

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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*Jesus, before thy face I fall,
My Lord, my life, my hope, my all;
For I have no where else to flee;
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee.*

*In thee I every glory view,
Of safety, strength, and beauty, too:
Beloved Saviour, ever be
A sanctuary unto me.*

*Whatever woes and fears betide,
In thy dear bosom let me hide;
And, while I pour my soul to thee,
Do thou my sanctuary be.*

*Through life and all its changing
scenes,
And all the grief that intervenes,
'Tis this supports my fainting heart,
That thou my sanctuary art.*

*Apace the solemn hour draws nigh,
When I must bow my head and die;
But O, what joy this witness gives,—
Jesus, my sanctuary, lives.*

*He from the grave my dust will raise;
I in the heavens will sing his praise;
And when in glory I appear,
He'll be my sanctuary there.*

Medley.

Above was one of Elder Leonard Key's favorite hymns.

(See obituary this issue.)

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 EDITORIAL

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



Clifford Wilbanks

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." (I Cor. i: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 ,

for 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 of 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. Without 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

CORRESPONDENCE

My beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ ,

I have lived my life among Old Baptists , my father , mother , grandparents . I can say I have respected them all the years . Loved them for over forty five years . Since 1934 have no doubt about where the Church was but could not join them until 1987 . I am sure that God rules

everything everywhere with justice and a sure hand even to the trembling of a leaf of the trees . I believe as sure as the sunshine and day and night that God rules with love and justice and needs no help to rule with a sure hand in everything . Let us have love and fellowship for one and all that believe our beloved Savior died for us . I believe in a sure Salvation by the Grace of God shed on his Son before the world was . I also believe He knew everything from the beginning .

I believe I will live to take every step allotted me before time and was born to Elder J . P . and Clara Helms on Jan . 22 , 1912 on time not one minute early or late . So my time to leave the earth is set as sure as my coming .

With love for Christ 's sake ,

James R . Helms
Rt . 1 , Box 462
Catawba , Va . 24070

1 THESSALONIANS 1 : 1 - 4 .

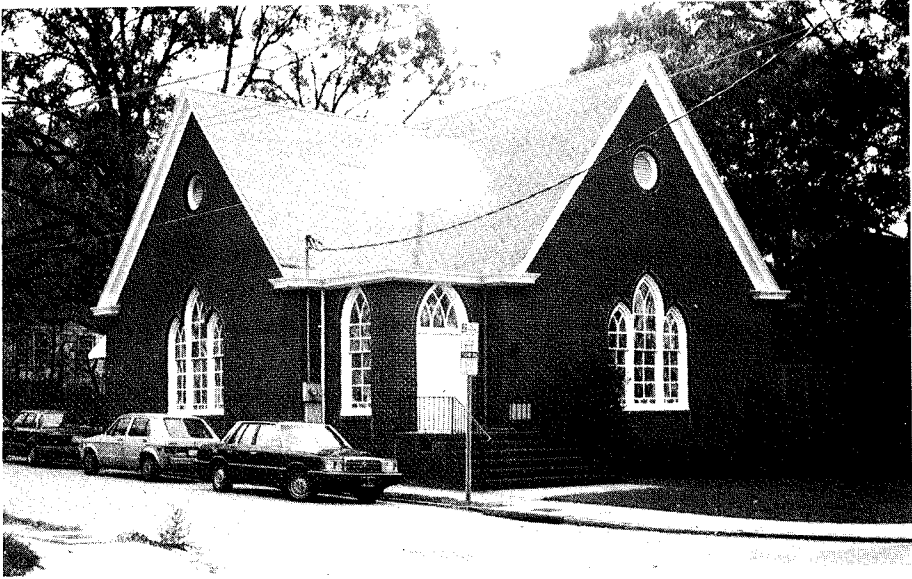
Paul , and Silvanus , and Timothy , unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ : Grace be unto you , and peace , from God our Father , and the Lord Jesus Christ .

We give thanks to God always for you all , making mention of you in our prayers ;

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith , and labour of love , and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ , in the sight of God and our Father ;

Knowing , brethren beloved , your election of God .

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



GREENSBORO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

MINUTES OF CONSTITUTION OF GREENSBORO CHURCH

Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church was constituted November 2, 1907. The presbytery was composed as follows: Elders P. G. Lester, P. W. Willard, G. Denny and Brother Henry Tucker, deacon. Elders P. W. Willard was chosen moderator and P. G. Lester, Clerk.

The following brethren were received by letter. Elder C. F. Denny, Elder O. J. Denny, Dr. Z. J. Brooks, J. M. Denniss, J. H. Combs, Levi Harris, G. W. Snyder, T. A. Snyder, J. H. Taylor and S. B. Denny and sisters Mollie Denny, Ellen Denny, Chessie H. Brooks, May Hampton, Nancy Denniss, Fannie Harris, Berlie A. Harris, Bessie J. Harris, Mollie Tillman, Lucy Osborne and Jennie Osborne.

On motion the Constitution,

Covenant, Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum were adopted and ordered spread on the church record.

On motion made by Elder Lester the Presbytery declared the members who presented letters legally constituted as a church to transact business for themselves as an independent body.

Elders C. F. and O. J. Denny were unanimously elected pastors to serve the church as they see fit. Brother Levi Harris was elected clerk. It was agreed to wait until some future time to choose deacons.

It was decided to have preaching every Sunday and the second Sunday in each month was the time appointed for conference meeting.

P. W. Willard, Moderator
P. G. Lester, Clerk

Elder O. J. Denny served as

pastor from 1907 to 1931 . Elder C.F. Denny served as assistant pastor from 1907 to 1919 . Elder J.A. Fagg served as assistant pastor from 1919 to 1926 . Elder W. Curry King served as assistant pastor from 1926 to 1931 . Elder W. Curry King served as pastor from 1931 to 1970 . Elder Kenneth R . Key served as associate pastor from May , 1963 and was chosen as pastor at the death of Elder King on Oct. 17, 1970 . And his brother Elder Leonard Key served with him as associate pastor until his death on May 5 , 1990 .

The Greensboro Church meets for service on first Sunday morning of each month at 10:30 a.m. Conference meeting is held on the third Sunday night in April of each year . Communion is held on the first Sunday in June .

Membership has remained stable throughout the years and the Lord has continued to bless this church .

All lovers of the truth are invited to attend our meetings .

Elder Kenneth R. Key , Moderator
Deacon Wayne Edwards , Clerk

COLOSSIANS 1 : 16 .

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 :

1 THESSALONIANS 5 : 18

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you .

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

" The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded ." — Romans xi . 7 .

Those that are blinded by the god of this world , have no knowledge of what power and feeling and savour and dew are; they see not these things , they are blind to their reality , they are dead to their importance ; but the living family of God, who are brought by his blessed Spirit into some apprehension of eternal realities , have eyes to see what power is , and hearts too , to desire to feel its manifestation. Nay, it is the very seeing what reality and power are which makes them desire to experience the savour of eternal things in their conscience ; and because they do not feel them as they wish , it makes them often fear that they are blind altogether (Isaiah lix . 10) . But the very inquiry , the very anxious cry , the very groaning desire , the very fervent supplication to the Lord that he would not let them live and die without a testimony from himself, that he would lift up the light of his countenance and grant them the life of his favour — these very cries are a proof of life . Were you blind , you would not see these things; were you deaf, you would not spiritually hear these things ; were you dead , you would not feel these things . And , therefore , that which you seem to take as an evidence against you , is , in reality , an evidence for you ; and the very sensations of trepidation, anxious inquiry, godly fear , and the crying out before

the Lord that he would search and try you and really make your heart right in his sight — these very things are the symptoms of life, the evidences of a work of grace upon the heart, and are the spiritual breathings of the quickened soul, the Lord himself having communicated these feelings unto it.

J. C. Philpot

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE
ATTRIBUTES
BY AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY
1740 - 1778

We now come, to consider the omnipotence of God.

Pos . 1 . God is, in the most unlimited and absolute sense of the word, Almighty. Jer . xxxii . 17 . Behold, thou has made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee. Mat . xix . 26 . With God all things are possible. The schoolmen very properly distinguish the omnipotence of God into absolute and actual: by the former, God might do many things which he does not; by the latter, he actually does whatever he will. For instance, God might, by virtue of his absolute power, have made more worlds than he has. He might have eternally saved every individual of mankind, without reprobating any: on the other hand he might, and that with the strictest justice, have condemned all men, and saved none. He

could, had it been his pleasure, have prevented the fall of angels and men, and thereby have hindered sin from having footing in and among his creatures. By virtue of this actual power he made the universe; executes the whole counsel of his will both in heaven and earth; governs and influences both men and things, according to his own pleasure; fixes the bounds which they shall not pass; and, in a word, worketh all in all: Isa . xlv . 7 . Amos iii . 6 . John v . 17 . Acts xvii . 26 . 1 Cor . xii . 6 .

Pos 2 . Hence it follows that, since all things are subject to the divine control, God not only works efficaciously on his elect, in order that they may will and do that which is pleasing in his sight; but does likewise frequently and powerfully suffer the wicked to fill up the measure of their iniquities by committing fresh sins. Nay, he sometimes, but for wise and gracious ends, permits his own people to transgress; for he has the hearts and wills of all men in his hand, and inclines them to good, or delivers them up to evil, as he sees fit: yet without being the author of sin; as Luther, Bucer, Austin, and others have piously and scripturally taught.

This position consist of two parts: (1 .) That God efficaciously operates on the hearts of his elect, and is thereby the sole author of all the good they do. See Eph . iii . 20 . Phil . ii . 13 . 1 Thes . ii . 13 . Heb . xiii . 21 . St . Austin takes up no fewer than nineteen chapters in proving that whatever good is in men, and whatever good they are enabled to do is solely and entirely of God; who, says he, “ works in holy persons, all

their good desires , their pious thoughts , and their righteous actions ; and yet these holy persons , though thus wrought upon by God , will and do all these things freely : for it is he who rectifies their wills which , being originally evil , are made good by him ; and which wills , after he hath set them right and made them good , he directs to good actions and to eternal life ; wherein he does not force their wills but makes them willing .” (2 .) That God often lets the wicked go on to more ungodliness : which he does , 1 . Negatively , by withholding that grace which alone can restrain them from evil . 2 . Remotely , by the providential concurrence and meditation of second causes ; which second causes , meeting and acting in concert with the corruption of the probate’s unregenerate nature , produce sinful effects . 3 . Judically , or in a way of Judgment . Prov . xxi . 1 . The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord , as the rivers of waters ; he turneth it whither - soever he will ; and if the king’s heart , why not the hearts of all men ? Lam . iii . 38 . Out of the mouth of the Most High proceeded not evil and good ? Hence we find that the Lord bid Shimei curse David , 2 Sam . xvi . 10 . That he moved David himself to number the people , compare 1 Chron . xxi . 1 with 2 Sam . xxiv . 1 . Stirred up Joseph’s brethren to sell him into Egypt , Gen . 34 , 20 . Positively and immediately hardened the heart of Pharaoh , Ex . iv . 21 . Delivered up David’s wives to be defiled to Absalom , 2 Sam . xii . 11 . and xvi . 22 . Sent a lying spirit to deceive Ahab , 1 Kings xxii . 20 - 23 . And mingled a perverse spirit in the

midst of Egypt , i . e . made that nation perverse , obdurate and stiff - necked , Isa . xix . 14 . To cite other instances would be almost endless , and , after these , quite unnecessary ; all being summed up in that express passage , Isaiah xlv . 7 . I make peace and create evil ; I the Lord do all these things . See farther 1 Sam . xvi . 14 . Psalm cv . 25 . Jer . xiii . 12 , 13 . Acts ii . 23 and iv . 28 . Rom . xi . 8 . 2 Thess . ii . 11 . Every one of which implies more than a bare permission of sin . Bucer asserts this , not only in the place referred to below , but continually throughout his works : particularly on Matt . vi . 2 , where this is the sense of his comments on that petition , Lead us not into temptation ; “ It is abundantly evident , from most express testimonies of Scripture , that God occasionally in the course of his providence , puts both elect and reprobate persons into circumstances of temptation : by which temptation are meant , not only those trials that are of an outward , afflictive nature ; but those also that are inward and spiritual ; even such as shall cause the persons so tempted actually to turn aside from the path of duty , to commit sin , and involve both themselves and others in evil . Hence we find the elect complaining , Isa . lxiii . 17 . O Lord , why hast thou made us to err from thy ways , an hardened our hearts from thy fear ? But there is also a kind of temptation which is peculiar to the non - elect ; whereby God , in a way of just judgment , makes them totally blind and obdurate inasmuch as they are vessels of wrath fitted to destruction .” See also his exposition

of Rom . ix .

Luther reasons to the very same effect; some of his words are these; “ It may seem absurd to human wisdom that God should harden , blind , and deliver up some men to a reprobate sense; that he should first deliver them over to evil , and then condemn them for that evil : but the believing spiritual man sees no absurdity at all in this ; knowing that God would be never a whit less good even though he should destroy all men .” and again ; “ God worketh all things in all men ; even wickedness in the wicked : for this is one branch of his own omnipotence .” He very properly explains how God may be said to harden men , &c . and yet not be the author of their sin : “ It is not to be understood ,” says he , “ as if God found men good , wise and tractable , and then made them wicked , foolish and obdurate , but God , finding them depraved , judicially and powerfully excites them just as they are (unless it is his will to regenerate any of them) and , by thus exciting them , they become more blind and obstinate than they were before .” See this whole subject debated at large in the places last referred to .

Pos . 3 . God , as the primary and efficient cause of all things , is not only the author of those actions done by his elect as actions , but also as they are good actions ; whereas , on the other hand , though he may be said to be the author of all the actions done by the wicked , yet he is not the author of them in a moral and compound sense , as they are sinful ; but physically , simply , and , *sensu diviso* , as they are mere actions ,

abstractedly from all consideration of the goodness or badness of them .

Although there is no action whatever which is not in some sense either good or bad , yet we can easily conceive of an action purely as such without adverting to the quality of it ; so that the distinction between and action itself , and its denomination of good or evil , is very obvious and natural .

In and by the elect , therefore , God not only produces works and actions through his almighty power , but likewise through the salutary influences of his Spirit , first makes their persons good , and then their actions so too ; but in and by the reprobate he produces actions by his power alone ; which actions , as neither issuing from faith , nor being wrought with a view to the divine glory , nor done in the manner prescribed by the divine word , are , on these accounts , properly denominated evil . Hence we see that God does not immediately and *per se* , infuse iniquity into the wicked ; but , as Luther expresses it , powerfully excites them to action , and withholds those gracious influences of his Spirit , without which every action is necessarily evil . That God , either directly or remotely , excites bad men as well as good ones to action , cannot be denied by any but atheists , or by those who carry their notions of freewill and human independency so high as to exclude the Deity from all actual operation in and among his creatures , which is little short of atheism . Every work performed , whether good or evil , is done in strength and by the power derived immediately from God him -

self, in whom all men live, move, and have their being, Acts xvii. 28. As at first without him was not any thing made which was made; so now without him is not any thing done which is done. We have no power or faculty, whether corporeal or intellectual, but what we received from God, subsists by him, and is exercised in subserviency to his will and appointment. It is he who created, preserves, actuates and directs all things. But it by no means follows from these premises that God is therefore the cause of sin; for sin is nothing but illegality, want of conformity to the divine law, 1 John iii. 4, a mere privation of rectitude: consequently, being itself a thing purely negative, it can have no positive or efficient cause, but only a negative and deficient one, as several learned men have observed.

Every action, as such, is undoubtedly good; it being an actual exertion of those operative powers given us by God for that very end; God therefore may be the author of all actions (as he undoubtedly is), and yet not be the author of evil. An action is constituted evil three ways; by proceeding from a wrong principle, by being directed to a wrong end, and by being done in a wrong manner. Now, though God, as we have said, is the efficient cause of our actions, as actions, yet if these actions commence sinful, that sinfulness arises from ourselves. Suppose a boy who knows not how to write has his hand guided by his master, and nevertheless makes false letters, quite unlike the copy set him; though his preceptor who guides his hand is the cause of his

writing at all, yet his own ignorance and unskillfulness are the cause of his writing so badly. Just so, God is the supreme author of our action, abstractedly taken; but our own vitiosity is the cause of our acting amiss.

I shall conclude this article with two or three observations. And, (1) I would infer that if we would maintain the doctrine of God's omnipotence we must insist upon that of his universal agency: the latter cannot be denied without giving up the former. Disprove that he is almighty, and then we will grant that his influence and operations are limited and circumscribed. Luther says "God would not be a respectable being, if he were not almighty, and the doer of all things that are done; or if any thing could come to pass in which he had no hand." God has at least a physical influence on whatsoever is done by his creatures, whether trivial or important, good or evil. Judas as truly lived, moved, and had his being from God as Peter; and satan himself as much as Gabriel; for to say that sin exempts the sinner from the divine government and jurisdiction is abridging the power of God with a witness; nay, is raising it from its very foundation.

(2) This doctrine of God's omnipotence has a native tendency to awaken in our hearts that reverence for, and fear of, the divine majesty which none can either receive or retain but those who believe him to be infinitely powerful, and to work all things after the counsel of his own will. This godly fear is a sovereign antidote against sin; for if I really believe that God by his unin-

termitted operation upon my soul produces actions in me , which , being simply good , receive their malignancy from the corruption of my nature (and even those works that stand opposed to sins are more or less infected with this moral leprosy); and if I consider that , should I yield myself a slave to actual iniquity , God can , and justly might , as he has frequently done by others , give me up to a reprobate mind and punish one sin by leaving me to the commission of another ; surely such reflections as these must fill me with awful apprehensions of the divine purity , power and greatness , and make me watch continually , as well against the inward risings as the outward appearance of evil .

(3) This doctrine is also useful as it tends to inspire us with true humility of soul ; and to lay us as impotent dust and ashes at the feet of sovereign omnipotence . It teaches us , what too many are ignorant of , the blessed lesson of selfdespair ; i . e . that in a state of unregeneracy our wisdom is folly , our strength weakness , and our righteousness worth nothing : that therefore we can do nothing either to the glory of God or the spiritual benefit of ourselves and others but through the ability which he giveth ; that in him our strength lieth , and from him all our help must come . Supposing we believe that whatsoever is done below or above God doeth it himself ; that all things depend , both as to their being and operation , upon his omnipotent arm and mighty support ; that we cannot even sin , much less do any good thing , if he withdraw his aid ; and that

all men are in his hand , as clay in the hand of the potter ; I say , did we really believe all these points , and see them in the light of the Divine Spirit , how can it be reasonably supposed that we can wax insolent against this great God , behave contemptuously and superciliously in the world , or boast of anything we have or do ? Luther informs us , that he , “ used to be frequently much offended at this doctrine because it drove him to self - despair ; but that he afterwards found that this sort of despair was salutary and profitable , and near akin to divine grace . ”

(4) We are hereby taught not only humility before God , but likewise dependence on him , and resignation to him . For if we are thoroughly persuaded that of ourselves , and in our own strength , we cannot do either good or evil ; but that being originally created by God we are incessantly supported , moved , influenced and directed by him , this way or that , as he pleases ; the natural inference hence will be that with simple faith we cast ourselves entirely , as on the bosom of his providence , commit all our care and solicitude to his hand ; praying without hesitation or reserve that his will may be done in us , on us , and by us , and that in all his dealings with us he may consult his own glory alone . This holy passiveness is the very apex of Christianity . All the desires of our great Redeemer himself were reducible to these two ; that the will of God might be done , and that the glory of God might be displayed . These were the highest and supreme marks at which he aimed throughout the whole course of his

spotless life and inconceivably tremendous sufferings. Happy, thrice happy that man, who hath thus far attained the mind that was in Christ.

(5) The comfortable belief of this doctrine has a tendency to excite and keep alive within us that fortitude which is so ornamental to, and necessary for, us while we abide in this wilderness. For if I believe with the apostle that all things are of God. 2 Cor. v. 18, I shall be less liable to perturbation when afflicted, and learn more easily to possess my soul in patience. This was Job's support: he was not overcome with rage and despair when he received news that the Sabeans had carried off his cattle and slain his servants, and that the remainder of both were consumed with fire; that the Chaldeans had robbed him of his camels; and that his seven sons were crushed to death by the falling of the house where they were sitting: he resolved all these misfortunes into the agency of God, his power and sovereignty, and even thanked him for doing what he would with his own Job. i. 21. If another should slander me in word, or injure me in deed, I shall not be prone to anger when, with David, I consider that the Lord hath bidden him, 2 Sam. xvi. 10.

(6) This should stir us up to fervent and incessant prayer. For does God work powerfully and benignly in the hearts of his elect? and is he the sole cause of every action they do, which is truly and spiritually good? Then it should be our prayer that he would work in us likewise both to will and to do of his good pleasure: and if, on self-exami-

nation, we find reason to trust that some good thing is wrought in us, it should put us upon thankfulness unfeigned, and cause us to glory, not in ourselves, but in him. On the other hand, does God manifest his displeasure against the wicked by blinding, hardening, and giving them up to perpetrate iniquity with greediness? Which judicial acts of God are both a punishment for their sin and also eventual additions to it? We should be the more incited to deprecate these tremendous evils, and to beseech the king of heaven that he would not thus lead us into temptation. So much concerning the omnipotence of God. I shall now,

V. Take notice of his justice.

Pos. 1. God is infinitely, absolutely and unchangeably just.

The justice of God may be considered either immanently, as it is in himself, which is, properly speaking, the same with his holiness; or transiently and relatively, as it respects his right conduct towards his creatures, which is properly justice. By the former he is all that is holy, just and good; by the latter he is manifested to be so in all his dealings with angels and men. For the first see Deut. xxxii. 4. Psal. xcii. 15; for the second, Job viii. 3. Psal. cxlv. 17. Hence it follows that whatever God either wills or does, however it may at first sight seem to clash with our ideas or right and wrong, cannot really be unjust. It is certain that for a season he sorely afflicted his righteous servant Job; and on the other hand enriched the Sabeans, an infidel and lawless nation, with a profusion of wealth and a series of success; before

Jacob and Esau were born , or had done either good or evil , he loved and chose the former and reprobated the latter ; He gave repentance to Peter and left Judas to perish in his sin : and as in all ages , so to this day he hath mercy on whom he will , and whom he will he hardeneth . In all which he acts most justly and righteously , and there is no iniquity with him .

Pos . 2 . The Deity may be considered in a threefold view : as God of all , as Lord of all , and as Judge of all .

(1) As God of all , he created , sustains , and exhilarates the whole universe ; causes his sun to shine , and his rain to fall upon the evil and the good , Matt . v . and is the preserver of all men , 1 Tim . iv . 19 . For as he is infinitely and supremely good , so also is he communicative of his goodness ; as appears not only from his creation of all things , but especially from his providential benignity . Every thing has its being from him , as Creator ; and its well-being from him as a bountiful preserver . (2) As Lord or sovereign of all , he does as he will (and has a most unquestionable right to do so) with his own ; and in particular fixes and determines the everlasting state of every individual person as he sees fit . It is essential to absolute sovereignty that the sovereign have it in his power to dispose of those over whom his jurisdiction extends just as he pleases , without being accountable to any ; and God , whose authority is unbounded , none being exempt from it , may , with the strictest holiness and justice , love or hate , elect or reprobate , save or

destroy any of his creatures whether human or angelic , according to his own free pleasure and sovereign purpose . (3) As Judge of all he ratifies what he does as Lord , by rendering to all according to their works ; by punishing the wicked , and rewarding those whom it was his will to esteem righteous and to make holy .

Pos . 3 . Whatever things God wills or does , are not willed and done by him because they were , in their own nature , and previously to his willing them , just and right ; or because , from their intrinsic fitness , he ought to will and do them ; but they are therefore just , right and proper , because He who is holiness itself wills and does them .

Hence Abraham looked upon it as a righteous action to slay his innocent son . Why did he so esteem it ? Because the law of God authorized murder ? No ; for on the contrary both the law of God , and the law of nature peremptorily forbid it : but the holy patriarch well knew that the will of God is the only rule of justice , and that what he pleases to command is on that very account just and righteous . It follows :

Pos . 4 . That although our works are to be examined by the revealed will of God and be denominate materially good or evil , as they agree or disagree with it ; yet the works of God himself cannot be brought to any test whatever ; for his will being the grand universal law , he himself cannot be , properly speaking , subject to , or obliged by , any law superior to that . Many things are done by him (such as choosing and reprobating men) without any re -

spect had to their works ; suffering people to fall into sin , when if it so pleased him , he might prevent it ; leaving many backsliding professors to go on to perish in their apostacy , when it is in the divine power to sanctify and set them right ; drawing some of his grace , and permitting many others to future misery whom , if he pleased , he could undoubtedly save , with innumerable instances of the like nature (which might be mentioned) , and which , if done by us , would be apparently unjust , inasmuch as they would not square with the revealed will of God , which is the great and only safe rule of our practice . But , when he does these and such like things , they cannot but be holy , equitable , and worthy of himself ; for since his will is essentially and unchangeably just , whatever he does in consequence of that will must be just and good likewise . From what has been delivered under this fifth head I would infer , that they who deny the power God has of doing as he will with his creatures , and exclaim against unconditional decrees , as cruel , tyrannical , and unjust ; either know not what they say nor whereof they affirm ; or are willful blasphemers of his name , and perverse rebels against his sovereignty : to which at last , however unwillingly , they will be forced to submit .

I shall conclude this introduction with briefly considering in the ,

Sixth and last place , the mercy of God .

Pos . 1 . The Deity is throughout the Scriptures represented as infinitely gracious and merciful . Exod . xxxiv . y . Mehem . ix . 17 . Psalm ciii .

8 . 1 Pet . i . 3 .

When we call the divine mercy infinite , we do not mean that it is in a way of grace extended to all men without exception (and supposing it was , even then it would be very improperly denominated infinite on that account , since the objects of it , though all men taken together , would not amount to a multitude strictly and properly infinite) , but that his mercy towards his own elect , as it knew no beginning , so is it infinite in duration , and shall know neither period nor intermission .

Pos . 2 . Mercy is not in the Deity as it is in us , a passion , or affection ; every thing of that kind being incompatible with the purity , perfection , independency and unchangeableness of his nature ; but , when this attribute is predicated of him , it only notes his free and eternal will or purpose of making some of the fallen race happy , by delivering them from the guilt and dominion of sin , and communicating himself to them in a way consistent with his own inviolable justice , truth and holiness . This seems to be the proper definition of mercy , as it relates to the spiritual and eternal good of those who are its objects . But it should be observed .

Pos 3 . That the mercy of God , taken in its more large and indefinite sense , may be considered , (1) as general , (2) as special .

His general mercy is no other than what we commonly call his bounty , by which he is more or less providentially good to all mankind , both elect and non-elect : Matt . v . 45 Luke vi . 35 . Acts xiv . 17 ; and xvii . 25 , 28 . By his special mercy , he , as Lord of all , hath in a spiritual sense

compassion on as many of the fallen race as are the objects of his free and eternal favour : the effects of which special mercy are the redemption and justification of their persons , through the satisfaction of Christ ; the effectual vocation , regeneration and sanctification of them by his Spirit ; the infallible and final preservation of them in a state of grace on earth ; and their everlasting glorification in heaven .

Pos . 4 . There is no contradiction , whether real or seeming , between these two assertions , (1) That the blessings of grace and glory are peculiar to those whom God hath in his decree of predestination set apart for himself ; and (2) That the gospel declaration runs that whosoever willeth may take of the water of life freely , Rev . xxii . 17 . Since , in the first place , none can will or unfeignedly and spiritually desire a part in these privileges but those whom God previously makes willing and desirous ; and secondly , that he gives this will to , and excites this desire in , none but his own elect .

Pos . 5 . Since ungodly men , who are totally and finally destitute of divine grace , cannot know what this mercy is , nor form any proper apprehensions of it , much less by faith embrace and rely upon it , for themselves ; and since daily experience , as well as the Scriptures of truth , teaches us , that God doth not open the eyes of the reprobate as he doth the eyes of his elect , nor savingly enlighten their understandings ; it evidently follows that his mercy was never , from the very first , designed for them , neither will it be applied to them : but , both in designation and

application , is proper and peculiar to those only who are predestinated to life ; as it is written , the election hath obtained , and the rest were blinded , Rom . xi . 7 .

Pos . 6 . The whole work of salvation , together with every thing that is in ode to it , or stands in connection with it , is sometimes in scripture comprised under the single term mercy ; to shew that mere love and absolute grace were the grand cause why the elect are saved , and that all merit , worthiness and good qualifications of theirs were entirely excluded from having any influence on the divine will , why they should be chosen , redeemed , and glorified , above all others . When it is said , Rom . ix . He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy , it is as much as if the apostle had said , “ God elected , ransomed , justified , regenerates sanctifies and glorifies whom he pleases : ” every one of these great privileges being briefly summed up , and virtually included in that comprehensive phrase ,

“ He hath mercy . ”

Pos . 7 . It follows that whatever favour is bestowed on us ; whatever good thing is in us , or wrought by us ; whether in will , word , or deed : and whatever blessings else we receive from God , from election quite home to glorification , all proceed , merely and entirely , from the good pleasure of his will , and his mercy towards us in Christ Jesus , To him , therefore , the praise is due , who putteth the difference between man and man , by having compassion on some and not on others .

