jesus as recorded in **Mark 16:16**, **“He that believeth and IS BAPTIZED shall be saved.”** The form of the verb used shows that it is not water baptism that is under consideration. The present tense of the verb shows that it is a condition they are NOW in. They are overwhelmed, immersed, submerged, or enveloped NOW. Are they NOW enveloped in water by the administrator? No, they are NOW enveloped in repentance by the Holy Ghost! This being submerged in repentance affects the cry for deliverance or salvation from their sins. This salvation is promised in this statement by Jesus. The hope of each child of God, who is so baptized in repentance by the Holy Ghost, is salvation from their sins, through the merits of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When one is baptized in water he outwardly manifests this condition and hope through the grace of the Father, the merits of the Son, and guidance, operation, and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” St. Luke 3:16. The effect of the Holy Spirit baptism is regeneration. The SOULS of God’s people are baptized into death and resurrected

unto life here in time; and, the BODIES of God’s people shall be baptized into death and resurrected unto life immortal into the great beyond — the end of this sphere of time. This is that for which we patiently wait and hope.

The natural soul trusts in natural man being inspired by the natural carnal spirit. This is the soul that sins. It shall die. (Ezek. 18:4) All people are born naturally in this condition. When it pleases God to baptize the soul of one of his people by the Holy Spirit he kills and makes spiritually alive the soul. Yes, the soul is overwhelmed, immersed, and submerged into death and resurrected into a new life. The soul that has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit shall never die. It is a new creature. According to Psalms 107 the experience of the redeemed is — **“Hungry and thirsty, their SOUL fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.”** This is brought about by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read in **Luke 3:3** **“And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE for the remission of sins.”** This does not say baptism of water but of REPENTANCE. This means that you must be overwhelmed, submerged, and immersed with repentance. It *is* a godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of. (2 Cor. 7:10) When you are overwhelmed with repentance you abhor yourself: you repent in dust and ashes. When you abhor yourself you die to the love of self.

You sink into despair; you are immersed in trouble and distresses. As he did not leave Christ in the grave he does not leave your soul in despair but raises it up a new soul. This is verified in **Psalms 23:3**, "**He restoreth my SOUL.**" You are then a new creature motivated by a spiritual soul. The mortal soul which is subject to death, has been baptized with immortality. This makes the soul immortal. Now, you are an immortal soul dwelling in a mortal body. This body has not yet been baptized with immortality. That will be the crowning work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says in **Romans 7:24** — "**Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**" Paul realized the sinfulness and mortality of his body. All God's children are possessed with the thorn in the flesh and infirmities of the flesh. Our bodies are subject to weaken and die. We cannot do the things we would because of the evil that is present in our fast decaying bodies. The body becomes lame and tottery with age. Our bodies become weak because of disease. Our natural eyes become dim and our natural ears deafen. Our memory fails and our ability to comprehend is affected. Our natural minds fail to function as they once did. I feel that as we experience these things we become more and more desirous of the immortalization of the bodies. "**Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.**" **Rom. 8:23.** Yes, the bodies of the saints shall be baptized into death and

shall be completely submerged, enveloped, swallowed up, or baptized with immortality. "**So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.**" **1 Cor. 15:54.** This will be the answer to the prayer as recorded in **1 Thess. 5:23** — "**And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole SPIRIT and SOUL and BODY be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**"

The baptism in water is figurative of this baptism that is essential unto salvation. This is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a GOOD conscience toward God: which is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, See 1st Peter 3:21. There are two kinds of conscience. There is a natural conscience and there is a Holy Spirit conscience. A good conscience is a Holy Spirit conscience. I believe that God's people are wrought upon by his Spirit and are made anxious to follow Jesus in baptism. They are desirous to outwardly manifest this faith in the Father baptizing them in the Son by the Spirit by submitted themselves to baptism in water in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. As the candidate for baptism is passive in the hands of the administrator in the act of baptism in water, so he manifests that he is passive in the hand of God in Holy Spirit baptism which is essential unto salvation. He manifests his faith in being in Christ

as he went down into the grave and came up out of the grave. As baptism into Jesus Christ and into his death is the door of entrance into the church which is the one invisible body including all the children of God, so baptism in water is the door of entrance into the church in its organized form upon this earth.

John required those whom he baptized to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. I believe such characters are the only ones worthy to be received into the organized church. When one comes confessing his sins and considering himself as the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, speaking of his unworthiness, my heart goes out to him and I am given to fellowship him. When such an one comes testifying that his hopes for salvation from sins is solely based on the grace of God and the merits of the Lord Jesus, I consider him as a proper subject for baptism in water into the fellowship of the organized church. None but those who have been baptized with repentance would come bringing such testimony from the heart desiring a home with God's people. The church receives such into their fellowship and one properly ordained will gladly administer the ordinance to that character.

I realize that I have just hinted upon this grand subject. These thoughts are my earnest and conscientious convictions. If they be true—may God be praised. If they be false—charge them to my ignorance and vain imaginations. May God bless this to your

comfort and edification, if it be his will, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder E.J. Lambert

NORTH JAY, Maine, Feb., 1879.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST: — If So I may be allowed to call you, as I feel unworthy a name among the children of God; for I see and feel myself vile, sinful and imperfect, polluted from the sole of my feet even to my head, and abhor myself, and feel less than nothing, and vanity; less than the least of any who have been born of the Spirit, like a bubble that will soon pass away, and the places that know me shall know me no more forever.

But blessed be the name of the Lord, who has prepared a place for all who love him. Truly the name of Jesus is sweet, and his words are precious to his tried, tempted and persecuted people, who are persecuted for righteousness sake. There has been a time when it seemed that I was persecuted and afflicted, and I was led to read with comfort the fourteenth chapter of John; and I felt every word to be like the voice of Jesus to me, especially where he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," &c. **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."** — John xvi. 33. How precious did my blessed Saviour appear

to me in the application of these words. Truly he is the Rock of my salvation, in him I trust that my sins are forgiven; and I feel a witness within that it is so, that Jesus died a bitter death for the redemption of all those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and he has given me a hope that is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast — a hope that maketh not ashamed.

It is a hope which the world cannot give or take away; for it reaches beyond the grave, and affords me peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. I trust the Lord gave me this precious hope about sixty-four years ago. O what shall I render to the Lord for his goodness and mercy, which have followed me all the days of my life? I trust in him still to keep me from the *evil* that is in the world, until he shall call me hence; then my sorrowing and sighing will be done away, and I shall dwell forever with the Lord, and sing hallelujah to God and the Lamb forever. There in heaven we shall enjoy sweet rest for the weary and heavy laden, who believe in and love our Lord Jesus Christ, and drink of the wells of salvation which he has provided, and to which the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall lead them who are born of the water and of the Spirit. Now if Christ be not in us the hope of glory, we are without hope and without God in the world.

How precious are the words of Jesus, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many man-

sions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

How consoling! The Bible has been a precious book to me.

"Give me a bible in my hand,
A heart to read and understand,
And I desire no more."

The able communications and editorials in the SIGNS afford me strength and comfort. I am not afraid or ashamed to stand as a witness for the truth which it proclaims. I would say to the valiant soldiers of the cross, Fight on the good fight of faith; fear not, nor be discouraged. Jesus is your Captain and Commander; he will go before you, and give you the victory. He will keep you safely in the hollow of his hand, and protect you as the apple of his eye. May our Lord make you wise as Serpents and harmless as doves, and give you a clear understanding of his word, and enable you to pass through the deep waters of affliction in triumph through the Redeemer.

What I have written looks to me broken and disconnected; but if you think best to insert it in some corner of the Signs, please correct all mistakes. Have patience with me, dear brother Beebe, this time, for I may never trouble you again, as I am almost seventy-seven years of age, and in a few more days or years I hope this mortal will put on immortality. May you, dear

brother, be strengthened in the inward and outward man, and long continue to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon; and may God grant you all needful blessings, is the desire of one who feels to be the least of all who are of the household of faith.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
SOPHIA MACOMBER.

The Maine Predestinarian Baptist Association, assembled with the Church in Bowdoinham, Sept. 18th, 19th and 20th, 1857, send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:- As we do not print our Minutes, we send this our annual epistle to sister Associations, churches and individuals with whom we correspond and are in fellowship through the *Signs of the Times*.

Another year has rolled around and we have continued tokens of Sovereign management and overruling hand of our God, not only in the dispensation of his new covenant blessings, but in his management and control over all worlds and all men causing the wrath of man to praise Him. The Lord has been mindful of us within the past year, and caused our hearts to rejoice by adding a few to our number who have been thoroughly tried and they have come forth as gold. This is the "Lord's doing: and it is marvellous

in our eyes." In view of the wonderful works of God in humbling the pride of all men who are made to acknowledge the truth of God as declared in the scriptures, we are more and more confirmed in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and the fallacy of the doctrine generally proclaimed among men at this day, that it depends on their own voluntary acceptance, or the will of the creature.

Our meeting has been one of special interest attended with some manifest tokens of the Lord's favor and blessing. We were made in some degree to rejoice in the God of our salvation. The preaching was all of a piece, and we believe in strict accordance with scriptures of eternal truth. We are greeted with the presence of visiting brethren from the Maine Predestinarian Conference which was a source of satisfaction to us. We have the pleasure also to acknowledge the reception of Minutes from the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Warwick, and Corresponding Associations. We sincerely desire the continuation of your correspondence both by Messenger and Minutes which we will endeavor to reciprocate as far as in our power.

Our next annual meeting will be held with the church at Jay, Me., commencing on Friday after the second Monday in September, 1858.

J. L. PURINGTON, Moderator
WM. QUINT, Clerk

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, a Presbytery met at First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis on Sat. August 17, 2013 for the examination of Brother Jeff Young if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, ordain Brother Jeff Young to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The Presbytery was called together consisting of all ministers and deacons, of our faith and order in good standing.

The Presbytery was organized with the election of Elder C.C. Morris as moderator. The Moderator appointed Elder James Pugh as Clerk.

The Moderator asked First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis if they were still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of Brother Jeff Young and Church spokesman, Elder Wayman Chapell, answered in the affirmative and presented the candidate to the Presbytery for ordination.

Elder Truman Bradshaw opened the Presbytery with prayer.

Elder Kenneth Adams questioned the spokesman regarding the qualifications for the office of Deacon. Brother Kenneth Evans questioned the candidate regarding the articles of faith of the church and his calling.

*The laying on of hands was performed by the Presbytery and the ordination prayer was worded by Brother Wayne Baines.

Elder Wayman Chapell gave the charge to the candidate about the duties and responsibilities of the office, and the trials and problems that he would be called on to moderate in the position as a Deacon.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was unanimous in the affirmative.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Deacon Jeff Young by all members of the Presbytery.

The ordained Brother was delivered back to First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis as an Ordained Deacon.

First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis gave Deacon Jeff Young the right hand of fellowship.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Elder James Pugh, Clerk

Ministers Present

Elder C.C. Morris
Elder Truman Bradshaw
Elder Kenneth Adams
Elder James Pugh
Elder Wayman Chapell

Deacons Present

Wayne Baines
Roy G. Howard
Hewatt Fleming
Kenneth Evans

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

Lowell Hopkins, VA	15.00
Glenford Sigmon, VA.....	5.00
Donald Arne, SD.....	100.00
Elder Jimmy Gray, NC.....	5.00
Marcus Vickers, FL	10.00
Gary Whaling, WV	5.00
Jane Myrick, FL	25.00
Nancy Pollack, NC	25.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MYRTLE MURPHY THOMPSON

September 1, 2013

Our Lord called home sister Myrtle Murphy Thompson. She passed from this life August 12, 2013 at the Chatham Health and Rehab Center.

Sister Thompson was born May 9, 1921, a daughter of the late John William Murphy and Hattie Doss Murphy. She was married to Geames Garnett Thompson who predeceased her. She was predeceased by two brothers, George Murphy and Percy Murphy and three sisters, Bertie Craddock, Connie Jefferson and Merklely Giles.

Sister Thompson retired from Dan River Inc. in 1993, where she worked as a battery hand in #1 weave room. Sister Myrtle was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by letter Nov. 12, 2006. Sister Thompson was a faithful member and attended church as long as her health permitted.

Sister Thompson is survived by one brother, Fred w. Murphy of Danville, Va; one sister Frances Murphy Giles of Chatham, Va.; stepchildren Linda Reid of Burlington, NC., Ann Knight and Neal Thompson of Danville, Va.

Sister Thompson was laid to rest in the Danville Memorial Gardens, Danville, Va. Aug. 14, 2013 at 11:00 A.M. The service was held by her pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield.