February, 1944

Put shoes on his feet. Luke 15:22.

Shoes are an important part of the travelers equipment. Not many would undertake a long journey without them. Whatever our destination may be, it inevitably follows that our feet will be used extensively to get us there. Not many would be willing to undertake a hazardous journey barefooted. Yet it is true that at certain periods and under certain circumstances we would be willing to undertake things knowing that it would be hard to accomplish, but the thing to be attained is of so much more joy, peace and pleasure that it covers up and hides from view the trials that have to be endured. It is not to tell just what the prodigal son represents that this text is before us. I am sure that the vast majority of people who have an experience of grace know the many and varied things that come their way are peculiarly fitting to their own travel. To pass lightly over the journey that the prodigal took, we find him getting back home. I am a firm believer in the fact that every biblical type, illustration, symbol, parable and miracle if rightly examined under the natural reasoning of man would tend to show that salvation is unconditional. I do not mean that the natural man could understand it, because the natural man cannot understand natural things when they pertain, or are used, to teach spiritual things. This can easily be ascertained by noticing the difference in the construction of the language used in the Bible and

the newspaper. So it is in this case. All men (the spiritually unlearned) put a condition in it. They often lament over the matter that the youngest did not stay at home, not knowing that he could not. They, as often, lament because more of their hearers do not come home as he did, not knowing that each prodigal does come home when starvation drives him. Starvation will not let a man do as he pleases. It was not optional at all with him, it was necessary. That necessity became so great that it made him willing to have changes wrought. Subsistence reached the stage that the conditions under which it came did not matter. Is not this your experience, brethren? Is there not such a hungering for the food of your Father that you are willing for him to have complete charge of your life? Do you not feel that anything he orders will be too good for you? This prodigal no doubt had known splendor, he had known what fancy dress had been, he knew the state of the servant, he had looked with disdain on them, but this matter of something to eat occupies his whole thought. Such a change has been wrought upon him that he sees himself a vile, condemned sinner. He knows that he is not fit to fill a son's place. He went away in riotous living, and that carries with it plenty of clothes, but as he comes back they have lost their significance. He is so anxious to get home that he is willing to be as one of the servants. Let us notice that he did not ask to lose his sonship. He acknowledges his unworthiness to be called a son, but so willing has he become that he is willing to be "as a

servant .” How changed he is now being called a son to being as a servant! He knew the custom of this country in which he lived, he knew a servant went barefooted . Although he knew the privations and hardships that such a procedure would bring , he was willing to go without shoes . My precious brethren and sisters , have you felt this? Does not the grace of God seem wonderful to you ? If you have really felt this condemnation and have heard your Father say “ put shoes on him ” you have indeed been blessed . It was the custom in that land to put off the shoes on entering the house . It is true now , little children . No shoes are needed in the house of the Lord . They are given for the journey . How precious the sight to see the beloved of the Lord in his house without shoes . No need of them in his house , they are for the journey . Did you notice that they are shoes “ put on ? ” Shoes are given to each of the Lord’s humble poor . They are “ put on ” them . Solomon sang about the beauty of the shod feet of the beloved (S.S. 7:1) , and may I ask what condition there is in being shod ? They did not send any searching party after the prodigal , yet he was brought to the place of shoes . Could he help coming? Did he get shoes by good works ? Were they placed nearby and he told to place them on his feet? Brethren I love the doctrine of God’s putting on shoes . Do you?

W . D . Griffin

1 THESSALONIANS 5 : 21 .

Prove all things : hold fast that which is good .

GOD’S OMNIPOTENCE OR INFINITE POWER

God’s omnipotence is that perfection of his nature by which he can do whatever he pleases in heaven and earth , in the seas and all deep places (Psalm 135 : 6) . His infinite power extends to all things possible . Though limited by his will to those things only which he has decreed to be done , God manifests his power in Creation , Providence , and Redemption . His omnipotence is represented as an infinite capacity , while his omniscience is represented as an infinite act . It is he who created , preserves , actuates and directs all things ; causing everything to fulfil the counsel of his will . If the Bible teaches God’s omnipotence , it also teaches his universal agency . All of God’s creations , visible and invisible , are subject to his divine control . God is the author of all the good we do . He works in us that which is well pleasing in his sight , through Jesus Christ , he worketh all in all . Lord , thou hast wrought all our works in us . He works in us both to will and to do his good pleasure . His power and wisdom is such that he causes all occurrences to praise him , the wrath of man included and the remainder he restrains .

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your “ Signs ” and without missing any copies , be sure to inform us of any change of address .

Editors

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Mrs. Lela Lockhart , NS	40.00
B.F. Poindexter , VA	2.00
Garner Horne , NC	5.00
Hassell Allen , NC	5.00
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OBITUARIES

SISTER BURNICE PHILLIPS DAILEY

I will attempt to write in memory of our Dear Sister who departed this life on May 29 , 1990 .

She was born March 31 , 1883 making her stay on earth 97 years . She had been afflicted for several years and had not been able to attend church .

She was a member of the

Primitive Baptist Church since 1949 . In our visits with her as long as she was able she showed a great interest in the Brothers and Sisters and the welfare of the Church . She was given Grace to bear her afflictions well .

She left two daughters ; Miss Burnita P. Dailey , Mrs. Mary D. Phillips ; Granddaughter Phyllis Rich ; Grandsons Allen Phillips , Marion Phillips ; Great Granddaughter Amanda Rich ; Niece Margaret Phillips .

Funeral Services were held at Richard & Horne Chapel June 1 , by Elder Raymond Goad and Mr. C.E. Mannon . Burial was in Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery . We feel our loss is her eternal gain .

Written by request of Union Primitive Baptist Church at last business meeting by Dorcie Semones .

Elder Hale Terry , Moderator
Sister Lessie Cox , Clerk

ELDER HARVEY LEONARD KEY

By request I will attempt to write a memorial to Elder Harvey Leonard Key , our beloved associate pastor of the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church , Tate St. , Greensboro , N.C .

Elder Key was born Jan. 2 , 1919 in Surry County , N.C. to Ida Elizabeth Lowe Key and Ransom Key and died May 5 , 1990 after an extended illness . He leaves to mourn his passing his wife of forty-nine years Beulah Johnson Key , one daughter Barbara Key Eller , and one son

Harvey Leonard Key , Jr. also four grandchildren and one great grandchild , two sisters Mrs . Verona Hamby , State Road , N .C . and Mrs . Minnie Jackson , Gibsonville , N .C . and five brothers Herman R . Key and Elder Kenneth R . Key , Greensboro , N .C . , John H . Key , McLeansville , N .C . , Reuben W . Key , McLeansville , N .C . , and Conrad R . Key of Pleasant Garden , N .C . along with a host of friends .

Elder Key was affectionally known by many as Elder Leonard to distinguish him from his minister brother Elder Kenneth Key . He joined the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church in April 1951 . On September 1962 he was ordained a deacon , but later the church recognized another gift in him and on September 7 , 1969 ordained him to the full work of the ministry .

Elder Leonard was a humble man and manifested much love for the brethren . He seemed to have a special love for children . In conversation his favorite subject was the Scriptures upon which he could talk for hours , always giving praise to his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . He enjoyed visiting with the brethren and often visited sister churches far and near . He had a beautiful tenor voice and enjoyed singing the songs of Zion . He was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and salvation by grace . He believed in a sovereign , all powerful God having infinite knowledge . From the pulpit he often expounded from the Old Testament , Isaiah and Jeremiah being his favorite prophets . He often spoke of the Lord 's people as " the garden the

Lord planted ." Also " the evergreen trees " was a beautiful subject to him .

It was a pleasure to him to see things growing , especially that of the fruit of his own labor . He planted and cared for different kinds of fruits , nuts , and even flowers and delighted in sharing with all who came his way . He provided well for his family . He owned and operated the Key 's Block Company and for many years did much heavy labor himself . With skilled hands he was an artist at many kinds of work . One of his last projects was making beautiful porcelin dolls . As usual he gave many of them away .

For almost two years Elder Leonard was unable to attend church , his greatest joy . This was a sore trial for him . During his confinement at home and especially after his sight became impaired to the extent that he was unable to read his Bible he would often times quote from the Psalms or Proverbs and with tears flowing beg for mercy .

With loving hands his family administered to his every need . His daughter once said " he spoiled us now we spoil him ." But none can stay the hand of the Lord when he speaks " well done , good and faithful servant " and bids him come home . The day before he died his daughter heard a dove cooing just outside her father 's window and she asked him if he heard that bird and he said " yes , that is a dove . It is a symbol of peace ." Before the noon of another day we feel his spirit fled to the arms of Jesus as this earthly body met with death .

Elder Leonard 's funeral was

held at the Chapel of Lambeth Troxler funeral home in Greensboro . It was conducted by Elders Hale Terry, Amos Hash and Lane Carter with prayer at the graveside by Elder O.K. Tench . Love for the man was evident and manifested through the exaltation of his Lord and Saviour . This was a fitting tribute to one who had been brought to humbly bow before his Lord and blessed to declare the whole counsel of God . Two of his favorite hymns were sung, " Jesus Before Thy Face I Fall " and " Amazing Grace ."

It was Elder Leonard's wish that Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. also take part in his funeral . As circumstance would have it Elder Davis was instigator and partly responsible for a bus load of people scheduled to leave early the day of the funeral to view the Western States and Canada with the blessings of the family he left as scheduled . There were several people on the bus that knew and loved Elder Leonard . At the self same hour of the funeral while riding through Kentucky Elder Davis felt to conduct a short memorial service on the bus and the group sang " Rock of Ages ." A loving remembrance for a departed friend .

The earthly tabernacle was laid to rest in Lakeview Cemetery just north of Greensboro to await the resurrection morn . We feel this one could witness with the Apostle Paul when he said " For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain ."

" The memory of the just is blessed ."

Humbly submitted,
Mary G. Blaylock

SISTER BESSIE MORTON

By the request of the church at Northeast Primitive Baptist Church

In my weak way I will try and write a few lines about our beloved Sister , knowing that God does all things well .

She was the daughter of Lewis and Susan Humphrey . She is survived by two children , one son , Jessie James Morton , one daughter , Marie Morton Haga , six grandchildren and seven great grandchildren and two sisters , Effie Morton and Emma Kellum .

Sister Bessie was born February 14 , 1905 and was laid to rest February 20 , 1990 , making her stay on earth 85 years and six days . Her husband , Bro. Edward Morton , was laid to rest April 26 , 1985 .

She was always a good and faithful member when she was able to attend . We believe she is a mother in Jesus gone to be with God , where there is no sickness , sorrow , pain or death ; but all love , joy and peace forevermore . We miss her , but we believe that her absence from her family and loved ones is her eternal gain .

Now to the Family : Son and daughter and grandchildren and great grandchildren Press on keep the good faith and press on to the high calling of God . I know that you have a vacant place in your home as well as in your hearts . I hope that the good Lord will reconcile all of you to your great loss and be a mother to all of you .

The services for Sister Bessie were preached by Elder J.T. Prescott , pastor of the Northeast

Primitive Baptist Church . She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mount of flowers in the Humphrey Cemetery .

Written by one living in hopes of eternal rest in our Lord and Saviour .

Effie Morton
233 Wolf Swamp Road
Jacksonville , NC 28546

ELDER HERBERT R . PRINCE

Herbert Prince was born June 26 , 1893 , in Gardner Station , Tennessee the son of Frank and Matilda Prince and died March 14 , 1990 at the age of 96 years and 9 months .

He was married August 26 , 1917 to Bessie Cross and to this union was born 5 children of which 2 preceded him in death . Jere Y Prince a son and Louise Joiner a daughter . He is survived by 3 daughters Edna Harding , Catherine Newman and Charline Freeman of Martin , Tennessee .

Brother Prince joined the Primitive Baptist Church as a very young man and attended the church all of his life as his parents were members . He was ordained an Elder the 5th Sunday in March 1955 and pastored churches in Alabama , Kentucky and Tennessee until a couple of years before he died and was loved and respected by the brethren everywhere he went . His membership was in the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis which he pastored for several years .

His funeral was in the Murphy

Funeral Home in Martin , Tennessee and was conducted by Elders Wayman G . Chapell and Richard H . Campbell . Interment was in the Martin Cemetery .

BERTIE E . REID

Sister Bertie Reid was born on May 19 , 1892 , in Lovelady , Texas . She was baptized in the mid-1920 's , but the exact date is now unknown . She united with Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas , Texas , on June 17 , 1984 .

Sister Reid and her late husband band , A . K . Reid , had attended Saints Rest Church for many years , having relocated to the Dallas area in the early 1940 's . Sister Reid loved to hear the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ preached . She knew well what she believed , rejoicing in hope of the salvation provided by Jesus Christ by His blood atonement and imputed righteousness alone ; and the absolute predestination of all things . Sister Reid was meek and loving , an asset to our little church who will be sorely missed by those who knew her .

She was called home on May 15 , 1990 at the age of ninety - seven years , eleven months , and twenty - seven days . She was survived by her son , Howard Speer ; her daughters Olive Fields , Edna Miles , and Louise Powell ; her sister , Lottie Krenek ; seven grandchildren , and many great - grandchildren .

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor , Elder C . C . Morris . Her

mortal body was laid to rest in Laurel Land Memorial Gardens , Dallas , Texas , there to await the coming of her Lord and Savior .

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church while in regular quarterly conference on June 3 , 1990 , with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Reid's family , a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times , and a copy be retained in the church records .

Elder C . C . Morris , Moderator
Deacon Dean G . Connell , Clerk

SISTER LINDA WISE

God , who is just in all His ways , called Sister Linda Wise from this low ground of sin and sorrow on October 12 , 1989 . Sister Linda was 48 years of age , having been born on June 1 , 1941 .

She was a quiet , humble person who loved her Church and supported it as long as physically able . She was baptised by Elder W . D . Griffin into the fellowship of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church on April 6 , 1969 and has been a member of Salisbury Old School Baptist Church since June 17 , 1984 .

Sister Linda suffered severe physical afflictions the last 2 years of her life , but was blessed with patience to endure them . " Tri - bulation worketh patience ; and patience , experience ; and experience , 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 . "

Before she passed , she seemed to be reconciled and possessed a peace that surpasses all understanding .

Sister Linda is survived by her husband , Robert Wise of Salisbury ; children - Ralph Kimes , Jr , Eugene Kimes , Denise Kimes , and Bradley Kimes all of Salisbury ; Mother , Sister Betty Nutter , also a member of the Salisbury Church ; and a sister , Vickie Hoeben of Salisbury , MD .

Her funeral was preached by her pastor , Elder Cleo Robertson , at Marvel Short Funeral Home , Delmar , Delaware and her body was laid to rest in Mardela Cemetery .

She was given a precious hope of one day being raised in the likeness of her Lord and to dwell with him eternally .

Read and approved by Salisbury Old School Baptist Church .

Elder Cleo Robertson , Moderator
Sister Phyllis Farlow , Clerk

HEBREWS 2 : 8 - 11 .

Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet . For in that he put all in subjection under him , he left nothing that is not put under him . But now we see not yet all things put under him .

But we see Jesus , who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death , crowned with glory and honour ; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man .

For it became him , for whom are all things , and by whom are all things , in bringing many sons unto glory , to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings .

For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one : for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren ,

Signs of the Times

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GLORY

*Await impatient soul of man
Until His purposed time
When joy shall then exalt the plan
With blissful peace divine*

*Search not in vain upon the land
But seek and ye shall find
Tis Grace that comes within His hand
That gives you peace of mind*

*Give thanks Oh Soul and look around
Observe the fullness of His work
Feel the gracious love abound
The fulfillment He did not shirk*

*Look up my soul beyond the veil
To where thy hope relies
Reach out with need that will not fail
To catch His seeing eyes*

*Rejoice thou soul that looks to He
Who spreads His love upon the flock
As wide as is the endless sea
And stands forever as a Rock*

*Consider oh soul the joy to know
When thou seest His glory shine
To rise and quickly with Him go
Where glory will be Thine*

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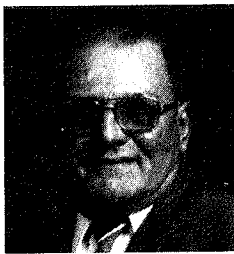
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EDITORIAL



Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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 re-

vealed 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 under 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) 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 it to 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 the 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 and 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 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 !

My dear readers if you find next in these thoughts they are His marks for Zion but if no merit they are but marks of the carnality of myself .

Elder C . B . Davis , Jr .

ROMANS 5 : 1 - 5 .

Therefore being justified by faith , we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ :

By whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand , and rejoice in hope of the glory of God .

And not only so , but we glory in tribulations also : knowing that tribulation worketh patience ;

And patience , experience ; and experience , 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 .

 ARTICLES

Sermon by Elder Cleo Robertson

“ Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father ’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you . And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again , and receive you unto my - self ; that where I am , there you may be also .

I realize there are many interpretations of this scripture and certainly the world sets forth that God has a house and within it are different rooms for his people . But first of all , let me say to you that God cannot be housed or limited to any building or any limits . He is boundless . There are no limits with God . He is not confined to one place but God is everywhere present and nowhere absent . He fills the universe . We cannot even begin to comprehend the fullness of this God . He has no beginning ; he has no end ; and in our finite minds , everything that we think of naturally , and everything that the carnal mind comes up with must have limits to it . It must have a beginning and it must have an ending . That ’s the only way we can think ; for , in our natural selves , we have a beginning and will have an end as far as these natural bodies are concerned .

But the carnal mind is enmity against God , is not subject to his laws , neither indeed can be . So the carnal mind cannot reason out the

things of God . It cannot search them out ; it cannot through any man ’s intellect come up with the things of God or understand them . That comes strictly and solely by revelation and is a spiritual thing , the carnal man cannot understand it . The spiritual man does understand it because that is the spirit of God in you and that is the only way you understand it .

These are the words of Christ as he was talking to a particular people — his disciples that he had called as apostles and separated to this work — that would be his ministers . He knew that his time was approaching when he must go to the cross , that his hour of death was nigh . He had told them this and certainly there were some troubled by that . They did not yet understand what was going to take place . They did not yet understand the death and burial and resurrection of Christ . And so he was telling them , “ *Let not your heart be troubled ,* ” and he gave them some comfort in the words that he spoke to them .

He said , “ In my father ’s house are many mansions . ” Now what house was he talking about ? God does not live or dwell in a house as you and I . Some refer to this as being in heaven and that there are many houses or mansions or rooms there where he will house his people .

But another thing , my dear people , is that when that time comes and Christ comes a second time and he takes his redeemed home to dwell eternally in that eternal heaven , there will not be a separation there between his people . They will be as one there with God . They will

not be separated by walls or rooms or buildings or anything of that sort. This is a perfect place there. There will be one God and I believe that you will worship him in spirit and in truth there because that is what you will be also, a spiritual being. This flesh and this natural body will not be there. But he says "in my father's house." As you will read in the old scriptures as we refer to the old Bible that God had given to his prophets to write down; you will find that just about every time that it refers to one's father's house and many times it is referred to as house of fathers, it is referring not to a building; it is referring not to a structure that man has made; but it is referring to a people. It is referring to those who are called by someone's name— a generation, if your please, heirs of somebody as Abraham's house, or Joseph's house, or Jacob's house. It is talking about his family, those who are of him. So, it is not talking about Abraham's house as a building, but it is talking about his heirs. So, it is here "in my father's house," it is not talking about a building, but it is talking about the heirs of God. It is setting forth the family of God, those who are called by his name, those that he died for, those who are the elect of God; and that is the house of God. When he told David to build a temple there, it was not to house God in; but, God would come down in that and meet with his people there and worship there. This was a type of something that was going to take place, the temple was, that they built there and it had things that were made after heavenly things.

The scriptures say that "ye are the temple of God." His people are the temple of God and that is where he dwells. And he said that "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." That is where God dwells with his people— the church of the living God is the house that he is talking about. He is talking about the church, and the church is made up of many mansions that are furnished with things that are perfect, that are bought with an extremely high price.

In the scriptures it says, "who can find a virtuous woman, for her price is beyond rubies?" He is talking about the church; he is not talking about an individual in the flesh. "Who can find a virtuous woman?" There is none virtuous in this world. This woman who had an infirmity for 12 years had gone to physician after physician trying to find something to help her. She tried all the doctrines that men have to offer, and I believe that before you came into the knowledge of the truth, you had gone to all the worldly physicians in this world. You had tried them and they could not help your case, could not reach your case, but instead you only grew worse. The more you tried, the worse it got until there came a time when you had spent all that you had as this woman had. And then when you had spent all, and had come to the end, then you heard of Jesus, not just about him.

There is a head knowledge where many people that read about Jesus know so far as the written word is concerned what it says, but

do not have a heart understanding of him — that which is revealed to them by Jesus himself , for he doesn 't dwell in them , but only in his people , those whom he has called and separated from the world . They have a spiritual understanding . So this woman came to him desiring something and was given to believe that only he could reach her case . That was faith , my dear people , that she had been given . She hadn 't obtained it somewhere . Some man had not given it to her . She had not gotten it by reading it in some book , but this was something that God had given to her . He had brought her down to the place that she didn 't have anywhere else to go . She didn 't have anywhere else to turn . It is then that he opens your eyes and your ears and causes you to hear of Jesus : And she was given a desire just to touch the hem of his garment and she felt that she would be made whole .

So she came in the press , and there were many people — a crowd of people evidently , according to the scripture , round about and he turned and said , " Who has touched me for I perceive that virtue has gone out . " Oh these disciples did not understand , with all the people , why was he asking that question . Who could tell him ? There were too many people around there . They could not tell who had touched Him . But Christ wasn 't asking for information . He knew who had done it . But he was asking for the benefit of this one . She had to come confessing what she was and he said , " Who has touched me , for I perceive that virtue has gone out . " Oh , she had to

confess , but the virtue went out of Him . The virtue was in Him , it was not in her . She didn 't have any , but the virtue went out of Him to her as it does to his people , to His house .

And then he told her to " go in peace , daughter . " Oh how sweet that was — daughter ! He acknowledged her as His own , one of His — His daughter — a child of God . He knew who she was , he had drawn her to him by the cords of his love . He loved her before she ever knew who he was . He had always loved her — this is an eternal love that he loves his people with — an everlasting love . At the appointed time of God , he caused her to come , but she had to go down to his feet and touch the hem of his garment . She had to be brought down and he told her to go in peace . He gave her peace . I believe it was sufficient for her .

That was a mansion , my dear people . It is furnished with the best and the price far exceeds anything else for the price is far above rubies . All the gold and all the silver and all the rubies of this world couldn 't purchase her . It wasn 't sufficient to pay the price . All the works of our hands aren 't sufficient to pay the price for this mansion . It took the precious blood of Jesus Christ to pay that price for that mansion . It was sufficient and it is furnished with the righteousness of Christ .

There is nothing unholy about that mansion in Christ , His Father 's house , but you know that when the prodigal son went out and spent all that he had he also came to the very end . He began to think of his father 's house , not the building that his father lived in , but his father 's

house . Those that were of his father . He began to long to go back . He had a desire just to be a servant in his father's house . His father gave him the best robe — a robe of righteousness — it was the best robe . There was a mansion and it was furnished with the best — it had mercy and love .

And in this father's house there is a window — a window of faith . When He told Noah to build the ark , there was a window put in above and through that window came the light . Through this window they were given to see . So it is in the father's house . There is a window of faith for everyone of his people — the light comes in . You are given to see through that window . You can't see Christ and the things of Christ in any other way but through the window of faith . And the scripture says that all men have not faith . Well , if all men have not faith , then there is somebody who is not of God . There is somebody that is not of his people , for He has given faith to His people . I believe just as surely as He has given it to you , that He is going to manifest it to you through the trials and tribulations that you have , to show you that He has given it to you and to show you that it is sufficient to meet every need that you have , not matter how severe the trial or sorrow . No , you don't feel that you have faith . Not now . I don't believe that Stephen realized that he had the faith that he had until it was manifested to him , until it was proved there . And he saw that God had given him what he needed for that moment . Yes , it has the window of faith in it .

This house of God also has a

door . It is none other than Christ . And no one can enter through that door except His people . He says , " No man cometh unto the Father , but by me ." You can't go to Him except the Father who sent Him draw you . He is the door to this house . It is by Him that you enter in . I believe that that door shut out somebody just as certainly as it shut in somebody .

When God closed the door to the ark , He didn't leave it to Noah to close the door . He didn't leave it to any man to close that door , nor one of Noah's family , but God closed the door to the ark Himself . He shut them in and that way they were secure and they were certain there . There could be no leak in that ark . They were not in jeopardy in the ark . And just as surely as He shut them in , He shut out everything of the world , for it has a door and I believe it also has a banqueting table .

One in the scripture wrote that he brought me into the banqueting house and his banner over me was love . Oh , what a feast it is when He brings you in there . You feast on the things of God , the things that are satisfying and edifying and strengthening to you , and comfort and peace . Oh , you don't feel worthy of it . None of us are . You know when David asked if there were any of Saul's house left to whom I may show kindness , for Jonathan's sake , not for Saul's , but for Jonathan's sake , there was one they said : Mephibosheth , lame on both of his feet . He couldn't come of himself .

Oh , the world will tell you that you have got to come , you have to go , you've got to do this and do that ,

you've got to accept him, that he is calling you. But if you are lame on both feet, how can you go? If you are in the condition that this one was in, how can you go? But He said to bring him. I believe they brought him and set him at the king's table. As he sat there eating the king's food, his afflictions didn't show. Oh no, for he was one just as the others were. For what a feast it was. He said, "I'm as a dead dog, I am not worthy to sit at the king's table. Oh, a dead dog has no usefulness at all. It is dead. That's how he felt. He was not of any use to anybody. There was nothing about him that was of any good or any benefit. Why would they bring me to the king's table? Such a place! But he did it for Jonathan's sake who was a type of Christ. It's for Jonathan's sake that you are brought to the king's table to feast there on the king's food. He showed kindness to you, mercy to you, love to you, and all the food they were given to feast on at the king's table. It may not be too often that we are brought there and we are given to feast like that; but, oh how precious and how good it is when we are enabled to sit at the king's table eating of his food. There is no comparison with our food, the things of carnal man, oh no.

The prodigal son, the husks that were fed to the swine couldn't satisfy him. There was just nothing to it. He desired to go to his father's house. They prepared a table there for him. All the food that was strengthening to him, that was sustenance to him was in his father's house. The mansions are his people there.

Each one of you is a mansion in

the father's house. You've been clothed with the best robe, you have been given mercy and the love of God. You've been bought with a price that far exceeds anything this world could afford. You are a mansion in the father's house and he said "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 you may be also."

Where was the place that he was going to prepare for these ones? Evidently something had not yet been prepared. I don't believe it was heaven. I don't believe it was that place where you are going to dwell eternally with God. If it had not yet been prepared, if there was something yet not done, then it was imperfect. But it was complete, and perfect and had ever been so. Oh, yes, he came to redeem you from under the curse of the law, but you had already been elected. He already knew his own. Everything had already been prepared for you in heaven. There was nothing lacking there, and yet he had to go and prepare a place for these. He was talking to his apostles. He was going to send them somewhere. You know that when he rose from the dead he said, "go into all the world and preach the gospel." And they did go into all the world of believers. That was the world he was talking about and Paul said that that was done. They fulfilled that commandment, and yet the world wants to try to do it this day. But it has already been done. It was fulfilled as far as his commandment to his apostles there. They were instructed to do

that . They went into all the world of believers wherever they were . They preached Jesus , the gospel , to them and wherever his people are today , the gospel is there with them . It is inside them . They may not have a minister in the flesh there , but yet God does not forsake his people . He knows where they are and whatever country they are in .