May all those left to mourn Sister Myrtle be reconciled to the Lord's will.

Written in love and hope by,
Carol R. Lansaw

Elder Marvin Brumfield,
Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

HEBREWS 5. 9.

“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
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And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

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EDITORIAL

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.” Isaiah 55:11



Elder J. B. Farmer The living Word of God is the Lord Jesus Christ. All things were made by Him. They were made by Him and for Him. In Him we live and move

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and have our being. He is God and there is none else. He is the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. There is no other God, and there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. What a great God He is. He does all His pleasure in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can hinder Him or, in truth, even question Him about anything He has done. His thoughts and His ways are as high above those of men as the heaven is above the earth.

According to the purpose of God, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. And God made man of the dust of the ground for a purpose — even to show forth His praise, for God alone is worthy to be praised. Of one lump of clay, He made vessels of honor to fit in glory, and He made vessels of dishonor to fit into destruction. Men in nature will not have this teaching, but it is no wonder, since none are enabled to know anything of the truth of God apart from the Spirit of God. His word is spiritual, and can only be understood by the ones quickened by that same Spirit. His people show forth His praise as they believe in Him and trust Him and follow Him. They show forth His praise as they are blessed to be separated from the world of wickedness, and walk in His light and love. They show forth His praise as they are blessed to endure every trial and not charge God falsely, as Job was blessed. They show forth His praise as they wor-

ship Him in Spirit and in truth. And they shall show forth His praise in Glory.

The wicked show forth His praise as they fulfill His purpose here upon the earth. They show forth His praise in their wrath. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he shall restrain." Glory and honor is brought unto God when the wicked are restrained and cannot carry out their evil will and purposes. God is glorified when we are blessed to think of the great destruction of Pharaoh's army as they pursued the children of Israel into the Red Sea where they were destroyed by the same waters that had been held back from harming God's children. When Jezebel, Ahab's wicked wife, sought to take the life of the prophet Elijah, we see that she could not carry out her will, and in the end was herself killed and eaten of dogs. Again and again all through the scriptures we see God frustrating the purposes of wicked men and even the devil, to God's honor, praise and glory.

Jesus said to Peter, "Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Peter seems to be typical of us in our great weakness. Satan is much stronger than we are according to nature, and he would have his way with us except for the keeping power of God. The children of God have overcome the world in Christ. Jesus said, "Fear not little flock for I have overcome the world." He also said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." God has

put His children in the midst of a wicked and perverse people that He might be glorified in them. His people must have trials and tribulations. They must suffer persecution in this life. If there were no sufferings and persecutions, there would be no victory over the world, and no reigning with Him. Without these fiery trials of their faith, there would be no evidence that they are His. He said, "All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." And, "If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him."

God sent forth his Word, Jesus Christ, to accomplish that which He pleased, even the salvation of His people. This great salvation began with God in eternity when He chose His people, and loved them with an everlasting love, and gave them grace in Christ Jesus the Lord. All this was before the foundation of the world. God purposed to save a remnant according to election, and sent out His Word to fulfill His purpose. His Word did not return to Him void, or empty. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, and He did it. Jesus said, "I came to do the will of my Father and his will is that all that the Father hath given me, I have lost nothing, and shall raise it up at the last day." This great salvation continues as His children are brought out of darkness into His marvelous light. It is manifested as He keeps them from the destruction of the devil's traps and pitfalls. His salvation is evident as the little lambs are filled with faith and trust, even unto death. Their faith fails not because Jesus keeps them all their days. Jesus accom-

plished that which pleased God when He gave His life a ransom for many, when he shed His blood to atone for the sins of His people, and when He came forth from the grave victorious over death, hell and the grave. Jesus accomplished that which pleased the Father, when He presented His bride to Him without any spot or blemish, altogether lovely.

Jesus prospered in that which the Father gave Him to do. He never sinned. He never spoke falsely. He always spoke the truth. He never respected men's persons, regardless of their wealth or position. He went about doing good. He healed all manner of diseases. He forgave the sins of those he loved. He called men to forsake the world and to take up their cross and to follow Him, even unto death. He raised the dead. He pressed forward and was not hindered in anything the Father sent Him to do. He always did the will of the Father. Jesus did not return unto the Father void, but brought with Him the whole family of God. He is the captain of their salvation. Of course the resurrection is yet to come, but God has already seen it, and it is a finished work with Him.

In one place it is written, "**Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obe-**

dient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, 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; and *that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*" This shall be the consummation of all things. Then shall every tongue praise Him world without end because He did the Father's will to perfection.

I trust this was written in kindness and faithfulness.

Elder J. B. Farmer

VOICES OF THE PAST

IT IS FINISHED

By Gilbert Beebe, 1837

When the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, — when His soul was poured out unto death, when frightened rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed, and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple the ark, and cherubims, and mercy seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Romans mocked, while racking pains and most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed

Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword, and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph, from the expiring Saviour's lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, af-frighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the Eternal God-head shouted, "*It is finished.*"

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire what was finished? From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had begun; love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfections of Jehovah which shine forth, in the economy of salvation were not finished, for these were without beginning, and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Saviour when he in triumph gave the victorious shout; nor has our Lord left this important subject in the dark. "**He who runs may read.**" He finished transgression, made an end of sin, and He Himself has declared that he has finished the work that his Father gave Him to do. We eagerly inquire, what then was the work that his father gave Him to do? The Son of God responds, "**I come to do Thy will, O God.**" I am come to do the will of My Father who sent me, and to finish the work. "**And this is the will of Him that sent me, that of all**

that he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise them up at the last day." And the Father has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth, to announce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz: "*His name shall be Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.*" He finished the redemption of this people agreeably to the prediction of the Psalmist: "*The redemption of the soul is precious, and it CEASETH forever.*"

First. He has finished the redemption of His people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin, as far as it relates to those He represented -

Third. He finished the law as far as it relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. "*Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled.*" He is the end of the law for righteousness unto everyone that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions; for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in His own body on the tree; and being made a curse for us, as it is written, "*Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*"

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which are against us nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for sin. "*There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.*"

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which He was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over Him; deep waters came into his soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally. He has completely finished all that was written of Him in the law, in the prophets, and in the Psalms; and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of His people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare,

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth; It is Christ that died.” He was wounded for their transgressions; He was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him; and with His stripes they are healed. He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished? Or, is something remaining to be done by the redeemed, in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be *using means*, or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then is the work not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dying reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeemer — nothing to render His redemption efficient, or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate results of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to or taken from the work which Christ finished when He yielded up the ghost and bowed His head unto death. *“It ceaseth forever.”*

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a *finished salvation* in His worthy name — a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy,

the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul, who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness, and mourn his sins; but by no means suited to the case of the whole, who need no physician. The Pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago, rejected this finished work and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised, opposed and slandered by all the work mongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins; but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it, you are not far from the kingdom.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

THE INCORRUPTIBLE MANHOOD OF CHRIST

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (1 Tim. 3:16).

The Word was made flesh.” This is the eternally glorious act of God. It has no parallel; indeed all other acts of Jehovah, as creation and providence, and in the gospel, redemption and regeneration, and the ultimate glorification of the elect of God are only relatively glorious. I feel it to be the

deepest, the highest, the sublimest in all the revelation of God; and I desire to write upon the subject with reverence and godly fear.

“The angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing*

shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her” (Luke 1:26-38).

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7). This child was not a corruptible child, who would grow up to be in his manhood a corruptible man, such as a child of hers would be by natural generation. The angel had said unto her, that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. That Holy Thing is in distinction from a child she might conceive and give birth to by having known a man. “The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman (the virgin Mary) shall compass a man (‘geber’, mighty man — not ‘enosh’, a thortal)” (Jer. 31:22). The virgin wrapped him in swaddling clothes, he sucked the breasts of his mother (Psa. 22:9), as she held him in her arms. “Up-holding all things by the word of his power” (Heb. 1:3). He was verily her child, the Son of the Highest; and thus she rejoiced before she brought him forth; “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is his name*” (Luke 1:46-49).

Abraham, David and the virgin

Mary, like all the fallen race, were corruptible human beings. But the Son of God in taking upon him the seed of Abraham and being made flesh in the womb of the virgin, and partaking of flesh and blood partook of no corruption of the Virgin Mary. Jesus her first born son was distinct and separate from her in this. She was corruptible, and he, her very son, conceived in her womb by the Holy Ghost and born of her, was incorruptible. How can this be? This is one of the glories of the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God.

The manhood of the eternal Son of God was indefectible, immeasurably full of grace. Christ **“is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fullness dwell.”** **“In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”** (Col. 1:15-19, 2:9).

There was no taint, or stain, or germ of Adamic sin, mortality and corruption in that Holy Thing born of the virgin. Our Lord Jesus Christ in his Godhead is the **“incorruptible God”** (Rom. 1:23), and his manhood from the moment of its conception in the womb

of the virgin was ever meet to be taken into union with himself, the Son of God. **“It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared** (fitted, adjusted thoroughly to) **me”** (Heb. 10:4-5). I shrink from the thought that when the Son of God came delighting to do the will of his Father, saying, “Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God,” “A body hast thou prepared me,” that God prepared a corruptible body, that such a body was “fitted, adjusted thoroughly” to the uncorruptible Son of God. If the body of Christ was corruptible as Abraham’s and the virgin Mary’s, then his body was sinful, mortal and corruptible. These three are inseparable in human beings. But Christ was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (Heb. 7:26).

His manhood was absolutely sinless. Jesus saith, **“The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me”** (John 14:30). This could not be said, if his body were corruptible (subject to decay, destruction). When the prince of this world cometh to us, he findeth in our Adamic natures something indeed — the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; but there were no deceitful lusts in Christ’s flesh. The Apostle Paul writes, **“We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of**

wrath, even as others” (Eph. 2:3). Jesus was not such. He was not by nature a child of wrath; but in his nature, in his manhood he was such that his conversation among men, and unto God was ever in that which is incorruptible. And all the desires of his flesh and mind and his fulfilling the same were ever in the sight of God of great price, and well pleasing unto the Father. **“I do always those things that please him.” “Thy Holy Child Jesus”** never had thought or desire but what was delightful unto God the Father, whom he calls, **“Holy Father,” “O righteous Father” (John 17:11-25).** The bodies of sinners are mortal and corruptible; and the apostle says to the children of God, **“If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live” (Rom. 8:13).** There were no deeds in Jesus’ body to mortify, no affections and lusts to be crucified; for Christ in his manhood was not a corruptible man. (Rom. 1:23).

Have we liberty to say the soul of Christ was incorruptible and his body, his flesh, corruptible? Never! The bodies of the saints are mortal (Rom. 8:11), corruptible (1 Cor. 15:54), vile (Phil. 3:21). Christ’s body was not such.

If Christ’s body had been corruptible, his flesh subject to decay, to destruction, then (apart from his covenant engagements as the Head and Surety, Redeemer of his people), he must necessarily have died, even as Abraham and David. Sinful, mortal, corruptible, pertain to sinful human beings who are under inevitable subjection to death. If Christ’s body were corruptible, then he

must of necessity have died, and his death was not voluntary.

The body of Christ was capable of dying, and did die. But the death of Christ was by the power of his own eternal Godhead, and was his own voluntary act. According to the exceeding riches of the grace of God unto the elect, he tasted death for them. The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. Jesus saith, **“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:17-18).** “He through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God.” This power no corruptible man has. The man Christ Jesus was not a “corruptible man”. If the manhood of Christ had been corruptible, he would have had need, as other human corruptibles, of redemption and regeneration.

We read in Rom. 8:3 of “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” Did God’s own Son in partaking of flesh and blood in the womb of the virgin partake of her sinfulness? Was the flesh of that Holy Thing that was born of her, “sinful flesh?” David exclaims, **“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psa. 51:5).** **“Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3).** Abraham’s flesh was sinful, David’s flesh was sinful, and the virgin Mary’s flesh was sinful, but of him who was David’s Lord, and David’s son (Matt. 22:45), it would be very blasphemy to say of him, of that Holy Thing that was conceived in the vir-

gin Mary of the Holy Ghost, and born of her, what is recorded in Psalm 51:5. The Son of God was in the likeness of sinful flesh as to "form" and "fashion" as a man (Phil. 2:8); but his flesh was not sinful, but sinless, impeccable. The Holy Ghost came upon the virgin, the power of the highest overshadowed her, and she conceived in her womb that Holy Thing. "A body hast thou prepared (fitted, adjusted thoroughly) me," saith the Son of God. Thus the manhood of Christ was shapened and conceived, and not as "his father David (Luke 1:32), according to the flesh," says in Psalm 51:5 that he was.