You , in your own experience , when there was no one there but you , didn't you hear the word of God come to you . I believe some of the most precious times I have experienced have been when I have been alone , by myself , and not an audible word was heard . But yet there was something inside — there was preaching going on there . The word of God had gone out , the gospel was preached , and yet not a man was there . You can't limit this God . He is going to be with his people wherever they are , and they are going to know him . But he has to prepare a place . He told them that " if I go not away , then the Holy Spirit will not come , " but he said , " I go away that the Holy Spirit will come . " There is another Comforter coming and he is going to reside in you , abide in you and he is going to take the things of Jesus and show them unto you . He is going to lead you , guide you and instruct you . " I'll not leave you comfortless , but I will come again . "

Now he sent his apostles unto his people , but before they could go to his people , something had to be done . How did they know to whom to go and if they went of themselves , what would they take ? And if they went and something had not been

prepared , how could it be received ? So he had to prepare a place for them among his people . He prepared his people . He came and established his kingdom within the hearts of you . He prepared you to receive his gospel and if he had not prepared you , then what would it mean if his apostles came and preached unto you ? It wouldn't mean a thing to you . There had to be a place prepared for these apostles to go before they could go . When a pastor comes to you , when God sends one to you to preach his word , he has prepared you to receive him . And I believe that where Jesus is , there you are . You are in him and he is in you , so that " where I am , there ye shall be also . " If we are where he is not manifested , then there is nothing to it . It doesn't mean anything to you and neither can the preacher preach . But He must be there and the preparation must have been made by him both for you and the minister . So he had to go to prepare a place for his apostles and his ministers to go . He prepared his people , he prepared their hearts . He said " I will write my laws in their hearts and put them in their minds and I will be unto them a God and they shall be to me a people . "

But when he hung there on the tree of the cross , the veil was rent and when he rose from the dead , they were commanded to go and preach to the world of believers , which included the Gentiles — us . But there had to be a preparation made before they could go . The word of God when it goes out is effective . It doesn't return unto him void . He knows where unto he sends

it. So the place was prepared and I believe just as surely as he has done a work in you and caused you to come to the church, that he has prepared a place for you there. It's already prepared. He prepared it. He prepared the people there to receive you as much as he prepared you to go. This God works at both ends. He doesn't just give you a desire to go and then leave you floundering. This thing is sure and certain. He said that "where I am, there you may be also."

Oh, how wonderful and precious it is when we can feel his presence with us. If he is not in our midst, then there is nothing there. You can make all the preparation you want to for a meeting like this, but unless Christ is there, unless he has prepared it, prepared you and the minister, then it doesn't mean a thing. The kingdom is within you. There he rules and reigns and he is your priest, prophet and king.

Elder Cleo Robertson

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 46:10.

Think about that statement for a while, from ancient times, to things way back from the beginning to things way out in the future. His counsel will stand, and he will do all his pleasure. As we read the scripture, and read history we know

of some of the things that have happened in the past, both good and bad. As we hear and learn of these things we also see that God has ruled and is still ruling. Let us consider a few things the scripture speaks of, to avoid being too lengthy I won't quote scripture verbatim, but rather write in my own words. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, with all the dreadful consequences, don't you believe God was still in power. The children of Israel who was his chosen people while held in bondage, by the Egyptians being mistreated in many ways. Even so, don't you believe God was still in control, to prove that he was the scripture says that he brought them out on the selfsame day. Meaning the very day God had purposed that they would remain there. The three Hebrew children was thrown into a fiery furnace. Was God still in control? The heat didn't even sear a hair. When Daniel was cast into a lions den. Was God still in control? There wasn't a lion in that den that even scratched him. Look at the treatment the blessed Saviour suffered while here on earth, while in the body of flesh. Paul was stoned many times, John was beheaded, Stephen was stoned and many more such things which are too numerous to mention. But I say unto you that God was still in power, all things were working according to the pleasure of his will. Many of these things were spoken of before hand in a manner like this. And it came to pass, see God had sent his prophets telling of these things that were to happen, and just as sure as one of his prophets spoke, with God speaking

through him , the things he said was sure to happen, it would be recorded in Holy Writ in this manner . And it came to pass . My counsel shall stand , and I will do all my pleasure .

Think of the terrible suffering and death of so many people during the civil war , and all the other awful wars we have read about in the past . Times when awful diseases would run through countries with no one able to control them , we read and hear of these things and are sometimes made to wonder . But thanks to the good Lord we still have to say , God is still in control . Think of all the people on this earth , God put them all here , gave all of them life . He chose the very minute they would receive life and the very minute they would die and the exact way . So we can see that it was his will that many would leave here during these wars , maybe this sounds cruel to you , but I say unto you that God has the power over death . The scripture says it is appointed unto man once to die , and I believe God is in control of every bit of it . Some of these things may be hard to understand . But remember God's ways are not our ways and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts as the sky is above the earth . My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure .

As we have looked at the past and have seen the things that have happened , and also seen how the Lord has controlled things , let us pause and consider some things that are before us today . There are problems today that without faith in the power of God , that he can and will control all things , would surely make us pause and wonder . Look at

the terrible condition things are in around the Persian Gulf with the awful weapons that mankind has today , and many of them in the hands of a mad man , before that is settled it could be terrible to think about . The awful disease called aids , is spreading throughout most of the world causing much death and suffering . All these drugs that so many have started using is causing more trouble than most of us even know about . The many babies who are born to women who use these drugs are bound to cause trouble and burdens for years to come . In this country where I have enjoyed untold blessings from God we have all kinds of problems . People live in such a way that it seems as if it would be worse than Sodom or Gomorrah . The national debt doesn't make any of us happy . I am not writing all these things to make anyone sad , or fearful or in a complaining way . But rather to point out the fact that God has control over all things now as we have seen he did in the past . Men who are blessed with a God given faith , has faith to believe in the power and goodness of God , knowing that is able to work all things after the counsel of his own will . If I didn't have faith in the power of God to handle all things , I would look at the things I have mentioned here and would really wonder . But see , God put all that great source and supply of oil when it is , and he put it there for a purpose . I believe he could have just as easily put it here in the U.S.A. He put it there for a purpose and that purpose is being fulfilled even today .

Let us look now at part of one

verse of scripture Rev . 19 : 6 — *Alleluia for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*. (The word omnipotent, means almighty, all powerful) . As we have been thinking about sad or terrible things , let us now look at this . We read where the scripture stated in Isaiah , his counsel would stand , and he would do all his pleasure , well that was way back in the distant past , many years ago . So now to show you that His power still holds , to remove any doubt as to the power of God . Here is this positive statement , written through the Apostle John as God revealed to him the things that must surely come to pass . *Alleluia , God omnipotent reigneth* . Now we can look at all these terrible things in a different way , believing in our heart that as bad as they may seem , they are all under the control of God . This declaration was made near the end of time as we know it , at the consummation of all things . So we are given assurance that none of these things or things to come will be too much for God to handle , or overthrow his power at all .

As we have looked and spoke of the things which are happening in this world as bad and great as they are , now let us look at something that is of much more importance to each of us , our individual soul . Those of us who profess a belief in Christ as our Saviour, who have sit in heavenly places , tasted the sweetness of his love , felt the peace that passeth understanding. I believe (at least I am) that at times because of our sins we are plagued with doubt and made to cry out , Oh what a wretch I am , it seems the harder I try , the worse I do . I believe I have

been shown that I have not the power to better myself , or to live in such a way as to be pleasing to God by my works . So I have been given this precious verse of scripture , *Alleluia the Lord God omnipotent reigneth* therefore I know he has the power to bring to pass and to keep all those precious promises he has made to his children through the scripture . Didn 't he also say , *Let not your heart be troubled , neither let it be afraid* . So with our God given faith , resting in him and his atonement for me . I believe he has the power to say , *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the earth* .

A brother in Christ , I hope .
Frank Hunt

EFFECTUAL CALLING

Webster defines effectual as follows : " Producing or having adequate power or force to produce an intended effect ." To deny the effectual calling of God 's elect , is a branch of outright infidelity . Since the Bible says they are the called according to his purpose (Rom . 8 : 28) , " *they are sanctified by God the Father , preserved in Jesus Christ, and called* (Jude 1:1). " *They are called to be saints, I am confident ,* " says Paul . " *That he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.* " " *And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them* " (Ezek . 36 : 27) .

The outward call of the gospel is not effectual unless the inward call

of the Spirit has preceded it . The outward call to those not having the inward is a stumbling block and foolishness . The inward call is always effectual , because the elect are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son and whom he predestinated , He called , justified , and glorified , and no charge can be laid against them . How shall he not with him freely give us all things ? How shall he fail to give us all things since he has promised them in Christ , all things that pertain to life and Godliness ?

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

And now , brethren , I commend you to God , and to the word of his grace , which is able to build you up , and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified .”

What a doctrine ! What a merciful God that would bestow such wonderful things upon sinners ! Sometimes , when we are given to ponder over salvation by grace , it seems too much that such worms as we sons of Adam know ourselves to be , are freely given Christ as our Surety , whereby we are called sons of God . Believing in the harmony of divine testimony , we find John calling the attention of the children of God to this same doctrine : “ Behold , what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us , that we should be called the sons of God .” — 1 John iii . 1 . This “ manner of love ” caused the old apostle to write to Ephesus the language of our text . It caused him

to be bold as a lion , wise as a serpent and yet harmless as a dove , to write that christian ’s theme , We know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord , to them that are called according to his purpose ; to fight the good fight of faith ; to instruct them that needed it , and to rebuke the unruly .

We hear much about preparing ourselves to preach , but God prepared Paul for his preaching and writing . One , if not the chief , reason we have so many isms in the church today is because of man ’s preparation to preach . Paul , prior to his miraculous calling from nature to grace , believed in keeping the law for life and salvation . God brought him out of this step by step , making him testify all along to God ’s children that it was due to grace . Some people , many of whom are wearing the name Old School Baptist , do not like to speak of God making his children do things . But in no other way could Paul leave this admonition with the church at Ephesus . Love , this kind that is peculiar , insomuch that when it is bestowed upon the heirs of promise the world no longer knows them , as it did not know Him , must efficaciously be shed abroad in the hearts of his dear children , and it produces fruit . It is strong as death , and none of these modern work-mongers are able to withstand death . It seizes upon rich and poor , high and low , bond and free , and they answer the call . To illustrate : We have recently been in the limelight in Alabama , because a poor miner ’s wife gave birth to quadruplets . They were lifted from obscurity to prominence , from rags

to riches . The town in which they were located was enjoying thousands of dollars of tourist trade . But in the midst of this wild celebration disease seized upon one of the babies and laid it low in death . Every Everything was done for it that money and medical skill could offer , but it had to die . So love , being as strong as death , when it is shed abroad in the hearts of the children of God , it produces obedience ; it honors and glorifies the Creator instead of the creatures ; it cause them to lose confidence in the flesh , and last , but not least , it causes them to fall out with the frivolous things of this world .

Believing that we have a foundation for whatever the text contains , let us look into its beauties . Let us remember that we must have grace to go into these things , and I do hope , if it is His will , that I may have an unction from the Holy One as I make the attempt . “ And now , brethren , I commend you to God .” Why do that , Paul ? Why not tell them that they have matters in their own hands , and that they are able to have a prosperous church and live above trouble while in this world ? We might imagine the amazement of the apostle to call in question his statement . Every genuine Old Baptist knows that God is all we have to look to . Paul had lost everything that was precious to the natural man , including friends , position and money . Something had to be given him of more magnitude , power and wonderfulness to make him write as he did : “ Yea , doubtless , and I count all things but loss , for the excellency of the knowledge

of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things , and do count them but dung , that I may win Christ , and be found in him , not having mine own righteousness , which is of the law , but that which is through the faith of Christ , the righteousness which is of God through faith : that I may know him , and the power of his resurrection , and the fellowship of his sufferings , being made conformable to his death .” Phil . iii . 8-10 . Watch that man as the Lord brings him on the way . Oh how we cling to our own power , the things of this world and our own righteousness ! But Paul was made to renounce all things as but dung . Oh what are riches without Him ? What are families and friends when we are in the gloom ? Yes , the text is a good one , and I feel that the apostle was well qualified to commend the brethren to God “ and to the word of his grace .” Many people who have never been brought into the saving power of this Word of grace are ready to say that this is the written Bible , but , dear brethren , Paul commends and points us to something more wonderful than that . To the word of his grace . Ah , methinks I see him as he lays aside his glory and comes to his brethren , manifest in the flesh . This is the One that admonishes this grace of God . We hear him as he forever puts a seal on salvation by redeeming grace : I came not to be ministered unto , but to minister . This living Word of this grace is not bound and waiting for men to act first (to do so would not be grace , but works) , but as the Father raiseth up the dead , and quickeneth them , so the Son

quickeneth whom he will. (John v. 21 .) Furthermore , the Word of this grace is all we have right now . He is a living Savior . He is a present Savior . No wonder the apostle wanted to commend to the brethren the Word of His grace . He had found him such a refuge in time of trouble (Heb . vi . 18 ; Psalms xlvi . 1) that he could well commend the brethren to him .

“ Which is able to build you up .” Let us praise such a wonderful Being . The world cannot understand why we are such sticklers for grace . None but those who are grace-taught can read this language right . Learning cannot know this statement is one coming from One who is omnipotent , omniscient and omnipresent , but rather they all hinge salvation on conditions . Ah , poor , wayworn Old School Baptist ! Here is something that was spoken to the church . The Builder of the kingdom is an able builder , even a master-builder . He cannot fail to keep this only set upon a hill . Our persuasion is that no power will ever pull it down . But brethren , the apostle is not treating upon the bringing in of new material altogether , but rather let us cherish the idea that He is able to build us up . Us , we who are , as we hope , already in the kingdom , need building up .

As I pen these lines to the poor and afflicted Old School Baptists who are scattered over land and country , I meet them in my mind , in union and sweet fellowship , each sighing and groaning as they look back in retrospection upon the rough journey they have so far come . Ah , with what shame must we confess that so many times we have builded

on sand . So much of the time have we tried to walk in our own strength ; so many times have we hewed out cisterns of our own , only to find that they are broken ; so many times does the poor old minister fear that he has run when he did not have the unction from the Holy One . But , dear brethren and sisters , be of good cheer , He is able to build us up ; yea , he will perform all the purposes connected with us .

Let us look for something besides those places of shifting quicksands . It is bitter contrast and warfare to the christian , and just as sure as we see so many scenes where we have builded by our own efforts , on a sandy foundation , we are sure to see spots that are like unto a Bethel to our poor souls . As said , He is a wise Masterbuilder . He knows we are oftentimes ready to despair and he builds us up at the proper time . I shall never forget when I had builded high ambitions in an educational field , and believed that I was all right . Oh what a scene when Paul was turned from what he chose to be to that the Lord chose and called him to ! Ah , the very elements were shaken and all nature seemed to be sad in sympathetic pose because I was dying . Dying , did you say ? Ah , yes I was dying to the stability of my own building and workmanship . But I cannot forget that time , so precious and full of consolation , when the Lord showed me another building , and even gave me a boon , that troubles and unfitness have not removed , that I was part of the building .

I have doubted much as to my call to the ministry , as by birth , name

and life have been peculiarly connected with circumstances of other people . I have lamented that I felt that if I had not been caught in a whirl of circumstances I would not have been connected with the church as I am , and that I feel that I was deceived and deceiving others . Several times in the midst of these soul-searching times have I received that building up by this same Word of his power . This same Builder is the chief corner - stone of the building . Every member of this building is fitted in as it pleases the Builder . To all the Old School Baptists who feel they are nothing , and not worthy to be among such people , let me say that every member is a particular member . Then every blessing is yours . He will build you up .

“ And to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified .” Oh , poor soul , why art thou cast down ? You have an inheritance that the Lord will give you among the sanctified . It is sweet here sometimes to enjoy the “ earnest ” of this inheritance , among his dear children here , in a church capacity , but in that day we shall see him that was slain for our sins , and shall look fondly on him .

I do not expect to meet many of the SIGNS ' readers , but I want to commend you to God , and the Word of his grace , who is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among the sanctified . At that time I hope to meet you .

Submitted in love ,
Elder W . D . Griffin

“ For we have not an 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 . Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace , that we may obtain mercy , and find grace to help in time of need .” — Hebrews iv . 15 , 16 .

What heart can conceive or tongue recount the daily , hourly triumphs of the Lord Jesus Christ 's all - conquering grace ? We see scarcely a millionth part of what he , as a King on his throne , is daily doing ; and yet we see enough to know that he ever lives at God 's right hand , and lives to save and bless . What a crowd of needy petitioners every moment surrounds his throne ! What urgent wants and woes to redress ; what cutting griefs and sorrows to assuage ; what broken hearts to bind up ; what wounded consciences to heal ; what countless prayers to hear ; what earnest petitions to grant ; what stubborn foes to subdue ; what guilty fears to quell ! What clemency , what kindness , what longsuffering what compassion , what mercy , what love , and yet what power and authority does this Almighty Sovereign display ! No circumstance is too trifling ; no petitioner too insignificant ; no case too hard ; no difficulty too great ; no suer too importunate ; no beggar too ragged ; no bankrupt too penniless ; no debtor too insolvent , for him not to notice and not to relieve . Sitting on his throne of grace , his allseeing eye views all , his almighty hand grasps all , and his loving heart

embraces all whom the Father gave him by covenant , whom he himself redeemed by his blood , and whom the blessed Spirit has quickened into life by his invincible power . The hopeless , the helpless ; the out - casts whom no man careth for ; the tossed with tempest and not comforted ; the ready to perish ; the mourners in Zion ; the bereaved widow ; the wailing orphan ; the sick in body , the still more sick in heart ; the racked with hourly pain ; the fevered consumptive ; the wrestler with death 's last struggle — O what crowds of pitiable objects surround his throne ; and all needing a look from his eye , a word from his lips , a smile from his face , a touch from his hand ! O could we but see what his grace is , what his grace has , what his grace does ; and could we but feel more what it is doing in and for ourselves , we should have more exalted views of the reign of grace now exercised on high by Zion 's enthroned King !

J . C . Philpot

ROMANS 6 : 3 - 5 .

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death ?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life .

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection :

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1990

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- Ralph C . Lucas , VA 5.00
- Mrs . J . T . Flippen , VA 2.00
- John H . Coker , NC 2.00
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Editors

 OBITUARIES

**MARTHA MARGARET
" BETSY " TRIPP AVERY**

At the request of Hancock Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, we will try to write an obituary for our mother Martha Margaret Tripp Avery, better known as Betsy.

Our mother was born in Pitt County near the Renston Community, which is located near Ayelen, N.C. on December 5, 1908. She was the daughter of W.L. and Mary Smith Tripp. She had one brother and two sisters.

Our mother married Chester Arthur Avery on December 15, 1926. They were married while sitting in our father's car by preacher Walter Nobles of Winterville, N.C. Unto this union two daughters were born, Mrs. Doris Sawyer and Mrs. Bettie Sue Joyner.

After marriage, our mother moved to the Winterville Community, where she lived the rest of her life. She was a housewife, gardener, and helped our father with the farm until his retirement. During her lifetime, she saw many changes in housekeeping, gardening, and farming as well as in many other areas.

During her childhood, she attended Hancock Primitive Baptist with her parents. After an absence of many years, she began to attend church again on occasion. Then on third Saturday night, June 14, 1958,

she joined Hancock Primitive Baptist Church near Ayelen, N.C. She was baptized the next day. It was a joyous time. From that time on, she was always ready to attend church. She enjoyed preparing meals for the all day meetings, having people come home with us after Sunday services to eat lunch and visiting other churches. She loved Hancock Church and it was a sweet place for her.

In August, 1988, she was diagnosed as having a pre-leukemic (blood disorder) condition, that would require periodic visits to the hospital to receive blood. At first she refused to do this. Because of her refusal for treatment, she had a heart attack on October 14, 1988. After an eight day stay in the hospital, she returned home. After two weeks at home, she was able to return to most of her normal activities. With the Lord's help, she did very well until February, 1989 when she had another heart attack. After a three week stay in the hospital, she returned home. Although she was able to take care of her personal needs, she needed help with the household chores. With the assistance of an elderly black lady, my sister and I was able to care for her at home. She enjoyed the visits from her brethren, relatives, and friends. She fought a courageous battle against her blood disease and heart disease, which both required many visits to the doctors and hospital. In August 22, 1989, she entered the hospital once again suffering from a third heart attack in ten months. On August 23, 1989, at age 80, the Lord called her home.

Her funeral was conducted August 25, 1989 at 3 p.m. at Farmer Funeral Home in Ayden, N.C. by Elder Harold H. Pittman and Elder J.T. Prescott. Their words were very comforting to our family. Our mother was entombed in the cemetery at Hancock Primitive Baptist Church.

She is survived by her daughters, Doris and her husband, Joe, of Winterville, N.C.; Bettie Sue and her husband, Edward of Greenville, N.C.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Although she is missed greatly by us, we would not have her back to suffer as she did during the last 10 months of her life. We can only hope that it is the Lord's will that we can join her one day where there is no suffering and pain, only joy and peace.

Written by her daughters who miss her very much.

Doris Sawyer
Bettie Sue Joyner

NELLIE DIX COLLIE

Nellie Dix Collie was born June 9, 1907 in Mayfield, North Carolina to Mollie and Larkin Dix. She married John Siddle Collie on December 8, 1928. To this union were born three sons and one daughter, John S. Collie, Jr. of Route 7, Reidsville, North Carolina, David F. Collie of Atlanta, Georgia, Bob R. Collie of Route 12, Reidsville, North Carolina and Peggy C. West of Ruffin, North Carolina.

Besides her children she leaves two sisters, Mary P. Brinegar of Spencer, Virginia and Essie D. Moose of Reidsville, North Carolina.

Sister Collie (Aunt Nellie) united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 27, 1938 and was baptized on the following fourth Sunday morning in the Dan River. She loved her Church, her pastors and all her brothers and sisters in Christ. She attended her Church regularly as long as her health permitted and enjoyed the preaching and singing so much.

After her husband was called away, she seemed to long for the day when she too could depart this old world. As her health worsened she found little pleasure here below and often spoke of wanting to leave. It seemed that the hymn, "Why should we start and fear to die?", became more and more precious to her as the day approached. Though we miss her so very much, we know that our loss has been her eternal gain.

She departed this life on August 3, 1990. Funeral services were held at Wilkerson Funeral Home (as our Church was undergoing remodeling) by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key, and Elder H.W. Wray. Interment was in the Church cemetery where she was laid to rest to await the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." "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 to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

She was a firm believer in the

Primitive Baptist doctrine and felt that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. I would say to the family as Paul said to the Thessalonians, "that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope."

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference on September 22, 1990.

Jean Moran

DEACON REUBEN R. FRENCH

Brother Reuben was born August 29, 1920 in Rockingham County, North Carolina. He was the son of the late William R. French and Annie Robertson French. He departed this life June 3, 1990.

On November 15, 1940, he married Sister Beatrice Cobb who predeceased him on December 6, 1988. They were blessed with four loving children. He is survived by his daughter; Mrs. Barbara Bolden, three sons; Rick, Donnie, and David French, nine grandchildren; four brothers; Jett, Roy, Clarence and W.R. French, and three sisters; Mrs. Mrs. Alma Johnson, Mrs. Lizzie Julian and Ms. Linda Roberts.

Brother Reuben joined Dan River Church March 8, 1970 and was baptised by his pastor, the late Elder D.V. Spangler. He was a highly esteemed member and attended his meetings regularly. Brother Reuben was blessed to travel far and near among the baptists. His home was a haven for the Lord's people. Being a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and the Resurrection of the Dead, he

was blessed to walk softly and humbly before his brethren trusting in an all wise and merciful God. It was his delight to discuss the scriptures and relate how he had been blessed with spiritual blessings as well as natural possessions by his Heavenly Father. Often times he quoted Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."

In January 1980, Dan River Church recognized a gift in Brother Reuben and ordained him a deacon, an office he filled well, being blessed to uphold the order of the church. Uppermost in his mind was the welfare of the church and her members.

Brother French could witness with Paul in II Timothy 4:7-8 "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 that love his appearing."

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by his pastor Elder Kenneth Key and Elder H.W. Wray. He was buried in the church cemetery beside his loving wife to await the glorious resurrection morn when Christ the righteous Judge shall come to take his ransomed people home.

May God comfort and sustain all who mourn the loss of our dear brother, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

The writer mourns the loss of a dear Brother in Christ and the loss of

her fiance'. We were engaged to be married June 30, 1990, but it wasn't in God's Master Plan.

Written in love,
Sister Phyllis Snyder

SISTER BERTIE HALL

I've been asked to write a few words in memory of Bertie Cobb Saunders Hall. She was a good mother and friend, always cooking for, and visiting the sick, or preparing, and having people in her home. She was an humble and gentle person who always looked for the best in everyone. The joyful times that we were blessed to enjoy, in past seasons, shall not be forgotten.

On August 11, 1990, at his appointed hour, our Heavenly Father called sister Bertie home. She was born June 14, 1905, to the late John and Mary Cobb. Sister Bertie married Roy Saunders in her early years. He preceded her in death by several years. To this union were born two daughters, Mrs. Dorothy Henderson of Raleigh, N.C., and Mrs. Wilma Jones of Reidsville, N.C. who survive her, along with four grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. Beula Smith of McLeansville, N.C. On December 31, 1973, Sister Bertie married brother Joel Hall, a dear member of Dan River Church, who also preceded her in death, on April 12, 1985.

Sister Bertie asked for and was received into Dan River Church on November 26, 1955 and she was

baptized on March 25, 1956 by her pastor Elder David Spangler. She loved her church and the doctrine of salvation by grace. She faithfully attended her meetings regularly.

Sister Bertie Hall made her funeral arrangements, including the songs she wanted sung. The funeral was held by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Cleo Robertson. They spoke so comforting to the family and many brethren, sisters, and friends that filled the chapel. She was laid to rest beneath a mound of beautiful flowers by her first husband to await the coming of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord grant the family faith to sustain them in their sorrow.

Written by one who loved her.

Betty Southard

MARGIE HOLLOWAY

It is with a sad heart we write of the death of Sister Margie Holloway. Sister Margie was born April 14, 1904 and died July 13, 1990. She was the daughter of the late Joshua and Sister Annie Adkins.

June 18, 1928 she married Louis N. Holloway. They had one son Louis Norman Holloway. She asked for a home with the Forest Grove Church, Parsonsburg, M.D. and was baptized November 11, 1945 by her Pastor Elder H.M. Bennett and remained a faithful member until her death. She loved attending the meetings here and visiting sister churches from Maine to North Carolina and entertaining the Brethren in

her home as long as she was able . She was ill several years but love for her Lord and Church was a comfort to the end .

Her funeral was conducted at the Holloway Funeral Home by her Pastor Elder J . R . Williams and Mr . Gary Hawkins .

Ethel M . Holloway

SISTER NANNIE SIMPSON

After a two week stay in the hospital, God called our dear Sister Simpson from this world on July 31 , 1990 .

She was born on April 5 , 1904 in Pittsylvania County . She was the daughter of Samuel D. Short and Ella Scruggs Short .

She was married to Floyd Simpson, who is deceased. She was also preceded in death by a son , Wilber Simpson of Philadelphia , Pa . ; eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren .

Sister Simpson worked with Memorial Hospital of Danville and also did private duty sitting with the sick or elderly until her retirement .

In 1941 Sister Simpson joined the church during a service at Dan River Church, but requested that her membership be put at Malmaison Church .

On the fifth Sunday in March 1963 , she came forward asking for a home with this church and was accepted unanimously . She was a faithful and supportive member of this church the remainder of her life . A quiet , gentle person and strong in her belief , she loved the church and doctrine it proclaimed . She derived

great pleasure from listening to the gospel being preached and I feel was fed many times from the Master 's table .

Sister Simpson also enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren , sisters and friends and welcomed their visits in her home .

Her health had been failing for years causing her to be unable to walk without the aid of a walker . She stated that she wasn 't in pain , just unable to walk . Whenever possible , she attended church regularly , bringing her walker with her . She didn 't complain about her declining health and bore it with patience .

After she became disabled and could not care for herself , she was blessed that her two daughters took turns caring for her the remainder of her life . They invited brethren , sisters and friends to visit her whenever possible and made them feel welcome when they came .

The funeral was conducted from Colbert - Moran Chapel in Gretna , Virginia by Elder Melvin Shelton and burial was in the Simpson family cemetery in Hurt , Va .

We shall miss Sister Simpson , but feel that she was ready to meet her God . The church wishes to express its heartfelt sympathy to her family . I feel this verse of scripture aptly describes her life . " I have fought a good fight , I have finished my course , I have kept the faith ." II Timothy 4 : 7 .

Written by order of the church : requesting that a copy be sent to family members , one sent for publication and one kept for church records .

Ruth M . Taylor - Clerk
Banister Springs Church

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WAITING

*How long dear Lord will troubles last
How long before the storms are past
How long before the trials cease
How long before I feel Thy peace*

*It seems so long since I have known
The hand that Thou alone hath shown
Times of sorrow that have no end
Joy and peace I long Thee to send*

*We know that we should not complain
For its in Thy hands to come again
Yet longing hearts desire to know
That Mercy and Love continue to flow*

*Thou measureth time not in days
As do men of worldly ways
Yet it seems so long between
The times when Thou alone art seen*

*Give us patience Lord to wait
Until Thou openest Grace's gate
To let us look within the Fold
And view the Flock of young and old*

*Relieve us Lord of toil and strife
Renew our hope of eternal life
Manifest Thy presence so dear
Among Thy children Thou holdest near*

*Give us to feel that short at hand
We'll see and walk the Promised land
Where trials and tears come no more
On God's celestial and peaceful shore*

C. B. Davis, Jr.



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MEDITATION OF
 A THIRTEEN YEAR OLD

As I sit on the rim of the warped sandbox which now holds my modest garden , I watch the clouds roll gently across the evening sky . As dusk draws nearer , the clouds seem to shift their positions as if to give the sun center stage to make it it 's grand finale . Even as I watch , the sky grows dark , deepening into the brilliant purple , I know so well . As I watch the sun go down in it 's array of fallish hues matching the leaves that clutter the backyard of my home . I realize as the sun makes

it 's final stand this day , I too will one day pass on and when I do , I want to do it as brilliantly and as breathtak - ingly as the sun .