The scriptures explicitly teach that Jesus Christ in his manhood was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens (Heb. 7:26). The first man Adam, as he came from the hands of his Creator, was declared to be good and "very good." But the manhood of Christ, of the Lord from heaven, the last Adam, hath the preeminence of the first man Adam, even when contemplated in his upright, unfallen estate. For the human nature of Christ held in indissoluble union with the Son of God was ever in consequence of this union impeccable (exempt from the possibility of sinning) and so indefectible and incorruptible. The first man Adam was not impeccable. This was manifest in the garden of Eden, "For by one man (the first man) sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Christ in all things hath the preeminence; he is fairer than the children of men, grace is poured unto

his lips. He is the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, and made higher than the heavens. And all this because he is "the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." Our Lord Jesus Christ is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting, Amen (1 Tim. 6:15-16). And I will again declare that if he, the Lord's Christ, had not been in his entire manhood, in his soul and in his body, too, all the days of his flesh impeccable, indefectible and incorruptible, but had been as Abraham, David, and the virgin Mary corruptible, he would have been ineligible to have been the offering and sacrifice for the sins of his people. Immanuel in his own person was the High Priest, the altar, the offering and sacrifice for the sins of his church. And as High Priest, he needed not to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins. Consider this also of the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, that he was not as Aaron, a mortal man who could not continue by reason of death, but in his very person as God-man he was made the High Priest of the church after the order of Melchisedec, after the power of an endless life.

As the atoning sacrifice, the Lord laid upon Christ, the iniquities of us all. God made him to be sin (by imputation) for us, "who knew no sin." He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. All the days of his flesh in which he was the antitypical scape-goat of his people,

and while in Gethsemane, and on Calvary he was immutably holy, the sinless, spotless sacrifice. "He offered himself without spot to God." An offering and a sacrifice for a sweet smelling savor. Our sins that were laid upon him were not of a sweet smelling savor. Ah no! They were an abomination, hated, a stench. But our blessed Saviour put them away by the sacrifice of himself. The sacrifices offered upon Jewish altars could never take away sin. They were only types and shadows of Christ's offering, yet in them it was taught that the offering must be clean and without blemish. And dreadful was the denunciations of all hypocritical worshipers who presumptuously offered "a corrupt thing" (Mal. 1:11-14). Christ is the "pure offering," he is not a corruptible. By the will of God we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb. 10:10). This offering was not a corrupt thing. Christ's body was impeccable, sinless, incorruptible.

The apostle Peter declares, **"ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19).** But if Christ's human nature had been corruptible, if it had been more corrupt, more vile than corruptible silver and gold, he could not have been the lamb of God without blemish and without spot, and he could not have given himself a ransom for our sins. Had his body once offered for sins been corruptible, the

blood of his corruptible body would have been sinful, corruptible blood, and could never have had blessed designation, "the precious blood of Christ," as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

We sometimes sing,

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

"Feed the churches of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." The blood of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God cleanseth us from all sin. And, let it be our contemplation that every breath he breathed, all his thoughts, and words, and acts, yes, all his sighs, and groans and tears; his bloody sweat, the sorrows, the agonies of Christ were not as of a man separate from the eternal Son of God. "The second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47). This man never had any being separate from the Lord. In the moment that the Holy Ghost came upon the virgin Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, and she conceived by the Holy Ghost that Holy Thing, that Holy Thing was taken hold of by the Word, the Son of God, and held in unspeakable, indissolvable union unto himself. So all the thoughts, desires and acts, of the flesh and mind of Christ were the thoughts, desires and acts of the Word made flesh, the God-man, our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Almighty God, sighed human

breath,
The Lord of life experienced death;
How it was done we can't discuss,
But this we know, 'twas done for
us."

The flesh of Jesus slept in the tomb three days and three nights in incorruption. It could never, even at the last moments of those three days be said of Christ's body, "By this time he stinketh." Christ saw no corruption (Acts 13:37).

The sacred body and soul of Christ were separated when Jesus died upon the cross.

But that Holy Thing, that impeccable, indefectible, incorruptible manhood was not separated from the Word, the Son of God; it was still held by the Word, the Son of God in ineffable, undissolvable union unto himself. There could be no dissolution of that union; not for a moment. It was immutable, eternal. The eternal Son of God held unto himself in eternal wedlock that Holy Thing that he took upon him, unto himself in the womb of the virgin Mary.

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27). "But he whom God raised again saw no corruption" (Acts 13:37). The doctrine cannot be read in the scriptures, Thou wilt not suffer my corruptible flesh to see corruption, for the man Christ Jesus, of the seed of David according to the flesh was not a "corruptible man" (Rom. 1:23). The Apostle Paul saith, **"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how Christ died for our sins according to**

the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." He showed himself alive after his passion, infallible proofs being seen of chosen disciples forty days. He ascended into heaven, he was received up into glory, and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. **"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).**

Christ shall come the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:28). **"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:16-18).** We look for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, **"who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20-21).** Christ's body was never vile.

"Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall

all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:51-58).

Elder Frederick W. Keene,
Raleigh, NC

ST. JOHN 11:25-26.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association met with the Church at Black Rock, May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1858, to the Churches connected therewith.

Beloved Brethren: — Permit us to address you on this occasion on the Present State of the Church of Christ. That the Church is at this time surrounded with darkness in a peculiar manner, is generally admitted; it is like the plague of darkness of Egypt, a darkness that may be felt; it is a wintry state of the Church. The sun occasionally shines, but its shining has not that warming, enlivening and cheering influence upon the plants as at other times it has had — and it is soon obscured by cold bleak clouds.

There are clouds rising from the mists of this world, from the various agitations in the world at this time, politically and otherwise, which much darken the hemisphere of the Church and saints, and produce a corresponding chilliness. There is not that liveliness in our love to the brethren, nor to the truth and ordinances of the Gospel, nor that engagedness in religious exercises, and in religious conversation, and meditations, as have at other times been felt.