Karen Glidewell
 (Granddaughter of Ed
 and Audrey Glidewell)

EDITORIAL

Before introducing the following article we would like to offer our thanks to God for his many blessings unto each of us and for making the publishing of the “ Signs of the Times ” possible for this the 159th year . We are grateful for our edi - torial staff and for their editorials that are both edifying and comforting .

Thanks to you who have sent in articles for publication and to you for the gifts that make it possible to send the “ Signs ” to those who are unable to pay . If any of you know anyone who would enjoy the “ Signs ” and unable to afford it we will be glad to send it to them free .

We would also like to expand our distribution and we ask your help in doing this . Please order a subscrip - tion for your children or grandchild - ren if you think they would enjoy it . If you know a friend you think would enjoy the “ Signs ” tell them about it and how to subscribe .

Now the following editorial was written in 1960 by the late Elder D. V. Spangler who was editor of the Signs of the Times for more than 40 years . This is being presented by request .

The Editors

THE LOST SHEEP

Sometime ago I received a request from a dear brother to write an article on the subject of the Lost Sheep .

In presenting to our readers such thoughts as we have on the subject , it is with fear and trembling ; there is a difference of opinion among brethren on the subject , and we hope a mantle of charity will be cast over the article ; and if there are those who view the matter differently , we would be glad to have them write on the subject . As long as one manifests a brotherly spirit in his writings , we are glad to publish his articles ; provided they conform to the principles of salvation by grace .

We find the subject of sheep throughout the Bible . The wealth of a person was often determined by the number of sheep owned . The animal was useful for food , and used under the law as a sacrifice — as a type of Jesus Christ .

Often in the presentation of them in the Scriptures they seem to represent the church of God as a whole . The line is often drawn between sheep and goats , as representing the elect and the non - elect ; or the saved and the eternally lost . The parables of the Kingdom of Heaven seem to present two classes of people . The difference between the virgins was that five were wise , and five were foolish : five took oil in their vessels with their lamps ; and five took no oil with them . Five went in with the Bridegroom to the marriage and the door was shut ; and five returned after going to buy oil , and found the door shut . Under the legal

or law dispensation , the Hebrew nation was often a type of the church which would be set up under the gospel dispensation ; and often referred to as the House of Israel . But all are not Israel that are of Israel , but in Isaac (Jesus) the seed is called ; which is the church of Jesus Christ . Though the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea , a remnant is saved . This remnant , in our humble judgement , represents the lost sheep of the House of Israel .

Under the sacrificial law the priest and High priest made offerings for the people daily and yearly , with a promise of better things to come , as a lamb was bound to the altar , and his life taken by the priest . As this lamb was kept continually before the house of Israel as a promise of the coming of the Lamb of God who should take away the sins of the world , no doubt there were among the worshippers Israelites who saw no more than a literal offering ; and others who saw Him who was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter for our sins . Faith in the offerer was that which distinguished between the true Israelite , and they who were after the flesh .

Many saw these daily offerings , and longed for a better sacrifice . Many longed for a better righteousness than could be obtained by daily offerings ; and only where there was a God given faith could one see the day of Jesus , and rejoice . Abraham saw his day , and by faith could say to Isaac , as they journeyed to the mount where God had commanded him to make an offering of his son , “ God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering .”

As the coming of the Lord Jesus drew nigh, the Jewish priesthood had sunk to such a low level that the torn and the lame were often substituted for the Lamb without blemish: the people brought that which was torn and presented it to the priest for an offering; and this was referred to in the book of Malachi as robbing God. Tradition had taken the place of the commandments of God, and Israel had sunk to a low state. And yet, with this dark picture before us, we are reminded that there remained some who thought upon His name; and a book of remembrance was written for them. These are referred to in the 24th chapter of Ezekiel:

“As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there they shall lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong

(persons who need no repentance); I will feed them with judgement.”

When Jesus sent out the twelve apostles, he commanded them to go not into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans: “But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go preach, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, clean the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”

One of our departed ministers was asked many years ago to whom he would preach the gospel, if God called him. His reply was, “If I preach the gospel, it will be to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

When a woman of Canaan cried to Jesus to have mercy on her, her daughter being grievously vexed with a devil, he answered her not a word; and his disciples besought him to send her away, but he answered and said, “I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Then she worshipped him, saying, “Lord help me.” But he answered and said, “It is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it to dogs.” And she said, “Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master’s table.” Then Jesus answered and said unto her, “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” And her daughter was made whole from that hour.

In Luke 15:4 we find a parable presented to the Pharisees after the publicans and sinners had drawn near to him. The Publicans and the sinners seem to portray the lost sheep, as we find the poor publican

in the temple feeling too cast down to lift his eyes to heaven, but crying to God to be merciful to him a sinner; but we find the Pharisee thanking God that he was better than other men—resting his case on his fasting and giving. The line is drawn between the poor lost sheep, as represented by the publican, and the self-righteous Pharisee: one begs for mercy, with no righteousness of his own to plead; the other manifests that in his own heart he is a just person who needs no repentance. This was a good time for Jesus to draw the line: one class draws nigh to hear him—the publicans and sinners; the others, Pharisees, murmuring because the Saviour eats with sinners and publicans. Here he searched their hearts; and closed their mouths.

“What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine (notice where he leaves the ninety and nine) in the wilderness, and goeth after that which is lost, until he finds it. And when he had found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he called together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”

There are those who do not hear Jesus' word; and they do not hear his word because they are not his sheep. He says, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. He calleth his own sheep

by name and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth His own sheep, follow him, for they know his voice.”

There were other sheep which Jesus owned, that did not belong to the Jewish fold, or the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This refers to the believers, or sheep, among the Gentiles, that he must also bring; and there would be one fold and one shepherd.

There are none of God's people who need no repentance; or whole who need no physician. He did not come to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners. All are sinners, but only to those who have received the commandment, sin has revived, and they have died to hope of salvation by the works of the law; and know the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

Dear reader, have you felt to be the lost sheep? Have you found yourself in wilderness, with no place to go? Have you been brought to the end of the law, and He took you on his shoulder and brought you to the fold? Could you believe that the Lord's people are those who are just persons who need no repentance? or are they the Pharisees whom Jesus was setting forth in the parable, who murmured because he ate with sinners? Are the ninety and nine, regardless of their profession of religion, the ninety and nine left in the wilderness. Has the dear Saviour found you as one alone, and delivered you from self-righteousness? If so, then you can sing with Newton:

“I once was lost, but now am found.”

In my understanding, we find the lost sheep that Jesus takes on his shoulder and brings home, a picture of the church; and the ninety and nine a picture of the self-righteous who have never felt the need of repentance. One claims to have no right to the blessings of God, as poor lost and ruined sinners; and acknowledging that the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table, and knowing that all they are, and all that they have, is because of the goodness and mercy of a gracious God. The other despises all others, needs no repentance, is clean in his own eyes, and trusts in himself.

As the line of distinction was drawn then, so shall it be until the Lord comes for his own. Times change, conditions vary, but human nature changes not.

Each may feel that he is a lost sheep. There are not two classes of God's people: they are all one in Christ Jesus. They are all by nature a disobedient people; all go astray, and need Him who must find us, deliver us, and bring us to the fold.

Written by the late
Elder D. V. Spangler

REVELATION 22 : 3 - 5 .

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

ARTICLES

TO THE SAINTS
SCATTERED ABROAD

Dear Brethren: If the Lord permits I desire to write to you that you might share and witness with me the knowledge and understanding that you may have received concerning the proverb—“*Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars*” (*Prov. 9:1*).

One may observe that the action is complete, the house having been built in the past, that there was a work—a hewing and a building that stands finished. One may also observe that the hands of men did not contribute to the building as “*we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,*” (*2 Cor. 5:1*). I do not believe that his house was built by the wisdom of men as one might infer from the parable of the wise man who built upon a rock while the foolish man built upon the sand, for all mortal men are carnal and foolish. “*Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.*” (*Psa. 127:1*), and “*All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made*” (*John 1:3*) referring to the WORD which was God the Son.

Is this not the Father's house in which there are many mansions? From another proverb “*Through wisdom is an house builded; and*

by understanding it is established. And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches" (Prov. 24:3-4). Christ the Builder is the power and the wisdom of God (I Cor. 1:24-30, Col. 2:2-3).

O, Beloved reader, I am given to believe that this house represents the Church of the living God, and that there are crowns of righteousness, of eternal life, and of immortal glory laid up in the heavenly chambers. These precious and pleasant riches are reserved for every saint having a name in the Lamb's book of life. This wondrous house is the bride of Christ for whom Jesus shed his precious blood on Calvary's hill as the purchase price for our redemption. May we rejoice and praise the Lord from whom all blessings flow!

" Wisdom hath builded her house," an eternal house. She has selected durable building materials that are everlasting and suitable for eternity. The Lord God has laid in *" Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation" (Isa. 28:16)* which is none other than Christ, a living stone, chosen of God, and precious, as his only begotten Son, that her house shall endure in eternity. Upon this sure foundation, true believers derive their spiritual life and strength from the living stone as they also *" as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house" (I Pet. 2:5).*

Again, Wisdom *" hath hewn out her seven pillars."* O, beloved brethren, do you understand the mysteries of this work? Wisdom's work is a work of perfection, *" nothing can be put to it, nor*

anything taken from it" (Eccl. 3:14). Because all men have the corruptible nature of the world embedded in their hearts no man can discover the mysteries in the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. Yet there must be a work of hewing — a trimming back, a cutting away, a shaping, a cleansing of the elect saints who are to be lively stones built up in the spiritual house. God, which dwelleth in the heavens with this eternal spiritual house shall not see corruption. Thus every elect saint, by ways known only to God, must be hewn and tried while passing through this time world, this low ground of sin and sorrow, that they grow in faith and in grace to become lively stones, suitable, that they may be *" fitly framed together unto a holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:21),* every joint of Wisdom's house knit and compacted together with His love.

Though the ways of God's work are beyond finding out, I believe that Wisdom's house stood builded and complete in the counsel and purpose of God before the beginning of time as *" that which is to be hath already been."* The writers of the Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Spirit, have revealed certain works of God between the former and hinder seas of time that manifest the spiritual house fitted with lively stones of the saints for eternity. Simply stated, for perfection, there are seven major works of God in the journey of ever saint; namely, creation, redemption, conviction, regeneration, sanctification, justification, and glorification through the resurrection.

But the works which Jesus did *“ if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written ”* (*John 21:25*). Thus I should not speculate on the way of God's works .

But if it is God's purpose that I should write anything profitable for edification or for stirring the pure minds of the saints , I am brought now to consider the seven pillars . Among other uses and meanings in the Scriptures , the number seven signifies perfection . I believe this meaning applies in this instance for this house of the Lord is a perfect house , built without hands and cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus .

By nature I understand a pillar to be a structural element set upon a foundation and extending upward to support a major structural entity such as a building or house . What , beloved saints , do we see in the case of Wisdom's house and the seven pillars? Do you see Wisdom's house placed upon a sure foundation that will endure throughout eternity? That sure foundation is Christ , the living Son of God , who is the light of the world. He is *“ the way, the truth and the life ”* (*John 14:6*) . The Apostle leaves on record *“ But if I tarry long , that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God , which is the church of the living God , the pillar and ground of the truth ”* (*1 Timothy 3 : 15*) .

Can Wisdom's house rest and endure upon a deceitful foundation? Can this heavenly house find support upon pillars of false doctrine, works ,

professed religion , error and pretended truths ? O , the wonderful , glorious Wisdom's house of righteousness is set upon TRUTH , Lord Jesus , supported by branches of the word of truth rightly divided , rooted in Him . Let us pray , dear children , that his Spirit and Comforter reveal to each of us his truth rightly divided , that as lively stones we may receive eternal life in Wisdom's house . With much concern and fear I am given to believe there are seven pillars of truth which I offer for your consideration and further clarification :

1 . Revelation , Salvation is by Grace : By revelation of God , the Father , the saints shall know that Jesus is the Christ , the Son of God , by whom all salvation is by grace . It is eternal and solely of the Lord , grace being the unmerited favor and gift of God and all of man's accumulated equity in good works fail to satisfy the law's demand for justice as all men have sinned .

2 . Election: In charity, it pleased God , in eternity before time began , to first love a particular people who were chosen to be hedged about and protected in his providence . At his appointed times God writes his laws in their hearts and puts them in their minds and they are individually turned about and are made to love the Lord , their God , with all their heart , soul , strength , and mind and to love their neighbors (brethren) as themselves and they are to God , a people . All things work together for good to them that love God , to them who are the called according to his purpose .

3 . Faith in the Redeeming Blood of Jesus: Saving faith , which is a gift

of God that fades not away in the face of tribulations and persecutions for the word, is a growing belief in the power of the redeeming blood of Jesus, which was shed upon Calvary's cross for the purchase of his bride, the church. Jesus, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is the perfect sacrifice for the sins of every elect heir of promise, that none be lost. The sins of the saints are imputed to Jesus, as surety, for the saints' justification under the law and for its complete satisfaction. This gift is a faith by which we live in hope and are blessed to walk in obedience and good works. However, being depraved in nature, our walk in this life remains imperfect, our old man's fleshly nature engages the new spirit in continuing warfare.

4. Imputed Righteousness to a Chastised, Persevering People: By the perfect righteousness of Jesus, imputed to his bride, the church is sheltered from the wrath of God and the sins of its individual members are remembered, by God, against them no more. Yet as little children the saints shall take up their crosses and follow Jesus in tribulations and in persecutions during their earthly sojourn. Their faith shall be tried in furnaces of affliction, and they shall pass under rods of chastisement for their good at times and occasions suitable to God's purpose, and though the legions of Satan be against them, they shall persevere and overcome as the victory is won by Jesus, the Christ, which dwelleth within them.

5. Spiritual Birth in Eternal Union with God: The saints, who are the

adopted children and sons of God, are joint heirs with Christ in an eternal union with God, having their names written in the Lamb's sealed book of life, who shall, in the fullness of time, be called out of the world by a conviction under the law as helpless sinners, and they shall experience a spiritual birth with baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire, to thereafter seek after the righteousness of Jesus to follow after his example in baptism in good conscience and to walk as guided by the Spirit in the way of the Lord.

6. The Resurrection: The resurrection of Jesus to ascend and sit at the right hand of God, the Father, to rule as King, Prophet, and Priest as an advocate for his bride, is the reason for the hope by which we are saved.

7. Communion of Saints in the Visible Church: Under the everlasting covenant of grace, during the gospel dispensation, the saints are given a unity of the spirit and a like mind, a mind like unto the mind of Christ, with a desire to follow his example. They are made to assemble at appointed times, to sit together in love and unity in heavenly places here below in the kingdom of God, in a love made manifest not in word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth, to rejoice in Christ and in tribulations, to grow in grace and in faith, to witness and watch over each other for good, and to eat and drink of the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus, our Saviour and Head of the Church. They watch and await the great day when they shall be gathered to dwell in immortal glory in his house, ever singing

praises to his Holy Name in eternity .

Let us glorify God and praise him in all events and things . Mark the errors in this writing to me , the chief of sinners in need of his mercy and your prayers .

Eugene F . Osborne , Sr .
January 1990

“ TRAVAIL ”

I would like to write on the word “ Travail ” . The dictionary defines as follows :

- 1 . Toil ; Labor .
- 2 . Trouble ; Hardship .
- 3 . The pains of child birth .

I would like to go to the Bible , Isaiah Ch . 53; 10, 11, 12 . Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him ; he hath put him to grief when they shalt make his soul an offering for sin , he shall see his seed he shall prolong his days , and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand . He shall see of the travail of his soul , and shall be satisfied : by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many ; for he shall bear their iniquities . Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great and he shall divide the spoil with the strong ; because he hath poured out his soul unto death ; and he was numbered with the transgressors ; and he bore the sins of many , and made intercession for the transgressors .

When a woman gives birth to a child she suffers for that child . The child itself is being born ; but the mother is suffering to bring it into the world .

The question now is did Christ suffer for the whole world or did he suffer for his people ? When Christ went to the Cross , he went to give eternal life to his people .

We now go back to the scripture ; for he shall bear their iniquities . The world SHALL means it is going to be . The dictionary meaning is as follows: In general SHALL in the first person expresses futurity , in the second and third determination or obligation . Now let us go on with this scripture ; He bore the sins of many . This means what it said , he did not bear the sins of the whole world as many would have you think . He bore the sins of his family . We now go on a little further ; and made intercession for the transgressors . The word intercession means to intercede which means to plead or beg on another's behalf . When Christ was on the Cross , he made intercession for his family , not for the whole world . But he made intercession for the sins he knew his people had and would commit .

The question is , did he do all this for someone that might believe in Him or for those that were Chosen in Him . The word Travail means to me — He suffered for His people that they have life everlasting .

A brother in Hope ,
Elder David P . Minter

PSALM 1 : 3 .

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 .

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

TRANSCRIBED AND EDITED
 SERMON OF ELDER JOE HAMRICK
 PREACHED AT SMYRNA CHURCH (LA)

II CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 3

As the brother was speaking of the well being too deep for sinners to draw that water of eternal life it brought my attention to the third chapter of II Corinthians . I believe where God sends a minister forth to preach the gospel , and He sends them forth , because we certainly find in the tenth chapter of Romans where it says , “ And how shall they preach except they be sent ? As it is written How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace , and bring glad tidings of good things ! ”

Now if a person that has not had the experiences of a child of God I would like to ask you how he can go to a university or seminary and learn from man how to preach to people who have experienced the dealings of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and souls ? It is impossible to do that unless that man has been through the fire . You don ’ t go through the fire unless you go to the university that God creates for His ministers .

My dear ones , the apostle Paul experienced both of these . He experienced high learning from men and he was preaching that which he learned of men . But how dissatisfying to God ’ s people and how he hated God ’ s people for loving this

wonderful doctrine . He hated them to the extent that he cast both men and women into prison . Ah , but later on when he was schooled by that heavenly Father he took an about face . Did he not ? That which he thought was right he found to be nothing but trash , nothing that God ’ s people could feast upon . So then later on he made it very plain as to where the doctrine he preached came from . He said , “ I certify unto you , brethren that the gospel which was preached of me was not after man . For I neither received it of man neither was I taught it , but by the revelation of Jesus Christ . ” So now he had been schooled by that heavenly Father and now he was sent forth .

So then I ask you again , how can they preach except they be sent by almighty God ? But remember this one thing , that where God qualifies and sends forth one minister the devil follows behind with about a hundred . Yes , I believe God ’ s ministers are outnumbered by about a hundred to one and maybe more . It may even go up unto the thousands . Yesterday the brother was so wonderfully gifted to bring out these false prophets concerning the devil also . He has three loaves too , just the same as the three loaves that represent the true God and the true Saviour and the true Holy Spirit . The devil is going to have three loaves and he is going to make them look just as much like the loaves of the living God as he possibly can . Ah , but there is a difference in those loaves , look at the first loaf concerning God the Father . False prophets make him a weak creature , they make him

to have power in this regard to look in the future to see if man will do good or not. Then if he does he includes him and he writes his name in the Lamb's Book of Life. But that name can fall out of the Lamb's Book of Life. You have to do certain duties in order for it to stay there, so you see then that this god that the devil is bringing forth is a weak creature. He doesn't know the way of salvation actually.

This lord and saviour Jesus Christ that he brings forth in this second loaf, oh how weak he is. He is not a saviour that came down here and said he shall save his people from their sins; but he is a saviour that comes down here and gives everybody an opportunity. He wants you to come forth in this second loaf, he wants you to give your heart to him but unless you are willing he can't do anything about it. That is the loaf that the devil puts forth, but God's people don't eat of that loaf because it is not satisfying to them.

And that third loaf, my dear ones, which is of the Holy Spirit, the people themselves take this loaf as themselves because they tell you they don't need the Holy Spirit that they are not dead and they believe exactly what the devil said back in the garden of Eden when the devil told Eve that God knoweth that in the day thou eatest thereof thou shall not surely die, but thou shall become as God knowing good and evil. So the people then that put themselves here in this third loaf, they think they are not dead, that they can accept Christ and come to Christ anytime they so desire, and that they are not dead in trespasses and in sin as the

scripture teaches and our own experiences tells us at one time.

Now I want you to notice the third chapter of II Corinthians. In this chapter you notice at the beginning there were certain false prophets that needed a recommendation, a written letter, to take with them to the different churches to recommend them to the people. The apostle Paul is bringing this out, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men" and he says in the third verse, "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, ...". If God sends forth His ministers and qualifies them to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ with power, not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance they don't need a letter of recommendation because their gift is going to make way for them among God's people and that is what the apostle Paul here is speaking of. "Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to Godward; Not that we are sufficient of ourselves ...". Oh no, he knew that and I believe that if we be God called ministers we realize it too. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;" and I believe we are taught that. If a person thinks otherwise it does not take God very long to dress him down and let him know where the power comes from.

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not

of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, ...". And I want you to pay attention here now. "If the ministration of death," This is referring to the mortal law. "But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones," You know when Moses was with the Lord upon mount Sinai that the Lord wrote these laws with His finger upon stone known as the ten commandments. "But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious." Now look at that word glorious and keep that in mind. "... so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away. How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, ..." Now if the law and if the condemnation of that law be glorious, "much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

Now we come down to the eleventh verse and here is what I want us to begin to think about. "For if that which is done away was glorious", which was the law, "much more that which remaineth is glorious... And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." Now if you read back in the 34th ch. of Exodus you will find where Moses went upon the mountain of Sinai and there met God and you know of all that took place there, the thundering and lightning and the mountain

quaked. Moses said that he exceedingly feared and quaked. That was showing the wrath of the law. Notice that when Moses came down off the mount his face shown with such brightness they could see his face shine from afar off. Moses came near unto them and what did they do, what did Moses do? He put a veil over his face because of the shining feature that was upon his face. Now this veil which was put upon his face seems to me was a type and figure of the law.

Now the Israelites could not look and see the glory of Jesus Christ because of the law. They trusted in the law and they went about to try to fulfill the law. In other words there was blindness that came over their hearts. In the temple there you know the curtain that separated the Holy from the Most Holy place was hung. It was four pieces of cloth because it speaks of it as being blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen. So we have four here pulling together and making something that it would be impossible for the natural eye to penetrate. But when the Lord and Saviour came forth from the grave this curtain did what? It rent from top to bottom and it made a way then unto Almighty God.

There are many coverings over the faces and hearts of the people when they are in the unregenerate state before being born again of the Spirit of God. We have these coverings one on top of the other so that we cannot see the beauty, we cannot see the glory of Jesus Christ. We cannot see it because of the veil upon our hearts. We can't penetrate those veils when we are dead in

trespasses and sins . Let 's look at the veils that are over our hearts . The first veil then that I might say is over our heart is that of ignorance , yes , ignorance . What does ignorance mean? It means darkness . We are ignorant to the things of Almighty God my dear ones . We are in complete darkness . With this cover we can 't see our ignorance , we can 't see the way of salvation . No, no, we can 't see that . We are ignorant to the truths of Almighty God . We are ignorant to the inward dealings of the Holy Spirit in turning us around and then pouring us from vessel to vessel . We know nothing of those experiences because we are ignorant of them . Because of our ignorance there are coverings over our eyes and hearts and our hearts cannot be a partaker of the things of the Spirit of God . So don't you see then that it is impossible .

And you know the Scripture says that darkness covered the whole earth and gross darkness the people . This gross darkness then is because of these veils being over our hearts and our minds that we cannot see the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ . We can't see that my dear ones . So we have a covering over our hearts and over our souls and this is not the only covering that we have . We also have the covering of unbelief . Yes , that is there too , we can 't believe in the things of God . You know the people saw Jesus when He brought forth so many wonderful miracles . He called Lazarus to come forth from the tomb . There were people there that saw this and He gave sight to the blind and many people saw and they

knew he was blind from his youth and yet they saw that Jesus brought sight to this man and how He cured the lame that he could walk again and how He gave hearing to the deaf and yet my dear ones because of unbelief they couldn't accept Him as the Messiah . You might say , well if I had been there I would have accepted Him as the great Messiah . But you wouldn't have my dear ones because it takes something more than flesh and blood to accept these things . Peter brought out what it takes to accept this when Jesus asked him whom do ye say that I am . He said thou art the Christ the Son of the living God . He said it from his heart , he said it because he believed it . There was given him faith to believe that Jesus was the Son of the living God and he brought it out in boldness . What did Jesus say to him? He said blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven . So when divine revelation comes my dear ones and when that old belief is carried away , it is carried away by the power of God for as long as it is there we can't believe upon Jesus Christ . We might think we do but we believe on that kind of Christ that is in that second loaf that the devil puts there . Christ that wants to do things, that 's an antichrist not the real Christ . We might be given to believe in an antichrist if we are given any belief at all . If we are not given to believe in the real Christ then it has to be an antichrist that we are given to believe in .

There are coverings then of ignorance and of unbelief and of

self-righteousness. Oh, that covering of self-righteousness is something is it not? Oh how we cling to our own self-righteousness, how we cling to it as long as we possibly can. That is a part of this old flesh and we don't want to give it up because the flesh produces self-righteousness and we are going to cling on to it as long as we possibly can. People will fight for it because that is all they have. This self-righteousness enables them to do things that would assure them of their eternal salvation. So they are not going to get rid of it. This old self-righteousness has to be torn away. When it is there it acts as a covering, it acts as covering that we cannot see the glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

There also is pride. Pride is a covering that covers us up. You might not be able to point to pride as a covering. I believe we have pride toward many things that we do not want to cut loose from. So it takes the power of Almighty God. And there is enmity against God and there is the enmity against the truth of God. It is such strong enmity in our hearts and this is a covering over our eyes and over our hearts that we cannot penetrate the glorious doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We can't do it and we can't believe on it. I don't care how hard we might try, we can't believe from the heart the true doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ not when the scripture says, "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."

So don't you see how these people are; yet everybody is in this state including God's people my dear ones. They are in this state and they have all these coverings over them and how in this world can you penetrate those coverings. You can't do it, it is absolutely impossible. Don't you see you can no more do it than you can go down and get water out of this deep well without anything to get it with. You just simply can not do it because my dear ones it is hidden from you. Gross darkness has covered His people so they are in this ignorance and they are in this darkness. But you know when it comes time and for each of God's children there is going to be a time the Holy Spirit begins to blow upon a little of this. He blows a little corner off here. He blows a little corner of this covering off.

You know the Holy Spirit is likened unto the wind. For it says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." So that when that wind begins to blow on all these old coverings over our hearts and over our minds and it blows off a little bit of corner here do you know what's going to happen then? Oh, you begin to see a little bit through this hole. You don't see the fullness of it. No, you don't see that at all but you see just enough to bring a little fear into your heart, a little fear into your soul. This covering had everything hid and you believed in this self-righteousness and you had confidence in the flesh but now you have just enough light here to

shine in that you began to doubt; you began to wonder am I mistaken. You had plenty confidence at one time in yourself but now you began to wonder my dear ones. Your confidence began to fade because the fear starts coming into your heart and into your soul, a fear that you might not be right, a fear that you might be on the wrong track, my dear ones. You hate to give it up and you are going to stay with it just as long as you can. But I'll tell you the bigger that hole becomes and the more you are given to see the more you are going to have this fear.

You know this fear is a wonderful thing. Yes, it's a wonderful thing to have fear because scripture speaks of it as the beginning of knowledge. So this fear then gives you doubts about all these other things you had so much confidence in at one time. So this fear is the beginning of knowledge that these things aren't perfect. Now you begin to see them come down just a little bit. Has this been your experience along this line that this fear began to creep into your heart and soul and cause you some concern? Oh you had a great desire to read more and find out more because you weren't safe any longer with your refuge that you felt you were riding to highest of heavens on. It was beginning to crumble underneath you just a little bit. You didn't feel safe upon it any more so my dear ones you began to look and began to read and you began to search and you began to want to hear more and more concerning the things of Almighty God.

Now I want to bring in the glory of these two ministrations here. Con-

cerning the first one it says, "Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away :... For even that which was made glorious ..." So we see one glory here being done away with to pave the way for another which is far more glorious. So we see the law here, we see the law coming in and why was the law pronounced to be glorious? Because my dear ones it did something that was absolutely necessary to take place in your heart and soul. That's the reason it is glorious and it is glorious because it came from Almighty God and it is holy. It was a divine law but my dear ones when it began to come into your heart and soul it did something to you. Oh it wasn't glorious to you but it was a glorious thing for you because it did something for you that was absolutely necessary in the experiences of a child of God. And what is that my dear ones? It brought you down. The apostle Paul said I was alive once without the law. Oh yes, he went about, he did not have any worries but he said when the commandment came sin revived and I died and I tell you my dear ones right here when the Holy Spirit begins to blow here upon your heart then the fear comes in. You see God's just and holy law. You see God's holy law, "thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." You realize that you can't do this. No, you can't do it because you can't love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind because if your heart is like mine it is

ninety - five percent of the time upon the things of this world away from the things of God. How in this world can you fulfill that law? You can't do it; it's impossible. What did James say concerning this? He says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." What does the law say to you? It curses you, does it not? It is the ministration of death and condemnation.

It is a fiery law and the glory part of it is that it brings you down to see yourself as you actually are. It brings you down to nothing; it strips you of everything you had confidence in toward your own salvation and it leaves you naked and empty handed at the foot of Jesus Christ. You say if it is not by grace then I am lost and I am justly lost because I know my sins. When Jesus puts the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left hand and says go ye cursed into everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels, I can see myself there on His left hand because I am guilty of everything that anybody could be guilty of. I am as the apostle Paul said, the chief of sinners. So that's the way you feel and you feel like if God's justice would rain down upon your head it would send you to the very depths of hell. But there is something else that is pointed out here. Now that the veil is going to be taken off your face and you are going to see the glory that's in Jesus Christ. Yes, that's where the glory is for God's people. It is in Jesus Christ. We must be brought down to nothing in ourselves first before we can see the glory in Jesus Christ. When the veil is taken off our

face, it will not be all taken off, it will be taken enough off that we will see as through a glass darkened. We can see the glory of Jesus Christ to the extent that we realize if we have any salvation that it is going to be in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Then isn't that a wonderful thing that the Holy Spirit has come along and He has paved the way for it says you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin. Yes, from whom He has blown these coverings away who were completely covered in unbelief, ignorance, darkness, in pride, in self-righteousness and all these coverings that were over your hearts.

Bless be unto God that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came down here upon earth to pay the price for His people. We find in Matthew where it says when the angel was speaking to Joseph "... 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 thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." And you know He did not come to call the righteous but He came to call sinners and those are the ones that feel to be sinners and the others feel to be righteous. If we did not have these coverings blown away from us by the power of the Holy Spirit we would feel to be righteous. We would have confidence in our own self-righteousness. We would have confidence in everything; but when the Holy Spirit blows them away we are those sinners and felt to be sinners and those are the ones that Jesus

Christ came down here to save . He came not to call the righteous but came to call sinners unto His glorious kingdom . He does everything for poor unworthy sinners who are made to feel themselves as sinners and not just to speak as being sinners but to feel themselves as being sinners . That 's what counts my dear ones and I trust that each and everyone of us here have been made to feel ourselves as poor unworthy sinners , Sick of ourselves , sick of our sins , sick of ourselves from the crown of our heads to the soles of our feet as Job was sick with sores .

All those sores represented sins and we feel our sins from the crown of our heads to the very soles of our feet but we have a great physician . Yes , He came not to minister unto the whole but to the sick . Those that are sick of themselves , those that are sick of their sins , those that are sick of themselves because they cannot do the things they would but seem to get around to doing those things that they hate . They are sick of these things but remember , Jesus came down to minister unto the sick and not to the whole . He didn 't come to minister to the self-righteous . He didn 't come to those still buried in unbelief He didn 't come to minister unto those . He came to minister unto the sick and those that are heavy laden , those that feel the burden of their own sins because did not He say , come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest . Yes , you have rest in Christ Jesus . There is no rest in this world for you . No , there is no rest for one of His little

ones passing through this world because this world is nothing but a wilderness for God 's people . It is a desert land . For that which is born of the Spirit of God there is nothing pleasing to it . As far as the old flesh is concerned yes , it is still pleasing to the old flesh . But , thanks be unto God we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit , if so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in us .

I would like to turn for just a moment to the seventh chapter of Romans and read just a verse or two . It is wonderful not to be under this law . Ye are no longer under the law . Why , because Jesus Christ fulfilled the law for His people . Now I want you to notice the first verse of chapter seven of Romans . The apostle Paul is speaking here , " Know ye not , brethren , (for I speak to them that know the law ,) " . Who is it that knows the law ? The ones that the law comes to them and acts as a schoolmaster to teach them of their evil condition ; to act as a schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ . Yes , that 's the glory of the law , but if the law has any glory in it , it is to bring us down to nothing and the greatest glory of all is having a way unto salvation where Jesus says "... I am the way , the truth , and the life : no man cometh unto the Father but by me ." He is that way , don 't you see , that 's why this glory here outshines the glory of the other . The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life . The law puts you in prison but the gospel opens the doors of the prison and frees you . Yes , it frees you from being in bondage to that law . That is why there is so much more glory pronounced in the gospel by the

apostle Paul than in the glory of the law. " Know ye not brethren , (for I speak to them that know the law ,) ". Those that have had some experience of being brought down dead inwardly speaking . " ... I speak to them that know the law , how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth ? " As long as we have these curtains of unbelief , self-righteousness , and ignorance , and all those things before us we know nothing about the law . But when the Holy Spirit begins to blow there and fear comes into our hearts and knowledge of the law begins to come into our hearts and souls that we can ' t fulfill it , then we know something about the law in that respect . " For the woman which hath an husband is bound , " now this is spiritually speaking and not naturally speaking , " For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth ; but if the husband be dead , she is loosed from the law of her husband . So then if , while her husband liveth , " now what do we mean here by husband , in a figurative sense we are married to the law . The law is our first husband . We come under the law . We are married to that law and as long as we remain married to that law it is going to curse us and we are going to everlasting hell . How is the way to become separated from that law ? It is this death I have just been speaking of . We must die under this law , just as Jesus died under the law . We find scripture saying when the fullness of time had come God sent forth His son made of a woman , made under the law , to redeem them that were under the law . Jesus was

made under the law then , He experienced the killing letter and we must experience it if we be in Christ Jesus , we must experience that death to some degree too . It is not a natural death I am speaking of but it is a death to those things that we once believed in and once cherished . We must die to those things . We must be brought down inwardly to nothing , unable to do anything . We must be brought down as the apostle Paul said , Oh wretched man that I am , who shall deliver me from the body of this death . This is the death I am speaking of . But let me tell you , we cannot go below God ' s everlasting hands . We can ' t go below His everlasting arms . We think that we go low , low but His arms are always there to lift us up , if we be cast down we are lifted up again by Almighty God .

" So then if , while her husband liveth , she be married to another man , she shall be called an adultress : " You know these people that claim they belong to Jesus Christ and have never been killed by the law . What is that ? That is adultery . You have two husbands ; you have adultery . Let me tell you that is spiritual adultery . Such a one will never enter into heaven . " But if her husband be dead then she is free from that law so that she is no adultress , though she be married to another man . Wherefore , my brethren , ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ ; that ye should be married to another . " We have become dead to the law by the body of Christ that we should be married to another even to Him who is raised from the dead , Jesus

Christ , that we should bring forth fruits unto God .

Let's look now at the glory as it is in Christ Jesus . Oh what a wonderful glory that is . We have been under this law and been under sin and have seen glory in it , yes there was glory in it to bring us to our senses you might say . But the glory now that shined on Moses ' face and the veil has been taken away by the Holy Spirit to the extent now that we can see the glory of Christ and then we say Jesus Christ , it is all Jesus Christ . All my hope is in Jesus Christ , a risen Saviour . That's what shines to us , that risen Saviour . He's the one that shines . He's the one we look to and not to any thing else . Our hope is in a risen Saviour . If Jesus had remained dead in the tomb , how cut off our hope would be , as the apostle Paul said , " If in this life only we have hope in Christ we would be of all men most miserable ." But our hope is in a risen Saviour and our hope goes on with Him into glory . This second glory here as the apostle Paul is speaking about in this third chapter oh how it does outshine the first glory . They are both important , they are both necessary , but oh how it excels that of the first glory . May God bless the truth and pardon any error .

Elder Joe Hamrick

2 CORINTHIANS 6 : 16 .

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? for ye are the temple of the living God ; as God hath said , I will dwell in them , and walk in them ; and I will be their God , and they shall be my people .

CONTRIBUTIONS

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PSALM 100 .

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord , all ye lands .

Serve the Lord with gladness : come before his presence with singing .

Know ye that the Lord he is God : it is he that hath made us , and not we ourselves ; we are his people , and the sheep of his pasture .

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving , and into his courts with praise : be thankful unto him , and bless his name .

For the Lord is good ; his mercy is everlasting ; and his truth endureth to all generations .

 OBITUARIES

 Written in memory of
 LILLIE BORDEAUX

In my weak way and if God will direct my hand, I will write a few lines about our beloved sister.

She was the daughter of Elder Henry F. Morton and Sister Phoebe Littleton Morton. Sister Lillie was born October 16, 1897 and died July 13, 1990 thus making her stay on earth 92 years.

The good Lord saw fit to bring her to the church in 1936.

She was married in her young life to Roman Riggs and to their union they were blessed with two sons, four grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Ernest Bordeaux, husband of her latter years, is still living.

Sister Lillie was laid to rest in Maysville Cemetery beneath a beautiful mount of flowers. Funeral service was conducted by her pastor Elder J. T. Prescott.

To all of the family that Sister Lillie left behind, press on. I know that you loved her but God loved her more. We feel that she has gone to rest with the Lord, forevermore. I know that you all have a vacant place in your hearts as well as in your homes.

Written by request of the North East Church the third Saturday in August 1990. Three copies were made, one for the church, one for the family and one for the Signs of the Times.

Written by Sister Effie Morton

Moderator and Pastor, J. T. Prescott
 Clerk, L. J. Sammons

HUEL LAVERN BURGIN

Brother Huel Lavern Burgin, beloved member of Paran Primitive Baptist Church, was born July 11, 1919 in Big Sandy, Texas to Grover C. and Opal Burgin. He died June 1, 1987 after a long illness. Brother Huel was a firm believer in the sovereign grace and mercy of Almighty God. Like his brother Wilborn, nothing less than sovereign mercy would do for him, for he realized his awful sins and failings and had that painful view of himself that only God can expose His people unto. But thanks be unto God that "where sin abounded, grace did so much more abound." Brother Huel could with feeling sing "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me."

He was survived by his mother, Opal Burgin of Hawkins; two brothers, Wilborn Burgin of Tyler, who has since also been called home, and W. M. (Bill) Burgin of Houston; and three sisters, Helen Pittman and Patsy Mitchell both of Hawkins, and Flora Stutts of Jacksonville. Funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Joe Hamrick, who also knows by personal experience what it's like to receive the summons, "Child, come home." Brother Huel's earthly remains are near his beloved church in Smith Cemetery awaiting the sound of the last trumpet. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

In Loving Memory
SISTER BLANCHE SCOTT COX

Sister Blanche Scott Cox was born May 21, 1925 to the late Thomas and Sally Scott. She married James L. Cox and to this union were born one daughter and three sons of which one son predeceased her. She leaves a daughter, Louise Suttle of Newport News, Virginia and two sons, Charles H. (Pete) Cox of Ruffin and William Frank Cox of Kansas City, Missouri, twelve grandchildren and two sisters, Virginia Page of Ruffin and Georgia Snead of Danville, Virginia.

Sister Cox united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 22, 1929 and was baptized on July 7, 1929. She attended her Church faithfully as long as her health permitted. She suffered a stroke on May 10, 1988 and was never able to walk again. In August of 1989 she told me that if she never walked again, God's gracious will proved it well. She said on another occasion that it wouldn't be right for her to complain about her condition for God made her that way, and she was thankful because she could be a lot worse. She said she was thankful she could see and hear as well as she could. She bore her affliction well and was always a joy to visit. Sister Cox loved to tell of how good God had been to her. She had a wonderful outlook on life and never lost her sense of humor. She loved her Church and all the brothers and sisters and sorely missed her meetings and the sweet fellowship she enjoyed there. She was filled with joy as she sat in her wheelchair on

her last visit to Dan River Church. It seemed to do her so much good.

Sister Cox departed this life on July 13, 1990. Her funeral was held in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 15, 1990 by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key and Rev. Charles Halipilias of Hickory Grove Methodist Church. She was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall appear without sin unto salvation unto them that look for him. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

We long for that glorious resurrection day when 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. There shall we inherit the kingdom prepared for us from before the foundation of the world and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

Though we are saddened by the loss of such a dear one, we know she has found joy unspeakable with the Lord. May her family find comfort in knowing that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference November 24, 1990.

Jean Moran

CHAPTER 53 : 1 .

*Who hath believed our report ?
and to whom is the arm of the Lord
revealed ?*

HARVEY J. BLALOCK

It is with a degree of sadness I feel in my loss as I write the obituary of Harvey J. Blalock of Gibsonville, N.C. He was born in Caswell County, N.C. on August 11, 1910 to Mac and Anna Blalock. He died on July 1, 1990 nearly reaching his eightieth birthday.

Harvey was loved by all who knew him and we all felt a sweet fellowship for him. He was a strong believer in the principles of the Primitive Baptist Church and attended somewhere at every opportunity. He readily helped and supported the many Churches any way he could. Although the Lord never saw fit to bring him into the membership.

I was blessed to have him with his wife Maxine and my wife for so many miles and hours of conversation of those things he deemed worthwhile. Harvey was strong in his faith and we all felt a sweet fellowship for him and saw evidences of his love for the Church.

Harvey leaves his wife, Maxine King Blalock, one son, Donald K. Blalock with his wife Glenda, a grandson Trent Blalock and a granddaughter Emily Blalock as survivors, all of Elon College, N.C. The funeral was conducted by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. and Elder Kenneth Key at Bartlett Funeral Home in Gibsonville with burial in Gibsonville City Cemetery.

He will be missed in days to come by all who loved him and knew him as a true friend. We feel his suffering is now over and we who remain still have this to face before we find relief in death. The remembrances of him by those who loved

him will have him live on and on for times to come in their minds and hearts.

May God bless all the family and others who feel a loss and each of us who knew him to thank God we traveled a while together.

In Respectful Memory,
C.B. Davis, Jr.

In Memory of
ROBERT LEE SAUNDERS

Born December 23, 1915 —
Franklinville, N.C. Died
June 5, 1990.

He was a farmer and retired Carpenter. Surviving are his wife, Eva Coley Saunders, and three daughters, Mrs. David R. Pugh of Lexington, Mrs. Willie G. Smith and Mrs. Henry Fred Lemons of Randleman, N.C. Four sisters, ten grandchildren, 6 great great grandchildren. He was a member of Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church of which he attended for 20 years. His funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth R. Key and was buried in Giles Chapel Church cemetery. He is gone but not forgotten.

Written by Wife and daughters,

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Editors

SISTER MYRTLE M. THOMAS

Myrrtle Thomas , daughter of the late Mr . & Mrs . Walter Thomas of Floyd , Co . Virginia died December 31 st 1990 . Born October 27 , 1899 . Age 91 years and 2 months and 4 days .

Sister Myrtle joined County Line Primitive Baptist Church August 17 , 1946 , and was baptized September 15 , 1946 by Elder J . G . L . Hash . Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor Elder Noel F . Conner , with Elder W . T . Conner bearing a part , at Wood Funeral Home in Floyd Co . January 2 , 1991 . She is survived by one sister Mrs . Laura T . Bartel , and one brother Mr . Claude Thomas and nieces & nephews and many friends .

She did start reading the Bible and began attending Payne 's Creek and County Line Churches , and felt the Old Baptist was the true Church , and wanted to be among them . " She spoke of being at County Line Communion time of seeing Elder J . G . L . Hash at the table and as he took up the bread and broke it I had much joy , and was filled with Hope that it was broke for me , and I was satisfied at that moment .

She traveled by walking several miles to come to County Line , and after being baptized was relieved of the burden for a while .

In later years was confined to a wheel chair , but got better and when she had a way to travel , came to the meetings both Saturday and Sunday . But again became disabled , and was in the Nursing Home for several years . She loved to have Elder and Mrs . Noel F . Conner and the members to visit her , and sing and pray

with her .

She became very ill and entered a Roanoke Hospital on December 27 , 1990 , and not able to speak , yet her face lit up with joy when she saw we were at her side . In death the look of peace , and Rest on her face gives us to feel glad her sorrow and suffering is over .

Read and approved by the church January 19 , 1991 .

Elder Noel F . Conner , Moderator
Catherine A . Houchins , Clerk

ECCLESIASTES 3 : 1 - 8 .

To every thing there is a season , and a time to every purpose under the heaven :

A time to be born , and a time to die ; a time to plant , and a time to pluck up that which is planted ;

A time to kill , and a time to heal ; a time to break down , and a time to build up ;

A time to weep , and a time to laugh ; a time to mourn , and a time to dance ;

A time to cast away stones , and a time to gather stones together ; a time to embrace , and a time to refrain from embracing ;

A time to get , and a time to lose ; a time to keep , and a time to cast away ;

A time to rend , and a time to sew ; a time to keep silence , and a time to speak ;

A time to love and a time to hate ; a time of war , and a time of peace .

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POEM

BE NEAR ME DEAR LORD

*Oh my Lord ever be
Ever near and close to me
Keep me humble at thou feet
Keep me safe till Thee I meet.*

*Trouble and trials can 't divide
Or keep me from my Saviour's side
But draw me closer to his breast
Gives me hope of eternal rest.*

*God the Father, God the Son
Died on the cross for his little ones
His love, His mercy and His grace
Gives me that abiding faith.*

By: Irene Setliff

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Editors



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 EDITORIAL

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



Elder R .H . Campbell

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 min-

istry 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 like -

ness 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 the 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 , “ whoso 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 obedience 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 hid -

den in the field ; the handfuls of purpose that they find as they glean among riches of their inheritance here in this time word , the fulness 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

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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PSALM 116 : 1 , 2 .
I LOVE the Lord , because he hath heard my voice and my supplications .
Because he hath inclined his ear unto me , therefore will I call upon him as long as I live .

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Old School , Grace taught ,
Primitive Baptist :

I write these words to you for your consideration , in hope that any of you who have been given more light upon this subject , you might do this poor worm of the dust of the earth , a great (wanted) favor , and give me your views .

I do so deeply feel and believe , that mankind in his nature is so completely depraved and sinful of himself , I just must not put my trust in them , where it has to do with Holy Spiritual matters ; so therefore I must never , under any circumstance , even attempt to place any one or more of them upon a pedestal above any other of the human race of themselves . In other words , my deep desire is , that I might be kept in such a way , as all my trust , my faith and my hope be ever in my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ , for all my Salvation , both in this world and that world to come ; and have no confidence in the flesh . With these things having arisen much in my mind and feelings , after having just recently read a writing by Elder Beebe : dated March 1 , 1844 . And in that my mind and feelings do wholly concur with what this Elder was enabled to set forth , and further that I am ever searching for a witness to my feelings , that my hope might somewhat be brightened , as did this writing of Elder Beebe seem to do for me . And further still , in the hope that this

Elder 's writing might somewhat serve to the lifting up of one or more in their feelings , I felt encouraged to copy his writing , and send it to the Signs of the Times , for its Editors , for their consideration , as to whether or not to insert it in the Signs .

Elder Beebe 's writing follows :
1 Corinthians 1 : 30 .

A correspondent inquires whether the text 1 Cor . 1 : 30 , teaches that the preacher is of God , wisdom , Righteousness , Sanctification and Redemption , or that Christ is made these things unto us ?

From the statement of the question , we infer that some self important preacher has laid claim to the application of these words to those who preach ; that as preachers , they are the wisdom of the church . This idea would seem to agree with what Job said ironically to his miserable comforters , " No doubt ye are the men , and wisdom will die with you . " Nothing can , however , be more clear than that these words are spoken in testimony of what Christ is of God made to his church . " But of him are ye in Christ Jesus . " of whom ? God who hath chosen the weak and despised things , &c . , is antecedent to the pronoun Him ; therefore the plain rendering is , " But of God are ye , (that is his people , his new creation ; for , if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature , old things are passed away , and all things have become new) in Christ Jesus , who of God is made unto us wisdom , " &c . It is not of ourselves , nor of our works , nor of men , nor of angels , that we are in

Christ, for if we are in him, "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. ii. 10. Of God were we set up in Christ from everlasting, chosen of God in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world. Eph. i. 4. "Who hath saved us and called us with a 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." These same scriptures which prove that our existence and security in Christ is absolutely of God, equally demonstrate that our life in Christ is not our minister, nor of any other being or power than that of God alone. That Christ, and not the preachers, is made unto the members of his mystical body, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, is so abundantly proved by the united testimony of the scriptures, and so very apparent in the experience of all who are born of God, arguments would be quite superfluous.

First, of God, of the provisions of his counsel, of his grace, and experimentally of the quickening operation of His Holy Spirit, Christ is made unto us wisdom. "We preach Christ and him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." — Cor. i. 22, 23. But why is Christ to the one class so essentially different from what he is unto the other? Why is he a stumbling block and foolishness to carnal

Jews and Greeks, and the wisdom of God to all that are called? Because God has chosen him so. God has caused us to differ. God has chosen us unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

Secondly, of God, Christ is made the righteousness of his people; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, "The Lord our Righteousness." "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness." Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, &c.

Thirdly, Of God, is Christ our sanctification; by, through, and of him, the saints are set apart unto salvation, consecrated to God, to holiness and eternal life.

Fourthly, Of God, Christ is our redemption. Certainly our minister did not redeem us from sin, guilt, condemnation, wrath and perdition; they paid no ransom price for us, neither was the right of redemption in them. Christ the near kinsman, by virtue of pre-existing relationship, held the legal right to redeem his people from the curse and dominion of the law, to redeem unto God by his own blood, and having redeemed us with a price, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins," &c. Christ our Priest having by his own blood ascended into heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us. We give not one longing look after that redemption which is supposed to be by such corruptible things as silver and gold, or works, or efforts of men or of angels.

In as much as be in accord with the will of God, may he lead, guide

and direct us in such a way as to render praise , honor and glory unto His great and Holy name, and give us a thankful heart that we might be enabled to thank Him for His blessings what have flowed unto us all the days of our lives . Amen .

In hope this love I feel for you all, is for Christ 's sake .

Troy G . Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd .
Kitty Hawk , N . C . 27949

ARTICLES

I would like to write a few thoughts about King Nebuchadnezzar who was quite a king , he was mighty among men , the king of the country of Babylon . He had such power and authority among men that by his own order he could have men put to death. He had such power that none dared to oppose him . When this king laid seige to Jerusalem, he requested that a certain number of the children of Israel be brought into his court. There to be fed good food and taught in the customs of the kings people , to learn his language etc. Now among those chosen from Israel was four of the children of Judah : Daniel , Hananiah , Mishael and Azariah , whose names were changed to Belteshazzar , Shadrach , Meshack and Abednego . God blessed Daniel with great wisdom and brought him into great favor with the prince and rulers of the kings court . Daniel told the king that he was a king of kings (Dan . 2 : 37) for the God of heaven hath given thee a

kingdom, power, strength and glory. So we can see from these few lines he was a mighty king with great power .

One night this great king had a dream which bothered him quite a lot , so he sent for all his magicians , the astrologers , sorcers and the wise men of the Chaldeans to show the king his dream . They stood before the king and said , Tell us O king your dream and we will give to thee, the interpretation thereof. But the king answered and said , it is gone from me . If you will not make known unto me the dream and the interpretation thereof , you shall be cut to pieces , and your houses be made a dunghill . I am writing this much about this king in order to show the reader what type man we are thinking about .

These wise and mighty men could not tell the king his dream , so he became furious and demanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon . When the guards went forth to gather all the wise , they came to take Daniel and his companions . Daniel inquired as to why, and why the hurry to kill all these wise men, and he was told the reason .

Then Daniel went in unto the king and asked for time saying, give me a little time and I will tell you the dream and interpretation . Then Daniel and his companions Shadrack , Meshack and Abednego all prayed to God for the answer on the knowledge of this dream . And God revealed to Daniel the dream and the meaning of it . Then Daniel went to the king and asked him not to kill all the wise men , for of a truth they could not have revealed unto him the dream .

Then he told the king of his God who reigns in heaven and reveals secrets that he had shown unto Daniel these things , then he told the king his dream which was this ; (so as not to be too lengthy, I will not write it word for word , but if anyone wishes to read it, it is found in Daniel 2 : 31-45).

Daniel told him he saw this image , which was a image of the king himself , he also saw vision of five kingdoms made of iron , clay , brass , and gold . One kingdom cut out without hands and smote the other kingdoms and broke them to pieces , then this kingdom grew and grew until it covered the earth and lasted forever . The king was so pleased he made Daniel a great man with much power .

Then the king made a great statue of himself , out of gold , then passed a decree that all men at the sound of music should bow down before this statue and worship . It was reported to the king that Shadrack , Meshack and Abednego did not bow down to the idol, so the king ordered them to be brought forth. He then asked them, “ do not you serve my god or worship the golden image which I have set up ”. Now if you be ready when you hear the sound of music you will fall down and worship, you will be well, if not, you will the same hour be cast into a hot burning furnace , and who is the God that will deliver you out of my hand.” The children answered and said : “ the God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of thine hand , but if not, be it known unto thee O king, we will not worship your god .”

Then the king full of fury , commanded the furnace to be heated

seven times hotter than usual and the three children bound and thrown in, which was done. The heat was so great that some of the strong men who cast the three into the furnace was killed from the heat . Then the king stood up , looked into the furnace and said , (Dan . 3 : 47-48) “ Did not we cast three men bound into the furnace and lo I see four men loose , walking in the midst of the fire , and they have no hurt , and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God .”

Let us stop and consider for a minute what this king has just said , “ the fourth is like unto the Son of God.” Now this was some 500 years before Jesus came to the earth with a body of flesh . The scripture has revealed in numerous places and times through prophecy by the prophets , guided by the Holy Spirit that there was a Son . We now know by reading the scripture and hearing the gospel preached that there is a Triune God , the Father , Son and Holy Spirit . But back at that date in time , some 500 years before the coming of the Son to earth , how many men had as much as heard the Son mentioned . How many knew of His existence , how did the king know ? And how did he know this fourth man looked like the Son . I believe there was only one way the king could have known these things and that was because God had revealed this unto him . Hadn't Daniel just said , (Daniel 2 : 28) “ There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets.” I feel that this king was blessed with a wonderful experience to have seen the Son of God walking in those flames with the three Hebrew child-

ren. Can you imagine in such a heat and their clothes wasn't even scorched, for there was not even the smell of smoke upon them. The Lord was working with this king but he wasn't finished with him yet.

Lets go back to this dream the king had, Dan. 2 : 34 . He saw a stone that was cut out without hands , it smote the image upon the feet , the other kingdoms were broken into pieces . Then this kingdom grew and covered the earth . This kingdom that Nebuchadnezzar saw in this vision , a stone cut out without hands , smashing the other kingdoms , growing until it covered the earth , was a vision of the kingdom of God . Notice the stone was cut out without hands , don't you see how clearly here that God is showing us that He will make his own Kingdom , without the help of man , or without any hand or hands helping him .

Doesn't the scripture say , the Spirit must the work perform , doesn't it also say it is by Grace , not by works lest any man should boast . The scripture teaches us in many places that he will accomplish the building of his Kingdom and the salvation of his people by his own work and method . The scripture tells us that all our works are nothing and even as filthy rags . Doesn't the Apostle Paul tell us that when a man is shown that he can do nothing in the way of bettering himself , or working for his own salvation , this is when he will be sometimes blessed to enter into that blessed rest that only the children of God will ever know . Yes the stone was cut out without hands .

It was also said this Kingdom

grew and covered the whole earth , Yes this Kingdom would grow because it is God's Kingdom . Isn't it written , " I have a people in every nation , kindred and tongue ." We now know how the gospel has been preached everywhere , we know how this Kingdom has spread . Dan2 : 45 . Daniel said , " the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure ." We know the work of God is sure and steadfast , for there is no power in heaven or on earth . Nothing in the times past , or out in the future that can change , delay or speedup , or hinder in any way the work of the God in heaven in whom we believe . I believe this kingdom is growing , just as fast as the Lord determined it would before time began . And it will grow to the exact size that was determined also .