As in night and wintry seasons beasts of prey crowd round the settlements of men, to raven; so it is with the Church at this time. There are those around the saints and among them, that would persuade or scare the sheep from their fenced folds to ramble with them in

the wild ranges of human wisdom, and to repose with them in their dens that they may prey upon them, and no doubt they have bewitched some of the sheep. There are others again who would persuade the children of God that they ought not to follow or receive the light which God has given for their continual guide, the Scriptures and blessed teachings of the Spirit, but to be guided in their belief and practice by the mixture of light and shade which is found in the writings of eminent men of past ages; and as these are various, so as they are followed they produce differences of views and dissensions among the saints. Again, Satan takes the advantage of this darkness, to assault the saints with temptations. It is an old complaint with the children of God that,

“Temptations everywhere annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy.”

How it may be with the brethren generally at this time we know not, but some are peculiarly tried with temptations. Satan so stirs up their passions, appetites, &c., that they think it is altogether themselves. And indeed it is their own vile nature that thus shows itself; and what is a worse annoyance to them, the old man when left to act itself loves as much as ever it did, the indulgence of itself in its corruptions, and hence under this wildness and darkness, or, in other words, not having the spiritual man in lively exercise, we are led on under the influence of our corruptions, till we are on the very brink of acting them out;

and were it not for the faithfulness of God who has promised that with the temptations he will make a way for our escape, we should plunge into actual sin. Though the escape is brought about, we know that it is not of ourselves, but that the sin is ours, though we were not left to carry it out; then arises the trying doubts, whether, if we loved God and his cause and believed the declarations of his word, &c., we could be led on thus contrary to his word and to the exposing of his cause to reproach. We are sometimes thus tossed upon the billows of temptations, until like Jonah, we become exceedingly displeased, and angry, and pray the Lord to take away our life, thinking it better for us to die than to live, yea, with Job, our souls, those souls which others tell us are made heavenly in regeneration, choose strangling and death rather than life. Again, as in wintry seasons, clouds have heretofore at times gathered over the Church, but at this time they appear to be gathering thicker than ever, as though preparing to burst in a storm upon us.

But, brethren, it is with the Church now as it was with Israel during the plague of darkness in Egypt. All the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. So we think the churches of the saints have at this time as clear light in the great truths of the Gospel as in any former period; and it is more distinguishable from every false system than formerly as it makes manifest the darkness without, by being so contrasted with it. The ministers of Christ, although frequently on account of the wintry darkness when going to their appointments,

feel more as though they were going on some worldly concern than to deliver a message of grace, yet are enabled generally to preach the gospel with much clearness, to feel, while preaching, the vast weight of their subject, the precious fullness and freeness of the gospel of salvation, and the importance of contending earnestly for the faith, and of preaching Christ as the only way of salvation. Private members are as well established in the truth, and have as clear a discerning spirit to distinguish between truth and error when preached, as at any former period; and whilst complaining of many doubts, fears and temptations, are as well established in the truth that their whole salvation is in Christ Jesus as in any former period, and manifest as much anxiety to know the Scriptures, and to be in all things conformed to them.

The inquiry is frequently made, What can be the reason of the Church's being in this dark wintry state, and whether it is not owing to the unfaithfulness of the Church that this has come upon her? The inquiry is also made whether the Church cannot adopt some course, whether some measures cannot be taken to bring the Church back to more sunny seasons, and whether individuals by proper efforts, by prayer, &c., cannot deliver themselves from their coldness? Some few have urged the making certain exertions to relieve the Church and saints from this unpleasant situation. Brethren, does not the same God reign in the heavenly kingdom as in the earthly? Does he not reign as supremely in the one as in the other? Does

not the declaration of the Lord, "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things" apply as fully to the spiritual world and its government as to the natural? Try your powers, brethren, in mid-winter to clear away the storm clouds, to avert the long, dark cold nights and to bring the sun back to his summer solstice, and if ye can do this, then may ye hope by your efforts to hasten on again the period when in reference to the Church ye may sing, "For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," and not till then. We know, brethren, that all this coldness and darkness and the corruptions, that cause us to doubt and fret, and are the materials for Satan's temptations to act upon, are in us. We cannot say with our Lord "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." No, the evil is all in us, and when we rightly feel, we take all the shame and blame to ourselves. But can we shake off or overcome these evils of ourselves? No, the more we feel the evil of these corruptions and coldness, we feel the more our entire impotency to relieve ourselves from them, we cry for God to interpose his grace or we must fall under them. It is true, that amid the severest colds and storms of winter, if God in his providence provide us with shelter, with fuel and clothing we may keep from perishing, so under all these dark and wintry seasons spiritually, God's grace will be sufficient for his people to secure that their faith fail not. He will keep them

by his power through faith unto salvation, though he may leave them, for more humbling of themselves, and for the trying their faith, to fall into the mire.

The people of God, are likened to sheep. Sheep are feeble, defenseless creatures of themselves, very simple in providing for their defense against their enemies, or in providing for, and protecting themselves and their young from perishing in the wintery storms. They need the constant care of a shepherd to provide food and shelter for them, and to protect them by keeping them embosomed, or by watching over them, or they will wander off, get scattered and devoured. The people of God are equally as dependent upon the care of their Shepherd. But David personating Christ in his body, the Church, says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul, &c." So that even the souls of the children, get off at times from the simplicity of gospel truth and order and need to be restored by the great Shepherd. This does not look like the souls of saints have been changed into heavenly souls.

As to the reason why the church is in this dark and wintery state; we would say, it is not that the Shepherd is unfaithful to his charge; not because he has not power to preserve his sheep in perfect peace, and to keep them in the constant enjoyment of light; nor because they are left to their own care; but because he has seen it best for the church to be in this state. In a word, because it is so written, and the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

The present dark and cold state of the church, will no doubt be more for the glory of God, more for a manifestation of the power and exceeding riches of his grace; more fully display to the admiration of saints and angels, the divine efficacy of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin, and that perfect fullness there is in him to present the vilest sinner without spot or blemish before the throne of God, than would the church's being kept in the constant exercise of that faith and love and zeal such as characterized the lives of Peter, John and Paul. Because now it appears so manifest that it is all of grace that they are saved and kept, all of Christ in which they will appear with acceptance before God, and shine in glory.

Let us then, Brethren, amidst all the darkness around, rejoice in the power and faithful care of our Shepherd and may we be found walking as children of Light.

Elder Samuel Trott, Moderator
Jas. Blizzard, Clerk

(The above Circular Letter of the Baltimore Association appeared in the Signs of July 1, 1858.)

REVELATION 1:7.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

“Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” - ROMANS vii, 24.