I hope I am not getting too lengthy , but I would like to mention one more thing . Dan 2 : 21-22 . Daniel told the king concerning his God . That wisdom and might are his , he changes the times and the seasons , he removeth kings and sets up kings , giveth wisdom to the wise etc . The Lord gave this king another dream and Daniel once again gave the king the interpretation thereof . Telling the king his kingdom would be taken away from him , that he would be driven from men , he would eat grass as the oxen . His body would be wet with the dew until his hairs were grown like unto eagles feathers , and his nails like bird claws , and seven times would pass over him . Daniel said this would happen until the king knew that God ruleth in the kingdom

of men, and giveth it to whom so ever he will . I can 't tell you the exact number of seven times, in the scripture it seems to represent a complete or a full number, such as seven days make a full week . Like I say I don't know the number, but I believe it was enough times to accomplish that which God set out to do , because this once great and powerful king was brought to the place where he said , “ I praise and extol and honor the King of heaven , all whose works are truth , and his ways judgement , and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” What an experience , what a revelation this once mighty king was given . Think of the difference in the things he is saying and the way he is thinking , compared to his thoughts and words back earlier. Isn't it written, Turn me O Lord and I will be turned. This king now knew for sure who was king , and who ruled both in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth . This king now knew in whom he believed and why he believed in Him. You could not tell this king that God had no power or that he was a weak God, the way most of the world now believe . Do you believe you could tell this king that a man has to act first , or make the right decision then God would do the rest. I didn't find in what I read about this king that he was out doing good , or that he was changing his ways . He was still proud and all mighty and had his own way regardless of how or what that meant to anyone . But through this experience the king learned , just as everyone does , that when the God in heaven has any dealings with a person he is taught exactly what the

Lord wants him to know . I believe that once God starts to do anything he finishes it, and I believe that every thing he has ever done was done right . The king's works or his good ways did not bring him to the place where he could praise and extol the God of heaven , for what does the scripture say , that election obtained it. I thank God for the belief I have in the doctrine of election , for that is one of the sure mercies of God. That sweet doctrine , I firmly believe would be lost world without end . There is a wonderful blessing contained in the book of Daniel for children of the heavenly king who has access to the scripture and has been blessed to read it . Does not the scripture in the New Testament say that the things in the Old Testament was written for our learning . I believe the scripture says, there are gods many and lords many , but one true and living God . This king I guess , for years believed in some of the little gods and even set himself up as a god here on earth. But when the time came and he met the one true God oh what a change was made . I verily believe that many people in the world today are found believing in these little gods . I believe that people today who are putting all their trust and dependence in money or the power of the almighty dollar are worshiping the silver idol just as much so as they did back in olden times . The scripture says , “ it is the work of God that you believe in me.” Therefore, I believe that men will believe in most anything , even in their own strength , until the God of heaven decides he should believe in Him , at such time ,

and only then will man see or believe in the true God. This is the reason I like the magazine, Signs of the Times so much. It speaks of and praises the true and living God, the one who is all powerful, who thinks and it is done, who speaks and it stands fast; not the god of the world who is weak and begging. May the Good Lord bless us with Love to one another, peace and understanding, strengthen us in our weakness, that we may love Him as we should. I desire your prayers.

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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 and 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 meeting , 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 is 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 .

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

A beautiful discourse on the doctrine of imputation, given by Dr. John Owen (1616-1683) at the administration of the Lord's supper.

When we have the opportunity of speaking to you on these occasions, it is for the direction of the exercise of your faith in this ordinance in a due manner. Here is a representation of the death of Christ; and there is in the Word a representation of that which we should principally consider and believe in the representation that is made in this ordinance, and that is of a blessed change and commutation that is made between Christ and believers, in the imputation of their sins unto Him and in the imputation of His righteousness unto them: and the principal part of the life and exercise of faith consists in a due consideration and improvement thereof.

God taught this to the church of the Old Testament in the type of the offering of the scapegoat.

“And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgression in all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.” (Lev. 16:21)

Aaron was not only to confess all

the sins and iniquities of the people over the head of the goat, but he was to put their sins and iniquities of the people over the head of the goat, but he was to put their sins upon him. Here is a double act, the confession of sin, which is, as it were, the gathering of all their sins together; and the putting of them on the goat, to give a lively representation of it unto faith. So God did instruct Aaron to the putting of the guilt of our iniquities typically upon the sacrifice, really upon Jesus Christ.

He doth not say, He shall bear the punishment, but he shall take the sin itself, that is, as to the guilt of it, and carry it quite away: and therefore in the sacrifice appointed in Deut. 21 for expiation of an uncertain murder, when a man was killed and none knew who killed him, so none was liable to punishment but there was guilt upon the land; then the elders of the city that was nearest the place where the murder was committed, to take away the guilt, were to cut off the neck of a heifer by God's appointment, and that took away the guilt.

Thus did God instruct the church under the Old Testament in this great sovereign act of His wisdom and righteousness in transferring the guilt of sin from the church unto Christ. Therefore the prophet says, “The Lord has laid on Him the iniquities of us all.” What then? By His stripes we are healed.” The stripes were all due to us; but they were due to us for our iniquities, and for no other cause. Now our iniquities being transferred to Christ, all the stripes came to be His, and the healing came to be ours.

To the same purpose the apostle says, " He was made sin for us , who knew no sin , that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him . " As we are made the righteousness of God in Him , so He is made sin for us . We are made the righteousness of God in Him by the imputation of His righteousness unto us ; for our apostle is to be believed , that righteousness is by imputation ; God imputes righteousness , says he . We have no righteousness before God but by imputation ; and when we are made righteous , the righteousness of God , which God ordains , approves and accepts , it is the righteousness of Christ imputed in us . And how is He made sin for us ? Because our sin is imputed to Him . Some will say , He was made sin for us , that is , a sacrifice for sin . Be it so ; but nothing could be made an expiatory sacrifice but it had first the sin imputed to it . Aaron shall put his hands on the goat , confessing all their sins over his head ; be their sins on the head of the goat , or the expiatory sacrifice was nothing .

The same exchange you have again in Gal . 3 : 13 , 14 : " *He was made a curse for us .* " The curse was due to us , and this Christ was made for us : and to confirm our faith , God did institute a visible pledge long beforehand , to let us know , He was made a curse for us . He had made it a sign of the curse for one to be hanged on a tree , as it is written " *Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree .* " What then comes to us ? Why , " the blessing of faithful Abraham . " What is that ? " Abraham believed God , and it was accounted to him for righteousness . " Justifi-

cation and acceptance with God is the blessing of faithful Abraham .

Here is the great exchange represented to us in Scripture in these things , that all our sins are transferred upon Christ by imputation , and the righteousness of Christ transferred to us by imputation . Both of these are acts of God , and not our acts . It is God who imputes our sin to Christ ; " He hath made Him to be sin for us " : and it is God who imputes the righteousness of Christ to us ; " it is God that justifies . " He who made Christ to be sin , He also makes us to be Righteousness . These acts of God we ought to go over with in our minds by faith , which is that I now call you to .

The way to know the application of the benefits and advantage of this great commutation to our souls is by faith . Christ in the gospel , and especially in this ordinance , is " evidently crucified before our eyes " (Gal . 3 : 1) . God hath set Him forth to be a propitiation ; so He is declared in this ordinance ; and Christ at the same time calls us to Him , " **Come unto Me : Look unto Me , all the ends of the earth .** " Come with your burdens ; come you that are heavy laden with the guilt of sin . What God has done in a way of righteous imputation , that we are to do in this ordinance in a way of believing . We are , by the divine help , to lay our sins by faith on Jesus Christ . Has God imputed all our sins to Jesus Christ ? Let you and I say Amen , by faith , so be it , O Lord . Let the guilt of all our sins be on the head of Jesus Christ ; and therein admire the goodness , the grace , the love , the holiness , the infinite wisdom of

God in this matter. If we were able to say Amen to this great truth, we should have the comfort of it in our souls, to acquiesce in it, to find power and reality in it.

Then the other acts of God is the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to us. It is not enough to us that our sins are all carried away into a land not inhabited; we stand in need of a righteousness whereby we may be accepted before God. He makes us to be the righteousness of God; we do not make ourselves so, but are made so by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.

Our second act of faith, that God may stir us up unto in this ordinance, is to "receive the atonement." So the apostle expresses it (Rom. 5: 11). We receive together with it all the fruits of the atonement.

Now if the Lord will be pleased to stir up our hearts from under their deadness, to gather them in from their wanderings, to make us sensible of our concern, to give us the acting of faith in this matter, that in reality the holy God has laid all our iniquities upon Christ, and gives to us life, righteousness, justification and mercy by Him, we shall then have the fruit of this administration of the Lord's supper. (Copy from October 1981 Gospel Standard) (nfc)

N.F. Conner

judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matthew 7: 1,2.

It is by request that I undertake to write upon the above portion of scripture; and because it has been badly misapplied and abused, especially where difficulties arise requiring diligence and faithfulness.

It is only human nature to take the course of least resistance; and as a friend said to me in a letter a few days ago, "It is easier to get people to do nothing than it is to get them to do something." Therefore we can understand the workings of the carnal mind, those who have not been born of the Spirit of God, but those claiming to be followers of the teachings of the Bible, claiming to be taught by the grace of God, seemingly drifting along with little concern while disorder surrounds them on every side, is not so easily understood. The worst part yet, is when anyone undertakes to provoke them to action, they are heard to loudly exclaim, "Judge not, that you be not judged," etc. This is to justify a carnal ease.

As we understand it, the above scripture is part of Jesus' sermon on the Mount to His disciples. Jesus here did not mean to teach His disciples or His ministers or churches today to not judge of matters pertaining to the order and honor of God's house, but that they should not be cruel and unjust in their judgment, interpreting men's words to the worst. In order to prove that He

**" JUDGE NOT THAT YE
BE NOT JUDGED "**

HOWARD EASON
500-C N. Polk St., Amarillo Texas

*" Judge not, that ye be not
judged; for with what judgment ye*

did not mean to teach they were not to be judges in anything, we would only have to go to the 15th and 16th verses: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheeps' clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Jesus is here warning them of wolves in sheeps' clothing, and giving them instructions as to how to judge them.

The New Testament abounds with instructions to God's under-shepherds as to how to watch over the flock and take care of the church of God. There are also instructions for the flock as to how they ought to behave in the house of God. Not only did Jesus warn His disciples of wolves in sheeps' clothing, but we find the apostles warning the churches of the same. Paul said to the Roman brethren: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple." (Romans 16:17, 18.)

Again, we hear him using this expression: "Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). We hear Peter warning those of like precious faith in

these words: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of which the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." (2 Peter 2:1, 8). Someone might say, does not the Bible tell us these things are going to take place? It is not God's purpose that it take place? Is it not embraced in the all things that work together for good to them who love God? And what are you going to do about it? etc. All these, and many more questions can be answered in the two following statements: Since the work of grace in the heart of a child of God produces fruit in their lives, what can those claim for evidence who live after the flesh and things of the world? "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 in this present world." (Titus 2:11, 12). Effectual calling is a fundamental principle and has been held so in all ages. The burden is the same as Ezekiel's: "And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." (Ezekiel 2:7).

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." — Romans xi. 7.

Those that are blinded by the god of this world, have no knowledge of what power and feeling and savour and dew are; they see not these things, they are blind to their reality, they are dead to their importance; but the living family of God, who are brought by his blessed Spirit into some apprehension of eternal realities, have eyes to see what power is, and hearts too, to desire to feel its manifestation. Nay, it is the very seeing what reality and power are which makes them desire to experience the savour of eternal things in their conscience; and because they do not feel them as they wish, it makes them often fear that they are blind altogether (Isaiah lix. 10). But the very inquiry, the very anxious cry, the very groaning desire, the very fervent supplication to the Lord that he would not let them live and die without a testimony from himself, that he would lift up the light of his countenance and grant them the life of his favour — these very cries are a proof of life. Were you blind, you would not see these things; were you deaf, you would not spiritually hear these things; were you dead, you would not feel these things. And, therefore, that which you seem to take as an evidence against you, is in reality, an evidence for you; and the very sensations of trepidation, anxious inquiry, godly fear, and the crying out before the Lord that he would search and try you and really make your heart right in his sight — these very things are the symptoms of life, the evidences of a work of grace upon the heart, and are the spi-

ritual breathings of the quickened soul, the Lord himself having communicated these feelings unto it.

J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in March. The meeting will be held at Dan River Church with Pleasantville Church being the host church.

Elder Haywood Wray, Mod.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1991

In memory of Deacon A. C. Gibson
 Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA 15.00
 Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC 2.00
 Mrs. H. W. Jones, AL 2.00
 Jerry P. Cockman, NC 7.00
 Mrs. Bruce McKinney, VA 7.00
 Mrs. Isobel A. Dickinson, MI ... 7.00
 Ms. Joyce Farley, TX 40.00
 Mrs. B. F. McLaughlin, TX ... 2.00
 Ballard Barker, VA 10.00
 D. H. Richardson, FL 2.00
 Mrs. Larue LeBlanc, LA 2.00
 Mrs. Ala Mae Noviello, TX ... 2.00
 Mrs. Frank Sizemore, WV ... 5.00
 J. Clive Chandler, NC 5.00
 Mrs. Clara McDuff, TX 2.00
 Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL 7.00
 Mrs. Hettie Wade, VA 4.00
 Mrs. Valsie P. Akers, VA 7.00
 Charles P. Hayes, AL 5.00
 Mrs. Cliff E. Weaver, WA 15.00
 In memory of Jesse R. Somers
 Mrs. Mary L. Hawkins, NC 32.00

 OBITUARIES

SISTER DORA L. ALVERSON

Sister Dora L. Alverson passed away from this life on Oct. 8, 1990. She was laid to rest in the Dan River Church Cemetery on Oct. 10, 1990. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key.

She was born on Feb. 18, 1901 to the late John W. and Ida French London. Surviving are her son, Hunter Alverson, and four daughters, Dorothy Smith, Nettie Woods, Barbara Harrell, and Jean Nelson.

Sister Dora was one of our dear "Mothers in Israel." She was a loving mother and a dear wife. She was a proud mother of her five children. On her dying bed, I heard her pray aloud for her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

We were told that she asked for her deceased husband twice before her death. We talked about going to meet daddy so I know she was ready to go.

When I joined the church after daddy died, mother said to me, "You are not only my daughter, you are my sister too." Sister in Christ.

We were all saddened to see her suffer so long, but if our being there helped bear her pain we were all glad.

Sister Dora is at rest and her race is finished. God granted her two wishes before she died. One to walk again and to go back to church. Her

paralysis did not keep her from trying to sing and pat her foot. I rejoiced when I watched her.

May the Lord bless our family who fought with mother to live on.

Submitted by her daughter,
Sister Dorothy Smith

NARCISSUS BARBOUR

We, the Primitive Baptist Church at Newport, Carteret County, North Carolina bow in humble submission to the will of our heavenly Father who took from our midst sister Narcissus Barbour on August 29, 1990. Sister Barbour was born December 7, 1900 in Harnett County. She was eighty-nine years of age.

Sister Barbour united with the Durham Primitive Baptist Church in 1948 and was baptized by Elder J. W. Gilliam. She came to Newport Primitive Baptist Church as a member in 1981 and was received with open arms.

Sister Barbour is survived by a daughter, Shirley B. Cheek of Morehead City, three sons, Billy W. Hamilton of Swansboro, L. B. Barbour, Jr. and William E. Barbour of Durham. Two sisters, Sister Meta Rohrbaugh, Williamsburg, Va., Sister Ada Chambers, Durham and a Brother, Dallas Jones of Coats. In addition there are six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Sister Barbour's afflictions caused her to be confined to her bed for several years. She will be greatly missed by her family and all that

knew her , and to know her was to love her .

She was a faithful member . She was blessed with a sweet and loving daughter and son - in - law , Shirley and Randel Cheek , who cared for her every need that human hands could reach .

Sister Barbour was a firm believer in the doctrine of unconditional election , turning neither to the right nor to the left , but pressed on with the precious hope that the Lord gave her .

Her walk was orderly and her conversation was Godly . From time to time when we would visit her she seemed to rejoice and we could see and feel the expression of love and sweet fellowship .

We feel satisfied that Sister Barbour is now sweetly sleeping in the arms of her dear Lord and Saviour . We trust that the Lord will reconcile her dear family , and cause them to realize that their loss is her eternal gain .

Her funeral service was held at Clement Funeral Home Chapel in Durham on September 1 , 1990 at 2:00 p . m . by her pastor Elder John Carroll . She was laid to rest in Woodlawn Memorial Park near Durham .

Therefore , be it resolved that a copy of this obituary be given to the family , one recorded in the church record and copies sent to Zion 's Landmark and the Signs of the Times for publication .

Done by order of Newport Primitive Baptist Church while in conference , September 16 , 1990 .

John Carroll , Moderator
Shirley Carroll , Clerk

JAMES WILBORN BURGIN

Brother James Wilborn Burgin beloved member of Paran Primitive Baptist Church , was born in Upshur County , Texas on April 26 , 1921 to Grover C . and Opal Burgin . He passed away July 20 , 1990 after a lengthy illness . Brother Wilborn was wonderfully blessed to have the fear of death graciously removed by his loving Saviour . A sweet calmness of spirit characterized his final hours . Also , he was blessed with a yearning desire for his blessed Lord , continually seeking Him whom his soul loved . Such a yearning and seeking can only find full satisfaction by entering a death void of its sting and a grave stripped of its victory by a wonderful Lord and Saviour who so graciously and lovingly receives His people as He calls them home . Brother Wilborn was made willing and ready to go .

He is survived by his loving wife of 49 years , Marcy Burgin of Tyler ; one son , Jimmy Wayne Burgin of Waco ; two daughters , Jane Norris of Carroll and Linda Stricklin of Plano ; eight grandchildren and one step - great - grandchild . He is also survived by one brother , W . M . (Bill) Burgin of Houston ; three sisters , Helen Pittman and Patsy Mitchell , both of Hawkins , and Flora Stutts of Jacksonville . He is also survived by his mother , Opal Burgin , of Hawkins . Funeral services were conducted by his pastor , Jimmy Hamrick . Interment of his body was in Smith Cemetery , near his beloved church where it awaits a glorious resurrection . " Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints . "

OKEY K. McCLURE

We bow in humble submission to the will of Almighty God, who in his wisdom and mercy called from our midst, our beloved brother and Deacon Okey K. McClure. He was born June 22, 1912, and died Aug. 20, 1990. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain. Our deepest Sympathy and Prayer goes out to his family. That God in his mercy reconcile their minds and hearts to accept his will, and give them strength, and comfort them in their grief. His singing voice and smiling face will be greatly missed by all, also we feel he is at rest in Christ waiting for that holy calling from on high that will call him from that sleeping dust to the arms of his Savior to ever be with him. He was faithful to his God and a faithful servant to his Church. He leaves his wife, Sister Gracie, five children (2 sons and 3 daughters), 18 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren to mourn his passing. He was a church member for 53 yrs. and a Deacon for about 37 yrs. Services was conducted at his church by Elders Ronald K. Crouch, Harold R. Johnson and Arlie Reynolds. He was laid to rest at Midkiff Cemetery, Lincoln Co., W.V.

Elder Ronald K. Crouch - Moderator
Brother William A. Johnson - Clerk

ELDER JOHN LEE SMITH

By the request of his wife, will try to write a few words in memory of our beloved Elder.

Uncle John Lee was born on March 27, 1901, in Spearsville, Louisiana, the son of Elder Woody

K. Smith and Mary Rebecca Barron Smith. He was a life long resident of Spearsville. He died September 1, 1990, at the hospital in Farmerville, La.

Uncle John Lee was a member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church where he served as Pastor for 40 years. He traveled much during these years and had a good report wherever he went. I have been in many of the churches where he had gone before and the brethren always asked about his welfare.

Survivors are his wife, Delma W. Smith, Spearsville, La., sons Winford Smith, Honolulu, Hawaii, Vernon Smith, Sheridan, Ark., Lyle Smith, Pine Bluff, Ark., and Carl Smith, St. Louis, Mo., one sister, Irene Risinger, Spearsville, La., nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

May we be reconciled to God's will in this matter and may he rest in this blessed hope which is the anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, which enters into that beyond the veil.

Written in love by
Elder G.R. Smith
Nephew by nature,
A brother in hope

In Memory of
ELDER OTTO TILLEY

The Lord has seen fit to take home our beloved brother. Elder Tilley was born March 28, 1891. It is with a sorrowful heart that I try to write the life and death of our beloved brother.

Elder Tilley joined the Primitive Baptist Church May 21, 1921. He

was Baptised by Elder S. F. Collins , and later was ordained to go where so ever the Lord called him , that his lot be cast among old Baptist .

Brother Tilley was faithful in all the 42 years he served the Old Baptist . He went through the heat and cold , snow or rain . Yes , he suffered the affliction and burdens that was laid on him , and never complained .

He was with the Elkhorn Association until the trouble came and divided them . Within a few years Elder Tilley went to the old Pocatalico Association , and ask for a home in the Providence Church , and was received May 23 , 1964 , in full fellowship as an ordained Elder , there he remained until his death .

The Death Angel came on the 11th day of December 1970 and called him home . We morn the loss of our beloved brother , but we believe it is his eternal gain .

Written by ,
Elder William P. O' Neal

SISTER BUELAH WRIGHT

Sister Malinda Buelah Lackey Wright was called away from this life on December 11 , 1990 at the age of 96 . She was a native of Patrick County , Virginia , and was born on December 9 , 1894 , a daughter of the late Elder George W. Lackey and Betty Ruth Turner Lackey .

She was united in marriage to the late Samuel Charlie Wright . To their union were born eight children , two of whom (Eulus and Noel Wright) preceded her in death . Her surviving

children are : Lem Wright , Chester Wright , Grady Wright , Arthur Wright and Clayton Wright , and Mrs . Lee (Stella Mae) Adams .

She united with Goblintown Church by experience on the 3rd Saturday in August 1917 , and was baptized the following day by her father , Elder George Lackey . She remained a member of this church until her death , although she lived a good distance away for some years and was unable to attend for that reason . Following the death of her husband in 1971 she made her home with her daughter at Bassett , and was able to attend as long as her failing health permitted .

Funeral services were conducted at Roselawn Chapel by her pastor , Elder John Wingfield , and a family friend , Reverend Oscar Adams . In addition to her children , she was survived by one sister , Mrs. Emma L. Brammer ; two half - sisters , Mrs . Tommy (Nervie) Lovell and Mrs . Myrtle Ramsey ; 14 grandchildren , and 18 great grandchildren . Her mortal body was laid to rest in Roselawn Burial Park at Martinsville , to await the second coming of her Redeemer .

Be it now resolved , that three copies of this obituary be prepared : one to be included in Goblintown Church records , one to be given to her family , and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication .

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference , the 15th day of December 1990 .

Elder John T. Wingfield , Moderator
Sister Lena Clark , Clerk

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POEM

Heb. 7:22

*Christ, exalted, is our song,
Hymned by all the blood-bought
throng;
To his throne our shouts shall rise;
God with us by sacred ties.
Shout, believer, to thy God;
He hath once the wine-press trod;
Peace procured by blood divine;
Cancelled all thy sins and mine.*

*Here thy bleeding wounds are
healed;
Sin condemned and pardon sealed:
Grace her empire still maintains;
Christ without a rival reigns.
In thy Surety thou art free;
His dear hands were pierced for
thee;
With his spotless vesture on;
Holy as the Holy One.*

*Oh! the heights, the depths of grace,
Shining with meridian blaze;
Here the sacred records show,
Sinners black, but comely, too.
Saints, dejected, cease to mourn;
Faith shall soon to vision turn;
Ye the kingdom shall obtain,
And with Christ exalted reign.*

Kent.



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EDITORIAL



Elder C.C. Wilbanks

If it be the will of God I will now continue to write a few words concerning His power, knowledge and wisdom.

Natural man cannot comprehend the living God of heaven and earth, *"for 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."* God hath said, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and*

my thoughts than your thoughts." To understand anything in truth concerning the attributes of God we must be taught by Him. Jesus said, *"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."* And again, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me I will in no wise cast out."* I believe that I am writing to a people who have been taught of God and it is for your comfort and edification and for the praise and glory of God that I trust I write. Only if God be in the matter and directing me will it be of any value.

I do not wish to bring out anything new, but only to remind you of things you already know. As Peter said, *"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of those things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."*

The birth of Christ through the virgin Mary was, in the minds of men, a miracle. Yet it was no miracle for God, for He declared, *"As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."* Certainly he thought it, and certainly he had a purpose in it. Isaiah said, *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."* And an angel spake unto Joseph, 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 thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* Now all this

was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. God has ever been with his children and they with him, even before the foundation of the world, for they were chosen by the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world. There are many people in the world who deny this, because they do not believe that Christ existed before his birth to the virgin Mary; but the Scriptures prove them to be in error. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* This could have been none other than the Son of God, for John said, *"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one."* And in Chapter 19 of Rev.: *"And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God."* And again John said, *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."* But let us go to the words of Jesus himself in his prayer to the Father. *"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."*

God's prophets told of the coming of Christ and what he must suffer hundreds of years before it was fulfilled. They inquired and searched diligently what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

This was never revealed to them, but it has revealed unto us in the Scriptures. Jesus said, *"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And 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. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up again at the last day."* God's holy justice demands death for sin, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission. In his Godhead Christ could not die and he was the only one who could be accepted of God as a holy sacrifice. Therefore he must become incarnate that he might shed his blood and lay down his life for his children. We read in Chapter 2 of the Hebrew letter: *"Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might 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. For verily he took not on himself the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things 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."* And in Heb. 10 we read, *"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."* The body prepared, (which was Christ in the flesh and not a body prepared for him,) was sacrificed upon the tree of Calvary, and by that one sacrifice he hath perfected forever

them that are sanctified. Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain. From the time of his birth people sought to kill him, but could not; because his time was not yet come. Christ said, *"I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 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."* What great power was given to Christ, and what beautiful words he spake! (In another place it was said of him, Never man spake like this man.) My understanding is, that the sheep he must bring are the sheep of the Gentile fold, and they were to be combined with the sheep of the Jewish fold, making one fold; and Christ is the one True Shepherd: and they shall hear his voice. The Good Shepherd laid down his life for his sheep and on the third day he took it again. Jesus said, "The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live." Christ died to pay the penalty for the sins of the his children, but if he had not risen they would still be dead in trespasses and sins. But he arose for their justification, and because he liveth they also live. While he was here in the flesh, he demonstrated his power on several occasions to raise the dead, and he said unto 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." *Can just anyone live and believe in him? Some of the Jews said unto him, If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believe not: - but ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."*

All men are born dead in trespasses and sin and must be born again if they are to ever enter the kingdom of God. Jesus said, *"Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* The Son of God speaks to his dead, alienated children and they hear and live. They are translated out of their state of death and darkness into his marvelous light and given eternal life; a life that was theirs before the world was, but is only now made manifest unto them by the appearing of Jesus Christ, for he is their life. he is the way, and the truth, and the life. He is also their prophet, priest and king. He is their all and in all. As their great high priest he ever liveth to make intercession for them, and he is the mediator of the new covenant which God hath made with the house of Israel. This covenant is; *"I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* What a wonderful covenant it is truly wonderful, and we greatly rejoice

when we are given a heart to believe that his covenant is with us poor, undone, helpless sinners. But there is much of our time spent in doubt, and we fear that hell will be our final destination. As for me, I feel this would be God's righteous judgment: but I trust in his mercy and grace; for Jesus Christ came into this low ground of sin and sorrow to save sinners, and I feel to be the chief. At times we feel we could walk upon the waters as did Peter if our Lord bid, and yet we quickly begin to sink in despair when we see our sins rolling over us in great waves. Then we cry unto him, and he hears. He speaks and the waves become as still waters and his arms of love and mercy lifts us up, and he renews our faith. When we are in the valley of fear and the slough of despondency he comes to us and drives away our fears and despondency. As David said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he had put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Yes Our God brings us out of our old, sinful, clay body, sets our feet upon Jesus and establishes our goings, yet we immediately turn out of the way when he does not lead us. He gives us eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. He gives us faith to believe, hope in his promises and a love that the rest of the world knows nothing about. If we have patience it is his gift to us. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* All of our blessings were and are in Christ Jesus

and we shall receive each and every one of them without fail; yet we do not know the things that he has in store for us therefore it has been ordained of God that we should pray for them. We do not know how to pray as we ought, nor what to pray for, but the Holy Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, *"I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding."* God knows our needs and he said, *"Before they call upon me I will answer and while they are yet speaking I will hear."* He knows our every thought from afar.

What a marvelous God we have! How can any refuse to praise and worship him? or yet how can we praise and worship as we ought? But, *"if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."* Brethren, do you believe in the resurrection of the body? If not deceived, I do; and surely you do also. If you do not, then of what good is your faith and hope? What do you have faith in, and what is your hope? And if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is vain also. Jesus said, *"In my Father's house are many mansions: 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." Did Christ fail to keep his promise? It would be absurd to even think of him failing to do anything that he has promised; for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. The 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians describes in great detail the resurrection of the body. Read it for yourself, for there is too much to be quoted here, but in part it says, *"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."* And, *"Behold, I shew 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, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed."* To the Philippians Paul wrote, *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."* And David said in the Psalms, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."* And Jesus said, *"for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."* Is there any thing put into the grave except our natural body? And Paul wrote, *"For 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."

After the resurrection, Brethren, then cometh the judgment when our King shall divide the sheep from the goats; the sheep on his right hand and the goats on the left. Then shall he say to the sheep on his right hand, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."* Those sheep on his right hand are the ones whose names are found written in the Lamb's book of life, and whosoever is not found written in the book of life shall be cast into the lake of fire.

Brethren, my hope is that my name is already written there. If it is not, then it will never be there, for what God hath done is forever; nothing can be put to it, neither anything taken from it.

Brethren, I have only touched a few of the many Scriptures that have come to mind, but may God bless them to your comfort and edification, and to his praise, honor, and glory.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

 CORRESPONDENCE

Copper Hill, Virginia 24079

March 20, 1991

Dear Elder Key,

You will find enclosed a letter relating on the experience of Sister Ora T. Nichols, 5320 Green Meadow Rd., S.W. Roanoke, Virginia 24018.

I would be very grateful if you would publish same in the Signs, at your earliest convenience, please?

In running through my files I found Sister Nichols letter written to my late husband B.O. Thompson and I in the year 1969.

She is a precious member. She and her husband, Deacon L.W. Nichol, have membership with Paynes Creek Church; Floyd County, Virginia.

Respectfully yours,
Gaye A. Thompson

Dear Bro. and Sister,

I have wanted to talk to you for several years, long before I joined the church, but seems like I've been held back.

I tried to do a lot of getting ready to join the church, I think I know I couldn't do anything. Yet I tried to choose the time and place, be dressed just right, and all that.

I wanted so much to tell the church how unworthy I was (and am), that I'm sorry for all the wrongs I've done, how much I love them, how good the Lord has been to me, and that I believe in "Sal-

vation by Grace."

Well, I couldn't do any of that, I was choked with love and tears and could say only a few words and answer a few questions — but happy.

I have had to be showed over and over again that I can do nothing of myself. I lay awake at night thinking of all the times the Lord has lifted me up and in his light, given me hope.

One time I was sick and in the hospital for 7 weeks. The doctors kept calling my family to come, saying I could last only a short time or a few hours. I knew I was hurt bad, but family, friends, loved ones, no one mean't anything to me. My physical condition, and whether I lived or not, didn't bother me at all. The Lord was there, I felt his presence, his love, as it filled the room. I was surrounded by a quiet, joyful peace I had never known before and I have never been happier. I was shown a line between life and death and I was on that line. I had to fall to one side or the other, but either way I went, the Lord was going to be with me, so I had no worry. I believe I lived a part of the 23rd Psalm. I believe I walked through the valley of the shadow of death and feared no evil because He was wth me. I believe my cup was filled with goodness that comes only from above. A few words that kept ringing through my whole being during that time was 121st Psalm. "*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.*" I have done nothing and never will to deserve the blessings I feel He has bestowed upon me.

Once I saw a light in a garden that was so pretty, so bright it shone everywhere. It was a light full of love and joy

and had a glow, a ray of sparkling light that was brighter than all earthly lights. I didn't see Jesus in this, but it all came from a halo around the head of Jesus.

Once I was placed face down in sand at the base of a lifeless tree — just the trunk of a tree with no branches. I couldn't move or speak. A soft voice spoke to me saying the tree was my life and that my husband and I would rebuild my life with His help.

Another time it seemed I was forsaken forever. I felt that I had lived just as long as I could I was sure to die and if I died I would surely go to hell. I saw everything beneath me "scooped out," and filled with burning flames everywhere. I was certain to go into this burning hell. I saw this for several weeks and rushed from my room each morning to hide the tears — tears of fear. Then suddenly, I was lifted out of this torture by a hand so gentle, it couldn't have been anyone but the hand of God.

You two visited in our home when I was going through this and oh, how I wanted you to know! I wanted to talk to the church, but I was so different. I have heard of so many people fighting a desire to go to the church, while I wanted to join the church and couldn't. I see that as a blessing in itself, since I wasn't ready and I couldn't get ready, but I had to be showed this.

I must quit and am sorry I've been so lengthy.

Love to you both,
Ora Nichols
A sister, I hope.

ARTICLES

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. — Hebrews 5:8.

I don't understand why I am trying to write on such a deep subject. I know I am not worthy, or qualified, but this verse of scripture stays on my mind and has been for some time. So, I thought I would at least try to write a few lines and maybe get some relief.

When you think of obedience, it is hard to think of it in connection with the Son of God. Usually when you think of obedience it has to do with some younger person, some child to its parents, or someone on their job in relation to their superior. But we are speaking of the God who is so powerful that he spoke this word into existence, keeps all things in motion by the power of his word, controls the destiny of all men, knows their every thought and deed, even the hairs of their head are numbered. Who before time, chose a people for his bride, these people (his chosen), he has done everything that was needed to bring them to Glory as his bride, there is no way, any foe, enemy, or any condition or circumstance will ever be able to hinder one of his loved ones from spending eternity with their God. How do you place obedience when speaking of such a God?

In speaking of obedience, the scripture says, *Jo. 3:38 — "For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me."* So here we see something of obedience, for he

says, I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him who sent me. So to do the will of the Father, he would have to be obedient to that will. We know from reading the scripture he was obedient to that will. We also know in many cases he suffered from doing that will.

He was given a body of flesh, like unto all of us for the purpose of fulfilling the law in the flesh. The body was also prepared and given to him for the purpose of using it for a sacrifice. Let us think of some of the times written in the Bible where Jesus suffered from being obedient to the Father's Will. Think of Jesus, the God who we have been speaking of, standing there before men, evil, puny, wretched men and allowing them to spit on him, revile him, mock him, make all manner of sport with him, knowing all the time he could call twelve (12) legions of angels to come to his defense. He humbly allowed men to drive nails through his hands and feet, hung on that cross suffering in more ways than we can ever describe. Certainly, he was obedient to his Father's will, and most assuredly, he did suffer from it. Think of the time when praying his sweat was as great drops of blood as this cup was set before him. The cup represented the sins of all his people. The Holy and Pure God that he was looked on sin as something dreadful and awful. We see that it was his Father's will that he drink the contents of this cup, thereby taking upon himself the sins of his chosen people. He was under such a strain as we said his sweat came as drops of blood. Hating the sin, not wanting those sins on himself, but wanting to be obedient to his Father's will he says. *Matthew 26:39 — Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou*

will. He took the cup and drank every bit of it, surely he was obedient to his Father's will and surely he suffered from it.

We have seen where or how the scripture speaks of his suffering, but we won't stop there, for it also speaks of our suffering. *II Timothy 2:12 — If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.*

This scripture is not saying you will have to suffer if you want to be saved. It is not saying if you want to go to Glory you will have to suffer etc. That would be obtaining salvation by our works. That we cannot do, and I certainly am not saying you can. The Lord has secured our salvation by his own works and power, and it is surely by grace through faith and not by any man's poor futile works. If we suffer, we will also reign with him, something else this verse of scripture doesn't mean. If we go out and break the law, steal something, or do something we shouldn't, get caught and we are found guilty and have to pay for it, by going to jail or paying a fine, and we are made to suffer by doing it. This is definitely not what this scripture means.

All of the Lord's chosen people have their own race to run, run with patience the race that is set before you. Each one has their own race, their own path, trials, tribulations, troubles, sufferings, joy, peace, etc. Look at the affliction and sorrow endured by the Jewish people because they were known as the chosen race. The suffering I am speaking of here is this, we all live in this body of flesh, with it's informities, weakness and sinful ways. Now when one has had some dealing with the Holy Spirit working within, making us, showing us the difference between the things of the Spirit and the

things of the flesh. Teaching us right from wrong, the sin that is in so many of our actions and thoughts. When we have been blessed to walk in the spirit and taste the fullness thereof. After we feel that we have witnessed within us that blessed hope of eternal life and salvation by Grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. After experiencing and enjoying this, we through the weakness of the flesh continue to commit sin and do the things we know are wrong, things we don't want to do. This is when I believe we are shown the meaning of this verse of scripture, "if we suffer with him." We know the Bible says that at the present time no chastisement is pleasant. This is when we are made to feel lower than the lowest, less than nothing, a trailer to that blessed hope that is within us. We are made to wonder if we have sinned away the day of Grace. We may not have a busted lip or a scarred face, but we will have an aching heart and a soul crying out for mercy. We cry for mercy because we feel justice would condemn us, and we would be lost worlds without end.

But praise the Lord, he knows how to care for his own, and thanks to his Holy Name he has the power to care for them. So in his own good time, when it pleases him, he can cause the sun to break through, put a smile on our face, place love and a sense of forgiveness in our hearts, and we are able to say Abba Father. We know the Lord doesn't whip one of his own for doing something wrong, no not because he did it, but so he won't do it again. Remember the scripture says, all those that are not chastened, are bastards and not sons.

So may we be thankful for everything, and praise God from whom all blessings

flow.

I desire your prayers,
with Love — a brother I hope,
Frank Hunt

REDEMPTION

Christ in the atonement obtained eternal salvation or redemption for his elect people: Redeeming them from the curse of the law, from vain conversation, and from all iniquity. Words found in the Bible must certainly mean what our authors define them as meaning. Webster defines redemption as follows: To purchase back, or to regain possession of by judgment of a stipulated price, to repurchase, to ransom, to liberate rescue from captivity or bondage or from obligations or liability, to suffer, to ransom, to rescue, to recover as to redeem a captive. God's elect people are called lawful captives and the Father brings them to eternal life by a redeemer. The Father being the creditor, the Son lays down a sufficient ransom to offended justice for their deliverance, and rescues them by mere force and power out of the hands of Satan (Isa. 49:25). Satan being the jailor has no lawful right to detain the prisoner after the creditor is satisfied. If the atonement is universal, the redemption is also universal. But the scriptures teach that the atonement only embraces those sanctified by God, the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ and called. He shall save his people from their sins.

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

**TRANSLATED AND EDITED
SERMON OF ELDER E.J. LAMBERT**

Preached on December 20, 1969
at Bethel Church (Arkansas)

During the hymn service my mind was taken to expressions found in the 9th chapter of Isaiah. I would like to read starting at verse six and read through the seventh verse: *“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, Counsellor, 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 with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”*

We would like to begin in our treating upon this subject with the last expression in the seventh verse. The last part of that seventh verse, he said, *“The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”* The reason why we met this statement first and talk on this verse is to let you know those things which this text includes are not left to the chance and volition of men as to whether they be done or not done. To let you know that these things which we read in your hearing was to be performed by the zeal of God. To have a zeal is to be mighty in exercise, mighty in working, mighty in enduring. God does

not sit on the stool of do nothing and wait and see what man will do. But this which we have under consideration, the prophet made the emphatic statement that the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. It didn't say that the zeal of the Lord of Host will perform part of it and leave some of it for us to perform. But this which is under consideration, the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. Now let's take under consideration what it is that the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform. This that we shall take under consideration will be certain; it will be sure; it will be perfect; it will not be lacking in any sense of the word. Why? Because it is based on the exercise not of the beneficiaries but upon the exercise of the giver — of the Lord of Hosts.

Beginning with the first part of the sixth verse of the ninth chapter of Isaiah, *“For unto us a child is born.”* Notice the last statement that I read, *“The zeal of the Lord of Host will perform this.”* That speaks as to the future, but in the first it says *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.”* That's speaking in present tense. Even though this scripture of Isaiah was written hundreds of years before Jesus Christ made His appearance in the earth I firmly believe Isaiah experienced the real truth of the matter when he wrote: *“Unto us a child is born.”*

Somebody might say those that came before the birth of Christ would be dealt with differently than those who came after the birth of Christ. I do not think so because God is the same God yesterday, today and forevermore. When we speak of God we can not speak of Him as in the past tense or the future tense when we speak of God rightly. But we speak of Him presently because the Scriptures

say that the Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. And just before this expression is made He said this, *"Be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day."* You know it seems to me that the apostle as he wrote this epistle he emphatically states you may be ignorant of many things and remain in that ignorance, but there is one necessary thing, one thing that you shall not be ignorant of, one thing that should be impressed upon your mind is that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. What does that mean? That means this, that as it was two thousand years ago as far as man is concerned, that God is. That was present and is present in His mind now as though it was happening at this time, coming to pass at this time, the things that came to pass two thousand years ago. The things that are occurring now is just as present in His mind and the things that shall occur one thousand years hence, should time go on that long, is just as present in His mind as though it's occurring right now. You know that the mind of the Lord is so great that it can comprehend all things at the same time and all time at once and therefore there is no time reckoned with God, but He is one eternal NOW. So when we speak of God properly, we speak of God as being is.

Jesus made a statement that the English perfectionist would say, reasonably and logically, was stated wrong. When Jesus said, *"Before Abraham was I am"* the English critics would say that it was a wrong state-

ment. If it had said, *"Before Abraham was I was,"* then that would be in accordance with good English. But the idea *"Before Abraham was I am,"* that would be contrary with the right usage of the English language say some teachers. But to those who are not ignorant of this one thing — that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day — it doesn't sound out of place to them. Why? Because *"Before Abraham was I am."* In other words even in the time of Isaiah, hundreds of years before Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem in the country of Judaea, Isaiah could experimentally say, *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,"* the present tense.

This question was asked at Antioch church last Sunday afternoon. Do we have any scriptural proof that Jesus Christ was born on December 25th? I said no, as far as I know there is no scriptural proof of that. Commentators have agreed, judging all things that surely it was along about the month of October as far as the season is concerned that Jesus was born. It was in the city of Bethlehem in the country of Judaea almost two thousand years ago. But I said I would like to answer that question and tell you that it doesn't make any difference when He was born here upon this earth. It doesn't make any difference what day or what month He was born on this earth. But I will tell you what does make a difference. It is when Jesus is born in you the hope of glory. That's the difference and that's exactly when you celebrated the birth of Christ. It was when Jesus was born in you the hope of glory.

There is a great deal to this statement, *"Unto us a child is born."* I had

some thoughts upon it a few days ago that couldn't be bought. There is a difference in *"Unto us a child is born "* and *"Unto us a son is given."* If you read a scripture and you don't find Jesus in the scripture you haven't found the core of the text. If you read a scripture and you don't find your own experience there then you haven't tasted the text. Here's what was sought for at the time when Jesus was born. What would be the sign? What was the sign that was given to them. Would they find a giant? Was that the sign? No, this was the sign: *"Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger."* This was the sign. *"Unto us a child is born."*

Those who have been born of the Spirit of Almighty God have been made sensible to their many sins and brought to serve the law. What a terrible thing this law demanded and the law gave nothing but it demanded everything. You did your very best to serve this law. But the law entered that the offense might abound and when this law came into your hearts and minds it showed you the very best of your righteousness was as filthy rags in God's sight. You found yourself feeling to be nothing, less than nothing, vanity, that sin was mixed with all you did and when you would do good evil was present with you. You felt so low down that should a king have come to you or should one in great authority or one mighty have come to you it would have so sunk you that you wouldn't have had any use for it. It would have been too shocking to you. But this is the sign, you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. When you were in this condition you said, *"Lord save or I perish."* You were certain that you were doomed to hell in your own

feelings. Did you want to come before a king then? No, you would say I'm unworthy. You said, I am unfit. Oh no, not that!

Let us take the words of Jesus. Jesus said, *"Come unto me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."* What do we first learn about Jesus? What think ye of Christ in your first experience? What did Jesus say? Did He say to those who were heavy laden and to those who were labouring, come unto Me? Did He say to them that I am the mighty God? No, He didn't say that. Why? You weren't ready for that. What did He say to you? He said just like He said to those that were heavy laden and labouring. You are heavy laden with your sins and you are labouring very diligently to try to get yourself out from under that terrible weight of sin that has you pressed down so much. Oh how terrible it is. But Jesus said learn of Me. What did He say? He said, *"For I am meek, and lowly in heart."* He didn't say He was high in heart. He didn't say, I am King and nobody had better cross Me. He didn't say that, did He? No, He said I am meek and lowly.

I have thought about families who are given children; when a child is born the mother says this is mine. She can lift it up. It is little, she can lift it up and caress it. She says this is mine. When Jesus appears to you He doesn't appear as the mighty giant at first but the sign is that you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Learn of me, I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest in your souls. Here you are down; here you are without hope for the future; here you are facing the fiery

judgment and indignation of a righteous God. You know if He should do you justice you would be cut off and that without remedy. Then all at once you come into possession of something meek and lowly; something you can caress and handle. Yes, one wrote about what he had tasted, what he had handled, the Bread of Life, to handle Jesus as a babe is handled. What did you want to do with that child? Did you want to destroy Him? Oh, no, how precious is that One that is born in you the hope of glory. He came as a babe. You know if it had been God's will for Him to come as grown He would have. But it wasn't His will that He come as grown, but He came as a little babe. The Scriptures say that He grew in stature and that He grew in wisdom and He grew in favour with God and man. That's what the Scriptures say. Haven't you felt in your heart and in your experience the growing of the Lord Jesus? Yes, when He first came to you He said I am meek and lowly. You know Jesus said of my own self I can do nothing. He said the Father works and hitherto I work. So He comes to you as meek and lowly and says I can do nothing of myself. What did He say when one said I will follow thee? He said the foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head. You know there was no room in the inn for Joseph and Mary, no room in the inn for Jesus to be born. But He was born and laid in a manger. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. Not a very enticing garment was it? No, but it was the clothes that they habitually rubbed the animals down with that the Lord Jesus was wrapped in. It wasn't a beautiful garment. But that should be the Son when He came to you in your

experience. When you first tasted of Him you found Him as a babe and oh how you caressed Him. You said He's mine. He's mine. You celebrated His birth. He was born in you as a child. He came to you as meek and lowly. You think you are low. You think you have been forsaken, but He came to you as the Psalmist David expressed, "*My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" And as Jesus Christ expressed on the cross, "*My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" He came meek and lowly. Jesus said that He became poor that we might become rich. Yes, He was born in you as poor.

"*Unto us a Son is given.*" That's a different statement. The Son is given and we thank God for the gift of His Son. We didn't say that we merited His birth, no. But we thank God for the gift of the Son. "*Unto us a Son is given.*" Aren't you glad it didn't say offered. Because in the offering you rejected Him many times in your experience. Yes, in your experience you rejected Him. But I want to tell you when the proper time comes the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. He will make you ready. He will make your heart ready to receive Him. To receive Him first as a babe, to receive Him first as a child that you can caress and that you can love.

"*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.*" Jehovah created the heavens and the earth. He created and formed all mankind. He created everything and put man as head of that creation to have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and beast of the forest and to have dominion over the things that God created. God gave man dominion over them. He even gave man the power to name the things. He is

the creator of Adam and the earth and all things that is. You know that our God, Jehovah, the Father, knows how and does delegate power. In the Scriptures it says to be ye subject to the higher powers for all powers that be are ordained of God. That's a delegation of power, isn't it? He said be ye subject to the higher powers for there is no power but of God for the powers that be are ordained of God. So God delegates power and what did He delegate to his Son? He delegated the government of Israel to the Son. In delegating the government, I want to tell you the government shall be upon His shoulder. Sometimes elders in the church gets to fussing about who shall be the greatest and who will be the boss. Sometimes deacons and elders have it as to who will have control over this, that and the other. But it is all of the flesh. Why? Because God has decreed and God has ordained that the government of His church shall be upon the shoulder of Jesus Christ the blessed Son of God. So He is the governor. There is no pastor that can take that honor unto himself that he is the governor of the church. There are no deacons that can take that honor unto themselves that they are the governor of the church. There are no clubs of pastors and deacons together that can take that honor to themselves, that they are governors of the church and that the church must look upon them and respect them as such because any time that happens it just proves that it is not the church that is spoken of here. Because the government shall be upon His shoulder and in the New Testament it says that Jesus Christ is the head of the church and it speaks of the church as being His body. So the government shall be upon His

shoulder.

I was talking to the pastor of the First Baptist Church in the community several years ago. He came to my home; he had recently moved to this community. He had heard that I was serving as pastor of some Primitive Baptist Churches in the community. He wanted to have a long talk with me. I invited him in and we sat down and began to talk. I have never been blessed in all my life with scriptures coming into my mind just as though I could see them in the Bible and I would quote them to him to every question that he asked. I'd quote the scriptural answer. He became astonished. He became so astonished that he began to talk to me as though he were a little boy and I was his father. He said, "Brother Lambert, I have such a terrible burden. The church here has twelve hundred members and oh what a great responsibility that's upon me, twelve hundred members resting upon my shoulder." I said, "I can sympathize with you. I used to feel the same way. I know what a burden it is, but that was too much of a burden for me and the Lord lifted it from me." I said that He gave me to understand that He assumed that burden. His face lit up and he said, "I never thought of it in that way, maybe you are right." I said, "I think I can tell you that I know that I am right."

"The government shall be upon His shoulder." He has the burden; He has the responsibility. Some of us quarrel and some of us complain about how He runs things but I want to tell you that it is the flesh and pride complaining every time. Sometimes its little folks that gets big recognition and people with a lot of pride say now that's just out of this world. How foolish it is that we come complaining

about it. I have seen people illiterate, as far as natural education is concerned, that the Lord has raised up and gave them the call to the ministry and qualified them. They were illiterate as far as worldly education was concerned, but when they went behind the sacred desk and the Lord blessed them to preach, they would make the wise and the noble hand their heads down in shame because they could preach so much better than they and so much more effectively. The pride of the flesh will come up and come against such things.

God's tool chest, do you know what God's tool chest contains? God's tool chest contains His instruments. His instruments are those He's chosen and Paul tells us that not many wise were chosen, not many nobel were chosen, not many mighty were chosen, but God chose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. He chose the weak things to bring to naught the things that are mighty. He chose base things. What are base things? Base things are lowly things. He chose base things, yea even things that are not to bring to naught things that are. Sometimes we have to take off our high pinnacle and have to be squashed down. I want to tell you we can't pat ourselves on the shoulder and say we humbled ourselves either because a man that is taken down by circumstances over which he has no control must say that the zeal of the Lord has performed this, I didn't get down humbly. The government shall be upon His shoulder. I want to impress upon you that the governor of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ and He gives in this book the proper procedure for the church to follow.

He said and His name shall be called,

first, Wonderful. Was there any thing more wonderful to you than the first child born to you? Here you are without hope in the world and here is one you can care less and love, who says I am meek and lowly. He became poor that we might become rich. How much would you take for a child born to you, a son that is given? Would a million dollars buy it? Would you sell a baby of yours for a million dollars? Would you? Money won't buy it.

Wonderful! We are at the last scheduled meeting at this place of this year, of this decade. What is the wonderful and the great spectacular of the decade? Most would agree that it was man's ascension to the moon and walking upon it. That is the wonder of wonders as far as the earthly wisdom, earthly technology, earthly science, earthly astrology is concerned. But you know what I consider to be the wonder of wonders. I read about the moon in Revelation. I read about the woman in Revelation. I read this woman was clothed with the sun and this woman had the moon under her feet. You know it takes a terrible power to draw you from the gravitation of the earth. It takes a terrible power because the earth draws. So it is with the lust of your flesh. It has such a drawing power that it takes a mightier power than you can ever manufacture to get yourself out from the bondage of the lust of the flesh. The gravity of that lust is so great. I tell you what kind of thrust engine it will take — the Holy Spirit — to ever lift you up from the gravitation of the lust of the flesh.

You know that man's first soar into space is the moon. The first spiritual soar after you have been taken from the gravitation of the flesh, the first spiritual lighting place is the law. While you are

under the magnetic drawing power and gravity of the flesh you are the servant of the lust of the flesh. After the Holy Spirit comes into your heart and mind and you are regenerated and born again it is a thrust engine that is fueled by the love of Almighty God that draws you up to the first stage in your space. That stage is the moon which is representative of the law and then you become as a servant of the law.

If you recall on the first trip as the astronauts went around the moon they let down a man to walk on the moon. The last time before the lift off from the moon to the earth they read the true story of creation. As they read in Genesis the purpose of the moon they read it in such a way that I knew that they knew that the moon itself was a dead mass of substance that wasn't worth anything other than what God has ordained it to be worth, to rule the seasons and to be a light by night. So it is in the night time when we cannot see the Son of righteousness that the moon is the only light, the law, that we have. That is when duty religion comes in. That is all we have when the Son is eclipsed from us and it has become the night time where the moon is the only thing that gives any light and that's the duty. That still is a stimulus and that's fine. But I want to ask you as far as the gravitation of the law is concerned what is the next flight? It is to be brought over the law and to be brought out from under its domination. You know the moon is over us. But I tell you we are servants of the flesh until we are drawn by the Holy Spirit into the gravity of the moon or the gravity of the law; then we are servants of the law. The scripture says the law is the schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ and Christ is the end of the

law to everyone that believeth.

The next step is when Jesus brings us up out from under the dominion of the law. Then we are as that woman as the church, that's clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet. The law has no more dominion over us but we have been freed from the bondage of the law. We have become free indeed when we are no more servant of the law but servant of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His name shall be called Wonderful. It's wonderful that He would take the responsibility of the law and fulfill it to a jot and tittle in our behalf.

He is Counsellor. How is He a counsellor? He's a counsellor in the counselling: do unto others as you would have them do unto you, in saying love your enemies, pray for your enemies, do good to them that spitefully use you. If you have been favored with Him being born in you the hope of glory, as a child grown up, He has become you Counsellor and your advisor. You say Lord Jesus I want you to direct my way. Not only that but He is you Counsellor in pleading your case before God. He comes before the great throne of God and says to the Father, "*Father I have taken this person's sins upon my own self. Father, I have taken the responsibility of the law and paid all that is required. I have done that for him.*" Therefore justice is satisfied because the law of God will not require anything less than the fulfillment of the law in every sense of the word and that all sins must be punished to its extremity. But Jesus Christ took that punishment. He's our Counsellor that pleads our case. He is at the right hand of the throne of God making intercessions for the saints of God according to the will of God. He's our Counsellor. Not only that but He is

Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God.

He doesn't come to you first as The Mighty God. He comes to you as a child. He doesn't come to you first as The Mighty God but He comes to you as a babe. He doesn't come to you as from a palace and arrayed in fine linen but He comes to you as wrapped in swaddling clothes first, then as Counsellor. He grows in your heart and mind and you grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and then you can count Him as The Mighty God.

The Mighty God what does it mean? Whatsoever His desire is, that He doeth. He worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He runs your life. He controls your actions. He watches over you. He providentially cares for you. You may forget Him but He does not forget you. He's The Mighty God. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.

Not only is He The Mighty God but The everlasting Father. Oh, as children we pray to Him as Father. We say, "*Father, give us this day our daily bread.*" In that relationship we look to Jesus as the Father of our faith. We look to Jesus as the Father of our salvation. We look to Jesus as the Father to whom we can go to and depend upon for giving us the things best for us. What a great relationship it is that He is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

You know scripture says God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Any church anywhere that you find real peace Jesus is the author of it. Any church anywhere

you find confusion Jesus is not the author of it. Somebody said that the devil is. You know we have a habit of wanting to put off on some strange unseen something that which really belongs to us. When I want to see the devil I look in the mirror. I don't charge God with my sins neither do I charge the devil with them. "*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing.*" How they make me to cry and how they make me to weep. How afterward when I meditate upon these things I beg God to forgive me. I beg God for His mercy.

"*Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.*" You talk about the church of the Lord Jesus Christ decreasing. Do you believe it will decrease? If this scripture is true it will not. We get fearful just like the old prophet did. He said, "*Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*" What did the Lord tell him? He said, "*I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.*" Sometimes we get to thinking that the church of Christ is decreasing; that it is not increasing. According to this I have to say the church of Christ is on the increase. Why? Because it says here, "*Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.*" So it shall increase. As the world is becoming more populated every day the number of children of God is becoming more numerous every day. Don't you believe that? I certainly do in the face of this scripture, "*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.*" God orders it and He establishes it.

"The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Are you worrying about it? In our pride we worry about it. It is prideful humility. It's hypocritical religion, that's what it is, but we are guilty of it. If we could only realize that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, that all things, in some mysterious way in which we are not now able to understand, work together for good to them who love God, to them that are called according to His purpose. May God bless the truth and pardon error is our prayer for Christ sake.