If the Lord the Spirit has implanted that piteous cry in our soul, “*O wretched man that I am!*” this will follow as a necessary consequence - “*Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” Where shall I look for deliverance? From what quarter can it come? Shall I look to the law? O no! that curses and condemns me, because I am continually breaking it. Can I look to friends? They may pity and sympathize; but they cannot remove the body of sin and death; it is too fast linked on for them to remove. Shall I go to ministers of truth? I may hear what they say with approbation; but there is something more wanted to remove this chilling embrace of the body of sin and death. Shall I look to the Scriptures? They contain the remedy; but I want that remedy to be sweetly applied. “*Who then shall deliver me?*” What refuge can I look to? Whither can I go, or whither shall I turn? From what quarter can help or deliverance come? See the embarrassment! view the perplexity of an exercised soul looking here, and looking there; turning to the right hand and turning to the left. Yet from one quarter only can the deliverance come. And thus, when the Apostle was brought here when he was sunk down to a low spot, and anxiously turning his

eyes to every quarter to see whence deliverance could come God blessed his soul with a view of his precious Son. God the Spirit wrought in his heart that living faith whereby he saw Jesus, and whereby there was a communication of the blood and love of the Lamb to his conscience.

J. C. Philpot

ST. MATTHEW 5:17-18.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

BROTHER BEEBE: — Having finished the business part of my letter, I will write a few lines to inform you, in part, how I get along in spiritual matters; for it is but in part that I can write or tell how I get along. I must acknowledge that I get along at a poor dying rate. My heart is so cold and hard it seems to me that I have no feeling nor realizing sense of how I do get along. The most of my time I am in a cold, lifeless state of mind respecting spiritual things. Sometimes Christians are the ones I long the most to see, and at other times I shun them for fear they will speak to me. I think,

if I am not deceived, I have been brought to see the end of all perfection here below— that there is no help in an arm of flesh — for I would not have raised one finger, if I could have secured the strivings of the whole human family in behalf of my salvation; I was satisfied that nothing short of the power and mercy of God could effect my salvation or do me any good. At that time I could see no way that God could be just and save such a sinful mortal as I viewed myself to be; for I was justly condemned by God's righteous law, and that law was as holy as God himself; and I had no desire for that law to be marred, let what was would become of me. I think I was made willing that God's will should be done. My burden at that time did not consist in the fear of being punished and tormented to all eternity, but it consisted in having a view of my unholiness, impurity, sinfulness, depravity, and rebellion against God, and the enmity of the carnal mind. My desires were to be rid of everything unlike God; to be pure and holy as God himself was all I desired; and would not that have been enough? But I was under the law and under its curse, and must there have remained eternally had not the great I AM provided a plan in infinite wisdom, ere time began, to rescue fallen man. He gave his only begotten Son to come into this world and take upon him the sins of all that the Father gave him in the covenant of redemption, and bear them in his own body on the cross. He magnified the law and made it honorable, cried, "It is finished!" gave up the ghost, and opened up a way

whereby God could be just and save such sinful mortals as you and I. And if we are ever saved, it must be in a different way from that which seems right unto man; for inspiration informs us that there is a way that seems right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Men take light for darkness, and darkness for light; they call bitter sweet, and sweet bitter; and the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. I do not know what the natural man possesses but what is carnal, and I know of no way that we can be cleansed but by an application of the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ; for his blood cleanses from all sin, and it is in and through his merits and righteousness that we are accepted of the Father, if we are indeed accepted of him. I believe that every one that was given to Christ in the covenant of redemption will be prepared here in time, and made meet temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, and eventually be received at the Father's right hand to sing praises to God and the Lamb in a never-ending eternity. I have a hope that I shall one day arrive there although I am so vile. I will not say that my hope is small, but I can truly say that I look small to myself, for I can see nothing in self that looks like a Christian; and if I am one, why am I thus? It appears to me, if I am a child at all, I am the least of all. I frequently hear brethren and sisters call their hope a little hope, and frequently see it thus expressed in the Signs and Messenger, by brethren and sisters. If I was writing for the press, I would ask brethren and sisters what our hope is, if

it is not Christ formed in the soul the hope of glory? I so understand it. And if so is our hope small? I think every one that has this hope has a big hope, and it is that they would not exchange for worlds like this.

Brother Beebe, I thought when I commenced writing I should write a little of how I get along in spiritual things; but you see how my mind runs away with my pen, so I may as well stop writing. I will just say that the *Signs and Messenger* come regularly, and they are welcome messengers to me, for they are laden with good news; they speak a language that no mortal man can understand except he has been taught by the spirit of God.

But I will close lest I intrude upon your patience. And may grace, mercy and peace be and abide with you, and the Israel of God, now and forever.

Yours in affliction,
NEHEMIAH BUTLER
Sanford, Maine, April 7, 1856.

Richmond Me., June 3, 1855.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: — I feel inclined to write a few lines after a long silence, feeling stimulated thereto by the many communications appearing in the *Signs and Messenger*, not that I expect to add anything essential, but to show the medium through which I receive nearly all the Gospel instruction I have; not having heard it

preached since last October. I am surrounded with a do and live kind of preaching in an abundance, and wonderful things have been performed through the winter and spring past, but it is all an empty sound to me; these words have passed frequently through my mind," But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

When I look back through a long series of years and behold the path in which the Lord hath led me, that I might grow in grace and knowledge, I am struck with humility and astonishment at the wonderful plan of salvation by grace.

My mind is frequently drawn towards the brethren in your region of country.

I cannot forget the season of enjoyment I had at the Warwick Association two years ago. I had flattered myself through the winter that I should attend this year if providence made the way plain; but as time rolled on, the way seemed to close up, and I became satisfied that it was my duty to stay at home. Whether I shall ever again visit the brethren in your vicinity is to me very doubtful, but I feel a comfortable degree of resignation to the will of God, and a strong confidence in his word, that He will never leave nor forsake his people.

I do not write, expecting to instruct brethren, but by way of remembrance, and encouragement to such as are capable of writing to edification, to perse-

vere. I find that many names that formerly used to appear in the *Signs*, are rarely now seen. This is a natural consequence as time moves on; nevertheless, I would say to elderly brethren, do not unreasonably neglect; it is getting common for brethren and sisters to write out their experience which is very consoling. I hope it will be continued as the Lord shall dictate; but in this as in every other point, true humility is necessary. In the course of my long life, I have seen a vain ambition manifested in this as in all other strains of conversation. Oh the depravity of human nature! The heart of man is evil, and desperately evil, who can know it? I will stop scribbling my thoughts, with a prayer that the Lord may be with you at the Warwick Association, and in all other places.

HEZEKIAH PURINGTON

PSALM 57: 6-11.

They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I *myself* will awake early.

I will praise thee, O Lord,

among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

For thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

MEETINGS

**LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING**

The Lower Mayo fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday, December 29th, 2013. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30. Mayodan Church will host the meeting. Directions for those who do not know the location: the meeting house is located at 426 N. 2nd Ave. US 220 Bus. N., Mayodan, N.C. 27027. Coming North or South on US 220, turn South on 220 Business to Mayodan. Go 2 miles to church on right. Coming NC 770, turn South on Janet Road. Go 2 miles to 220 Business. Turn right and go 1 ½ miles to church on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(276) 952 -2098

SKEWARKEY UNION
(Eastern Kehukee Association)

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union on the fifth Sunday of December 29, 2013. The church is located at the corner of St. James Street and Albermarle Avenue in Tarboro, NC. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend an invitation to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
 252-823-0786

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in December 2013. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church. The church is located 1 mile east of Hwy 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Road.

Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator

ROMANS 8:1-2.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2013

Glenna Link, TN	25.00
Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
Arleen Giles, VA	5.00
Earl Thurman, VA	5.00
Thomas Pegram, VA	15.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA	5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Flay Mordecai, MS	5.00
Mary Lee, NC	5.00
Charlie Fox, AR	10.00
Marie Southern, NC	5.00
Bodie Lankford, LA	5.00
Gerline Weatherford, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER HASSEL D. ALLEN

Brother Hassel Denny Allen died at his home in Edgecombe County, NC on September 14, 2013, after several years of declining health. He had celebrated his 89th birthday. Brother Allen was born in Pitt County, NC on May 8, 1924, the son of Brother John I. and Sister Hattie Joyner Allen. He was the last survivor of their eight children. He was named for two Primitive Baptist ministers: Elder Sylvester Hassell and Elder S.B. Denny.

During World War II, Bro Allen served with the U.S. Army in Italy and North Africa. He was awarded the Com-

bat Infantry Badge and Bronze Star for his heroic service. It was fitting that a military honor guard was present at his burial service to pay tribute to one of "America's Greatest Generation".

In 1946, Brother Allen married Ethel "Peggy" Keel, to whom he was married for 63 years before her passing in 2009. They were the parents of three children: Brenda Allen Colombo of Greenville, NC; Denny Allen of Rocky Mount, NC; and Delores "Dee" Allen of the home.

The Allen family lived in Rocky Mount, NC from 1949 until 1972. Brother Allen was employed as a salesman with Procter & Gamble Company for 30 years, retiring in 1979. After his retirement, he raised a large garden and angus cattle on his farm. He sold his vegetables at the Farmers Market and from the yard of his home near Bethel, NC.

Brother Allen joined Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church in 1961 and was ordained a deacon several years later. He was also the clerk of the church for almost 40 years. He served the church faithfully and was a strong believer in, and defender of, the faith, doctrine and order of the Primitive Baptist. With the passing of time he became the last member of Flat Swamp Church, but with the help of members of the other churches, services were held there each first Sunday until Brother Hassel was physically unable to keep up the building

and grounds which he had maintained almost singlehandedly for many years. The last service was held at Flat Swamp Church in August, 2011. Brother Allen then joined Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church in Williamston, NC and attended there as long as his health permitted.

Brother Allen served as Clerk of the Skewarkey Union for seventeen years (1978-1995). When the Kehukee Association divided in 1981, Brother Allen and others undertook the organization of the Eastern Kehukee Association, and he served as it's Clerk for four years (1983-1986) and it's Moderator for twenty-three years (1988-2011).

A few days before Brother Hassel died he told his daughter that he was "very tired and ready to go". The words of the Apostle Paul are appropriate: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. 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". (II Timothy 4:7-8)

Brother Allen passed peacefully in his sleep on Saturday morning, September 14. His funeral was conducted at Wilkerson Funeral Home in Greenville, NC by Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Joe Sawyer. His body was buried with military honors in the Bethel Cemetery beside his be-

loved wife, Peggy, where it will rest until the day of the Resurrection when the dead in Christ shall be raised with a spiritual body. We believe he will answer the call of the Saviour: **“Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”.** (Matthew 25:34)

There, in that kingdom, his faith will end in sight and his hope in possession of that **“... building of God an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”.** (II Corinthians 5:1)

Written at the request of the Eastern Kehukee Association.

Charlie D. Alston

SISTER PEARL TURNER DYER

Our hearts was saddened by the loss of our beloved Sister Pearl Turner Dyer on May 5, 2012 when the good Lord saw fit to call her home. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. Sister Pearl was born March 2, 1936 to the late John and Betty Turner. She was blessed to share her life with her husband of 45 years Mr. Edwin Dyer. You always saw them together. Devoted to each other and their family, they supported each other and their home churches. Both were devoted and faithful members until illness kept them from church. The Lord blessed their union with two children, Mr. John Dyer and Mrs. Betty Waggoner (Tim). As their family grew

they were blessed with five grandchildren whom sister Pearl always had pictures to share along with a beautiful and proud smile. Sister Pearl is also survived by her siblings and spouses: George Turner, Marie Nester (Nelson), Nancy DeLancey (Wilfred), and Thomas Turner (Sylvia).

Sister Pearl served as a faithful and devoted member at Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church. We will sure miss her beautiful smile and sweet spirit. She was received by the Church at Long Branch on December 5, 1954. An excerpt from the 4th Church record book reads:

“Sunday December 5, 1954 after services by Amos Issac Hash, Miss Annie Pearl Turner, was received by experience for baptism. On Sunday January 2, 1955 Amos Issac Hash, Miss Annie Pearl Turner, was baptized by Elder J. G. L. Hash amid much rejoicing. Praise ye the Lord for His mercies. Elder J.G.L. Hash Mod.”

Funeral Services were conducted 2:00p.m. Tuesday May 8, 2012 at Flora Funeral Chapel by her Pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder Junior Conner. Her body was laid to rest in Republican Church Cemetery. We feel blessed to share the time we had with Sister Pearl on this earth. Praise ye the Lord for His mercies.

Submitted in love and humbleness
Sister Betty Walker

Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church

This writer apologizes for delay in sending to have published.