Elder E.J. Lambert

PECULIARITY

January 1938

Awoke this morning thinking of the peculiarity of the children of God. They are a peculiarity to the world, to themselves and to the Lord. We might take for a text, in consideration of this subject. Paul's language to Titus: *"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."* — Titus ii. 14. In nature they are not peculiar from other people, but are subject to the same things that other men are. They have contagious diseases and get hurt in accidents, are careless, and are subject to other things that befall the human race, the same as other men are. Too, they are like other men in their nature. They get mad, are subject to flattery run after vain and glittering things the same as those who have not heard of better things. Paul tells the Ephesian brethren that they were by nature the

children of wrath even as others. (Eph. ii. 3.) So we can safely conclude that their peculiarity is not in nature. It is not the saving of his people on the cross that makes them peculiar, because up to a certain period in the life of Paul he was not different or peculiar from any other man in nature, even though there is not any doubt but that when Jesus cried out on the cross that it was finished, he had completely done all for Paul that was done for any child of God. Paul was under the law, and believed that all that he had, or ever would have, was to be had by keeping that law. In this he was not any different from any one else who has not been brought to a peculiar stage in life. All the sects in the time of Christ, as they are now, were alike and had much in common as to coming into eternal life. Ask any man now who has not had a work done for him and it made manifest, and he will tell you he must do something in order to inherit eternal life. There is not any peculiarity in this at all. But let us notice those who have been quickened. It is far different with them. Up until this imparting of life into them they did not bear a single characteristic of a child of God, they did not appear peculiar to themselves nor to the world, but now things are very different. One time, my dear reader, we all thought we were doing fairly well. We thought we could measure arms (works) with the best church member, and that the most of them were our inferior. This is a common feeling among the world. But how is it with you now? Do you feel that you are as good as any of them? No, no, you feel different now. You look upon each dear child of God as being far your superior. Can the world understand this? No. Can you even understand it

yourself? No, you do not see why it is. But the answer is simple to those who are simple and are made wise by the testimony of the Lord. (Psalms xix. 7.) The natural man can never understand the salvation of the Lord. An intelligent man who is a grammarian can do wonders with language until it comes to the Bible. He can read anything forward until he comes to the Scriptures. Then language fails him there and he shows that he has the same thing in common with the most illiterate man who has not been taught in the school of grace. On the other hand, you watch the man that the Lord deals with. See how much deeper grace can go than grammar. Grace can and does take a drunkard out of the gutter and make a peculiar man out of him. It can and does go into the college president's office and make him acknowledge that salvation is of the Lord, and makes a marked, or peculiar, man out of him. It was a special people that the Lord chose unto himself. They were not chosen because they were special, but were chosen to be a special people. (Deut. vi. 7.) They were very common in the nations around about them, because they were not the most popular nor the best, but to the contrary. But his choosing and causing them to come unto him made quite a bit of difference in the children of Israel. They were his special or peculiar people, and the world recognized that they were special, and they hated them for it. This brings this peculiar people under the hatred of the world. The Lord chose the type to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations of the world (Deut. xiv. 2) and they were hated at every turn and everything done to molest them. So it is at this day. The hatred of the world for this peculiar peo-

ple has not diminished. It cannot comprehend them. It cannot understand how men can go to the stake, praising God above the roar of the flames. It cannot understand a motive (love is the motive; the world has not that love) so strong as to cause men to leave all that this life offers and spend and be spent in feeding the sheep (a service in the Lord) and the only compensation to be that "*I am with you always,*" and to have afflictions, trials and disappointments.

Another peculiar trial of this people is their faith. Poor and cast down they may often be, but the Lord holds them up. Daniel could not be turned from worshipping God, even though it meant being cast into a den of lions. The Hebrew children went into the fiery furnace. The children of God several centuries ago went to the stake, were pierced through with hot weapons, pushed from cliffs, and yet their last cries were to God. This is a peculiarity that cannot be fathomed by the world, because this faith is of God. It is not in any way the work of the creature, because the creature cannot manufacture a faith that would stand. If it could, then it would cease to be peculiar.

What a peculiar people! "*Who hath made thee to differ?*" cries the apostle. It is the Lord that has done the work. The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure (Psalms cxxxv. 4), and as long as this work is made manifest you will find this peculiar people, this holy nation, this royal priesthood, this chosen generation. May the Lord keep his peculiar people.

A poor sinner,
W.D. Griffin

MEETINGS

CERTIFICATION OF ORDINATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that we the undersigned elders and deacons met March 16th, 1991 Union Primitive Baptist Church (Old School or Primitive Baptist Church of Christ) in Union Parish, Louisiana, for the purpose of ordaining Brothers J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to the full work of ministry. After hearing the said brethren declare their belief in an absolute Sovereign God, total depravity of man, unconditional election, limited atonement, perseverance of the saints in grace by the perfect effectual work of the Father-Son-Holy Spirit, and the resurrection of the bodies — all merited for God's people by the work of Christ the perfect Saviour. This was done to our satisfaction by their preaching and response to questions by members of the duly-organized Presbytery. We did ordain Brothers J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to the full work of the ministry by prayer, laying on of hands, and charge in accordance to the Holy Scriptures.

This authorizes Elders J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ where-soever and whensoever God sees fit to bless them, and to perform in any official capacity becoming an ordained Minister of Christ.

We commend Elders J. Theron Jones and Clifford C. Wilbanks to all orthodox and orderly Baptists as being sound in doctrine, careful in deportment, and as

humble and conscientious in the display of God's Gift of the ministry in them.

Witness our hands this 16th day of March, 1991.

ELDERS

- Richard Campbell
- Jimmy Hamrick
- C.M. Haygood
- George Jones
- Gerald D. Shipman
- Graydon Smith
- Lloyd Wall
- C.C. Morris

DEACONS OF RESPECTIVE CHURCHES

- Miles Bird
- E.H. Chandler
- Alvin Fox
- Charles Fox
- Marvin Curnutt
- Frank Pilgreen
- John E. Smith
- Harold R. Toney

All of the above signed the minutes of the Presbytery.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FEBRUARY 1990

- Lloyd Spikes, OR22.00
- Mrs. Philliss Snyder, VA2.00
- Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA12.00
- Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN
- In memory of Eld. Albert Brock32.00
- John R. Copelin, TN2.00
- Mrs. Annie Pearson, MI22.00
- Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS12.00
- Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL2.00
- Mrs. Marie D. Cannaday, VA2.00
- J.W. Arrington, NC2.00
- Reed Harper, TX7.00

Mrs. Willsie M. Wood, VA	2.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC	2.00
E.F. Dyer, VA	2.00
C.J. Williams, TN	2.00
G.M. Lockey, NC	2.00
Milton Houston, NC	2.00
Eld. Fred Neikirk, AL	2.00
R.A. Hocutt, AL	2.00
Mrs. Marie Futch, LA	2.00
Eld. J.D. Hamrick, TX	4.00
Mrs. Ollie Rhoades, TX	
Memory husband Earl Rhoades	18.00
Raymond May, VA	2.00
Eld. Noel Conner, VA	7.00
John D. Manning, NJ	10.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER CLARENCE BARTON

In submission to the request of Sister Barton, and trusting it is the will of God, I attempt to write the obituary of Brother Clarence Barton. Brother Barton was a very loving person and often expressed his love to those around him. It was certainly a joy to know him. He was born July 11, 1901 in Floyd County, Virginia to the late Dennis and Jennie Ingram Barton. He and Sister Mamie were married December 25, 1931. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Peggy B. Bullins. In addition to his wife and daughter survivors include two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

He and Sister Barton were received into Riverview Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday, September 24, 1966. They were baptized the next day by their pastor the late Elder J.R. Hollandsworth. He loved to hear the gospel of Jesus

Christ proclaimed and the singing of the songs of Zion. He loved to read his Bible and wore the covers off several during his life time. Brother Barton lost his sight several months before his passing and enjoyed listening to the Bible tapes.

He is greatly missed by his many friends and the members of the Church but we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

He departed this life on Thursday September 20, 1990, making his stay upon earth 89 years, 2 months and 9 days. His funeral was conducted on Saturday, September 22, 1990 at Collins Funeral Chapel, Bassett, Va. by Elders Noel Conner, Larry Hollandsworth, and Carl Terry. His body was laid to rest in the County Line Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the glorious day when all the saints will awake with the likeness of Christ and be carried home to ever be around the throne of God to sing endless praises for ever and ever.

Written by
Carl E. Terry

OPAL VALETA BURGIN

It is with a sweet sorrow that I write the obituary of my dear grandmother and sister in Christ, Opal Valeta Burgin. Granny, as she was affectionately called by many, was born on December 23, 1899 and received into the hands of her loving Heavenly Father on November 11, 1990 at the age of 90. She was a member of Paron Primitive Baptist Church in Hawkins, Texas for 42 years and served as church clerk for a number of years. Granny was preceded in death by her husband, Grover Burgin, who was deacon at Paron. The Good

Lord blessed their union with eight children, four of whom survive, Sister Helen Pittman, Sister Flora Stutts, Sister Patsy Mitchell and Bill Burgin, and a host of grandchildren, great grandchildren and dear in-laws. Four sons preceded her in death: Huel, Wilborn, Grover Jr., and Wayne Burgin. My Granny's funeral was conducted by Elders Jimmy Hamrick and C.M. Haygood whose words were very comforting to the family and friends. Her body was laid to rest in Smith Cemetery next to her beloved church's meeting house.

Granny believed in an all wise and all powerful God and had no confidence in the flesh. She would readily admit that there was nothing good in her if someone would tell her how precious she was. Granny was a wonderful witness to the goodness and graciousness of a covenant keeping God and would often be seen with a sweet smile even while going through heartrending afflictions.

It seemed that Granny was blessed to love everyone, especially the household of faith. She was constantly doing good deeds for other people without any desire for recompense. Granny was truly blessed to live a life that showed a great work of grace in her heart. I never heard Granny say or do anything unkind to anyone. Only God could have blessed her to have done this.

My dear Granny died on a day that had the following scripture verse printed on my calendar; *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."*

May our blessed Lord be given all the praise, honor, and glory for having given us this dear precious one who touched our lives so deeply.

Her unworthy grandson,
Phil Pittman

RUBY WALDON COLE

Sister Ruby Waldon Cole was born April 23, 1908 to Franklin and Laura Jane Beasley Waldon. She was called from the walks of this life Jan. 2, 1991. She was married to Morris Cole and to this union three children were born. Funeral services were held at 11:00 AM in Poplar Springs Church with Elder H.C. Moon and Bro. M.H. Hollis officiating. Interment was in Poplar Springs Cemetery. Sister Cole is survived by her husband Morris Cole, one son James Cole, one daughter Faye Cole Phillips. She was preceded in death by a daughter Sarah Cole Sisson. She also leaves six grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, three brothers and one sister.

She believed and loved the doctrine of salvation by Grace. She was faithful in attendance and a supporter of Poplar Springs Primitive Baptist Church. She loved flowers and brought beautiful arrangements for church services. Though her name was not on our earthly church book we feel it was on God's Book of Life written there before the Earth was spoken into existence.

The many floral arrangements expressed the love of community and friends for her. She will be missed by her family, her church family, and the community. Though we will miss her we feel our loss is her gain.

Charles P. Hayes, Church Clerk
Poplar Springs Church, Lamar Co., Ala.

SISTER VIOLA MURPHY

God in His infinite mercy has seen fit to call from our midst at Malmaison Church, Sister Viola Murphy. Sister Murphy was an humble, very soft spoken lady. She had been in declining health for a number of years and unable to attend church, but always contributed generous to its welfare. She had lived with her daughter, Virginia since her husband, Brother Downey Murphy passed away. No one could have cared more tenderly for their mother than Virginia did. Sister Murphy was born March 2, 19023 in Pittsylvania County and departed this life Sept. 14, 1990. She was the daughter of G.W. Shelton and Virginia Shelton.

She is survived by 2 daughters, Virginia M. Owen and Arline M. Giles, both of Chatham, 2 brother, 1 sister, 2 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Scott Funeral Home by Elders O.K. Tench and Denver Simpson. Interment was in Highland Burial Park. May the family be given to feel that God was gracious to take her out of her suffering here. *"Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord."*

Humbly submitted,
Peggy Wells

JOSHUA E. POTTER, SR.

Lowland, North Carolina, Joshua Edward Potter, Sr. 89, or Lowland died Wednesday, January 30, 1991.

Funeral service was 11 a.m. Saturday in Goose Creek Primitive Baptist Church at Lowland with Elder Oliver

Allen and Elder Jesse Foreman officiating. Burial was in Lowland Community Cemetery.

Potter was a retired farmer.

He is survived by his wife, Elma Ballance Potter; two sons, Preston Hubert Potter of Everglades City, Fla. and Joshua Edward Potter, Jr. of Greenville; three daughters, Joyce P. Carawan of Washington, Audrey P. Lewis of Lowland and Judy P. Murphy of St. Mary's, Ga.; a sister, Gentry P. Williams of Lowland, 12 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and a great-great-grandchild.

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES: GOD'S ETERNITY

Time has a continual succession, the former time passing away and another succeeding; but eternity is an infinite, immutable duration. Eternity, as an attribute of God, is that perfection of his nature by which he continually exists, without any beginning, end, or succession of time. His eternity fills all duration, as David says, *"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."* (Psalm 90:2.) *"Thou, O Lord, shall endure forever and thy years shall have no end"* (Psalm 102:12-27). The scriptures speak of God's eternal power and God-Head, all his acts, like himself, are eternal. What he does is forever his eternal nature being infinite. There can be nothing added to it, or taken from it. What a firm foundation for helpless sinners to base their hopes upon! That this eternal God, who has promised them eternal life and cannot lie, is not slack concerning his promise and has confirmed it by an oath.

Signs of the Times

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POEM

*Lord, at thy table I behold
The wonders of thy grace;
But most of all admire that I
Should find a welcome place.*

*I that am all defiled with sin;
A rebel to my God;
I that have crucified his Son,
And trampled on his blood.*

*What strange surprising grace is
this,
That such a soul has room!
My Saviour takes me by the hand,
My Jesus bids me come.*

*"Eat, O my friends," the Saviour
cries,*

*"The feast was made for you:
For you I groaned, and bled, and
died,*

And rose and triumphed, too."

*With trembling faith, and bleed-
ing hearts,*

*Lord, we accept thy love:
'Tis a rich banquet we have had,
What will it be above!*

*Ye saints below, and hosts of
heaven,*

*Join all your praising powers;
No theme is like redeeming love,
No Saviour is like ours.*

Stennett.

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EDITORIAL



Elder R. H. Campbell

Now he which
 stablisheth
 us with you in Christ,
 and hath annointed
 us, is God. Who hath
 sealed us and given
 the earnest of the
 Spirit in our heart.

In the beginning, God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them. And God blessed them and God said unto them, be ye fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth in the earth. In

this we see that God loved the man that he had made and that he blessed him abundantly, so that he stood in need of nothing for life and happiness in the garden of Eden where God placed him to dress and keep it. He gave man an help meet to comfort and support him and they had all things at their disposal; the only thing that was forbidden to them was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; of this, they were not to partake, for in the day that they ate of it they would surely die. The man was created subject to vanity, and this brought about his downfall from the original state in which he was created; vanity causes man to desire all things and especially those things that are forbidden to him. Because of his fall, judgement was placed upon him and all of his descendants, because they were in his loins when the judgement was pronounced on him. This weakness is inherent in all his seed as well as all of the other characteristics that they receive from him, and this is the basic cause of all sin in man, their pride of life, selfishness, greed for wealth and power and prestige among their peers.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made and more deceitful than any other creature, and knowing of this weakness in man used the one restriction that was placed upon him to tempt him and bring about his ruin as far as his life in the garden of Eden was concerned. When man

yielded to this temptation, judgement was rendered to the serpent, the woman and the man because they were all involved. The serpent was cursed above all cattle and told that he was sentenced to go upon his belly and that dust (the earth and the carnality of the world) would be his food and his dominion would be in the natural things of the world all of his days. Enmity would be placed between his seed, (the children of wrath) and the seed of the woman (the children of promise treasured in Christ); that his seed would bruise the heel of the seed of the woman (crucifixion of Christ) and the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Christ's resurrection from the grave to destroy the power of the serpent).

Unto the woman the judgement that was pronounced was that God would greatly multiply her sorrow and her conception, in sorrow she would bear children and she would be subject unto her husband. In the day of creation God told man to go forth and multiply and replenish the earth, (these are the seed of promise) and now because of the transgression God is going to greatly multiply that conception, bringing in an innumerable host of people (the children of wrath) to continually war against the seed of the woman; they are of their father the devil and his works shall they do all the days of their lives. The ones referred to as the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman are all men

in nature, offspring by nature of the woman; one, of their father the devil because of the transgression and the others of Adam according to the promise of God in the day of creation. This lineage is apparent in all generations and is known by the fruit they bear; they cannot change their heritage because they were created according to the pleasure of God for a specific purpose. The seed of the woman are all those treasured in Christ and the devil's seed those who crucified him because of the hatred that they had for him. This would all occur in the process of time as the plan of God unfolded to make manifest the purpose in it all to the Glory of his holy name. In this then we see the plan of salvation set in such a manner that man cannot affect or influence it in any way, as the scripture states in one place, *"The lot is cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."*

Man was originally created upright, without sin, and walked and talked with God in the garden of Eden, but because of the fall from the state of innocence to the corrupt and depraved state of man as he is in nature he was banished from the presence of God, as he had been, and sentenced to life apart from him; without any ability to recover himself from the wretched and undone condition that he was in. God made man coats of skin, which, I believe, represents the fleshly nature of man which conditions man to dwell apart from him, unaware of the kingdom of

heaven and completely satisfied and at home in the world of nature in which he lives. As long as man is clothed in these coats of skin he cannot communicate with God, has no desire for anything other than the things of the world around him; as Solomon wrote , *"He hath made everything beautiful in his time; also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."* God drove man from the garden of Eden and placed at the east of the garden cherubs and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. The tree of life is eternal life (Christ) and the flaming sword surely represents the Holy Spirit which keeps the way of the tree of life pure and undefiled by the depravity and corruption of the man of flesh adorned with those coats of skin; they represent the vail that is over the eyes of man so that they (Israel) could not look unto the end of those things, typified by the law, and understand the truth thereof, nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The only way that man in nature can partake of the tree of life is for the Holy Spirit (the flaming sword) to reveal it to him by removing the vail of flesh that is over his eyes and showing him the way of the tree of life, then and only then is man able again to walk and talk with God. This change,

in man, is not influenced, in any sense of the word by the efforts, ability or desire of the old man of flesh but rather in spite of them; man would live out his life without any knowledge of the kingdom of God for he is at home in the world; as it is written the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. The man in nature knows not the way of the spirit and is not aware of God and his works all around him daily in the things he observes; the rising and setting of the sun, also the bow in the clouds, the seasons of nature and the fulfilling of prophecy in his day that were declared many generations ago. He is completely unaware of the wisdom and power of God that is behind every event and the sovereign purpose and plan woven throughout time and eternity.

God gave a law unto Israel, his chosen people according to the flesh, to govern his life here in this time world and to give a semblance of order to it. The law was not given as a way of salvation but was to show unto man his weakness and complete failure in his attempt to do that which was his duty to do, and his inability to direct his own way to accomplish his desired end. The sacrifices under the law made nothing perfect and was but an admission by man that he had failed in keeping the law and the same sacrifices year after year for the same failures made manifest the depth of depravity to which man, in nature, had fallen. The offering of the sacrifice did show evidence of a desire in

the heart of man to be justified before God, whether from a standpoint of vanity and pride, or a sincere heartfelt repentance to God for sin and a desire to be cleansed from their polluted condition before him. The differences in man's reason for their offerings appears many times in the scriptures; Cain and Abel offered sacrifice unto God but for different reasons. Cain's offering was from a standpoint of vanity in offering unto God the fruit of his labors the fruit of the ground which God had cursed; Abel's gift was an offering of faith unto God, presenting unto him a portion of that which God had given unto him and told him to have dominion over, the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof. Jesus spoke of the differences in the reason for mans honoring him on one occasion when he told some who followed him, "Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." Some sought him, and followed him because of the truth of his word and the power demonstrated in his work, while others followed him because they did eat of the loaves and were filled, or, in other words for the natural benefits that they received from the miracles. On another occasion Jesus asked them, "*What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?*" Their answer to this question manifested this same basic difference in the heart of the individual; some saw Jesus as the son of Joseph and Mary and perceived nothing special about him, while

others beheld him as the Christ of God who taketh away the sin of the world and marveled at the wondrous word and work that he did among them. The offering under the law did not make the giver clean, but, it did make manifest the heart and the love, or lack of it, for God; some offered the lame and sick of the flock, while others cast into the treasury their very living, some gave grudgingly of their possessions while others laid down their very lives.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. Now, I know that the world quotes this as a text to support the theory that God loves all of mankind alike and that man, as he is in nature, must make a decision to believe and be saved, or to not believe and be damned as a result of that choice. I believe that the statement, that God so loved the world, applies to the time before the world was formed when God looked down through time and saw all things that would be, because it was his will for it to be so, was pleased with his work and said it was very good; he knew of the fall of man, the condition man would be in and in counsel with the Son and the Holy Spirit had established the plan of salvation that would assure that all of the seed of the woman in all generations would inherit everlasting life. He gave his only begotten Son that they should not perish and he loved the world for their sake; this

was the reason for the world being formed, in the first place. This thought was ever in his mind as he 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. All of it was in the plan, and all of the plan was because of the love that God had for the children of promise that he formed for himself, created for his glory, called by his own name and redeemed from the power of satan unto himself.

In the above scripture, as in all of his writings to the churches and to individuals the Apostle Paul is declaring his experience and the basic truth of God's plan of salvation for every heir of promise. He knew that the only way that he could have come into a knowledge of the truth was for it to have been shown to him in such a way that he could not deny it and with such power that he could not resist it. All of this was done unto him when the great light which shined around him, he fell to the ground and heard Jesus speak to him and tell him of all the things he must do. Saul of Tarsus was a very strong and confident leader of the Jews and yet he had no will to resist this voice that spoke to him, but he, trembling and astonished said, "*Lord what wilt thou have me to do?*" It is on the basis of this experience that he wrote the above scripture to the Church at Corinth, "now he

which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath annointed us is God." Paul had thought that he knew God when serving in he Jewish religion but now he saw the truth; surely he could witness with Job, "*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.*" He had studied the law all of his life but it did not teach him to know God, it took the anointing of the Holy Spirit and that was the work of God; who also seals and gives them the earnest of the Spirit in the heart. Just as Paul could witness with Job, all of those who have been given this earnest of the Spirit can also witness with the Apostle Paul that it is all the sovereign work of grace and a miracle to be turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, to feel to have been forgiven of all sin and given an inheritance among them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus.

This was the calling that Paul wrote about so much, it was given him, he could not deny it, as it is in, and alway has been in the servants of God. It is for a specific purpose and that is always to the benefit of the saints of God and for the welfare of the Church in Christ. It led Paul the remaining days of his life and he shunned not to declare unto the churches all of the counsel of God, for that was the reason it was given him. As he admonished Timothy, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his

kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." He was saying to Timothy your calling is of God, your strength will be of God and your mission is to all who have been given an ear to hear and a heart to understand; you cannot judge who these are, but the word will make manifest who they are and will bring forth fruit unto the glory of God. The anointing, the sealing and the gift of the spirit are of God, you are but an ambassador for Christ, as though God did beseech them by you, to be reconciled unto himself. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God per adventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth ; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. The ambassador is but to deliver the information, that he has been given to the one to whom it is sent, meekly and gently, knowing the results are in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God who has stablished it from before time, and is working all things together for good to those who love him, to them who are called according to his purpose. The end results will be the salvation of every heir of grace according to the plan which wisdom devised and the Holy Spirit accomplishes in the sovereign

display of faith in the heart of every saint; as mercy and truth are met together and righteousness and peace have kissed each other in the blessed experience of this conversion from darkness to light.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God. Surely this is the experience of all who have had this change; right at this point in time they feel that they can say in all assurance, that they know that they have passed from death unto life because of the pure love that they have for Christ, his word, and for all who give evidence of this light shining in their countenance, their walk and in their conversation. Surely this is the light which Jesus referred to when he said, *"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* There is no greater joy experienced in this life than when brethren come together in love and the veil of flesh is removed and they commune in spirit and in truth. As Paul wrote to the Hebrews; *Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure*

water." Oh that they could always be thus, but they cannot. It is these experiences and the memories of them past and the hope of others in the future that strengthens them and enables them to press on to finish their course in faith of Him who hath established them and annointed them in Christ Jesus their Lord.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard Campbell

ARTICLES

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Matt.: 11-25.

In writing what I am about to write, it is not with the intention to criticize anyone or their belief. But I do want to compare the wrong with the right, the truth against the error. I believe people believe the way they have to. If the Lord wanted them to know the truth, he would reveal it unto them. I am writing about a sovereign God who said, I will send the comforter, and he will take the things of mine, and show them unto you.

Most of us when we think of someone who the world considers as lost, one who we don't believe has been dealt with by the Holy Spirit. We usually think of those who drink to excess, cuss, gamble, fight etc. But

I believe there are many in the same condition who you may see in their church regularly, who will tell you they are saved. I don't mean that I am judging them, may the Lord forbid. But by their fruits you shall know them. These people believe in their own righteousness, their own good works, they attend church, donate money to the church, visit the sick. They don't do things such as robbing, killing, etc. In fact some of them are morally good people. They are satisfied with their standing, feeling good within themselves, in short they believe in their own self righteousness. But what does the scripture say? *Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.* The Scribes and Pharisees were very strict in their daily lives, they were very careful to maintain a outward show of godliness, but they trusted in their own works and their self made righteousness. We know they came far short of fulfilling the law. Why did they trust in their own righteousness, when the scripture plainly says, a man's righteousness is as filthy rags. Why can't the people of today read this in the Bible, and see they can't trust in their own works.

These same people I am writing about also believe and teach that all you have to do is believe. Why can't they read and understand, *John 6:29 This is the work of God that you believe on Him, whom he hath sent.*

They say you have to have faith. I agree with that, you do have to have faith. But I don't believe a man can make it up within himself, doesn't the scripture say that faith *Eph. 2:8 is a gift of God*. Now that is plain language, why can't they read and understand that verse?

These same people believe God is calling everyone, he is begging and pleading, they believe the choice is up to every individual. A true believer, believes that God has a people who he has chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and here in time he will call his chosen at the appointed time, not everyone, just his chosen. The scripture says in *Romans 8:29 for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate*, those he also called. Why can't these people believe this, it plainly teaches their belief is wrong. They also believe you have a free will, it is up to each person whether they will believe, or they won't. But doesn't the scripture say, God works in you both the will and the do of his good pleasure. They believe and teach that God loves everybody, when the scripture plainly says, *Jacob have I loved and Essau have I hated*.

Like I said, I am not writing to criticize their belief, because I surely think they believe what they have to. I am trying to point out the many times the scripture in plain language teaches the opposite from what they believe. Now they either can't read these parts of scripture, or they read

and can't see their true meaning. The one thing that makes it seem so strange to me is this. At one time I believed the very things I have just wrote about as being a true doctrine. I believed it so strong that I was ready at any time to teach it to anyone, to discuss or argue that I was right. And I continued in that belief until one day, and I believe that at his own appointed time, the good Lord showed me some of these scriptures, with their true meaning. Then I can say I most surely believed differently than I had believed before. Now I know what I believe, and I know why I believe as I do. I am not saying that only Old Baptists believe this, nor am I saying that all believers are Old Baptist. What I am saying is this. The way I believe is the truth, and is preached and believed by the Old Baptist, more so than any other church I have found. I know I have been given a love for the Old Baptist people that I do believe has been sent down from heaven, because I don't believe Satan, or the world deals in such a love as this.

Again I ask why — can't these plain facts or truths be seen by so many. When you consider and think on this question, it brings you back to — I thank thee Oh Father, that thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Just think about that king, great is the mystery of godliness. Think for a minute of the two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, when Jesus joined them, walked and talked

with them, yet they did not recognize him, seems almost impossible doesn't it. The scripture says their eyes were holden that they would not recognize him, yet at the appointed time Jesus opened their eyes that they might see and know him. When we consider this do we need to wonder any longer why so many people can't see the true meaning in these plain simple statements in the Bible. Have you not heard some of the grand old preachers of God make this statement. As many times as I have read this scripture, I have never seen this in it before. See, God had not revealed it unto them before, their eyes had been holden by God, then at the appointed time God had opened their eyes so they could see.

Don't you see it is for the building of the body, the edifying of the saints, as you might say, line upon line precept upon precept. Giving each of his children what they need as they need it. Keeping them hungry, always looking for and hoping for a crumb of mercy, to strengthen their faith, which to them is like a anchor, both sure and steadfast. As a earthly father will give to his children, food when they are hungry, other things when they are needed, even more so will our heavenly Father give to his children. What a wonderful God is ours, all these blessed truths revealed at the right time and at the right amount to bring all his little children to the exact place he would have them to be. But as Jacob of old said, It is enough. At times

we get low and at times we get hungry, shouldn't it be that way, because even with natural food we need to get hungry to truly enjoy food, the same rule applies to spiritual food. The Good Lord gives to us as he knows our need, and in such a way and time to bring us to the place we need to be, for the purpose, honor and glory of our heavenly Father. Not too much at one time, lest we be exalted above measure, not too little at one time lest we stray but just enough. And again, I thank thee O Father, that thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. How sweet and how wonderful when we are given to see and taste of these things, for it carries with it a sweet promise, it isn't hid from you, but rather it has been revealed unto you. As Jesus once said, *Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but my Father which is in Heaven.* What a wonderful God is ours.

I desire your prayers,
Frank C. Hunt

With risk of being misunderstood and more than likely criticized by many ministers and brethren, I feel to take pen in hand and and write some of my views on the Holy Writ.

Many who know me and have heard me preach have said that I spiritualize the Bible more than

anyone else they know. To me this is very complimentary, but some who make these compliments mean them to be a bit derogatory.

However, I do believe any comments made that might differ on the Scriptures would be a bit critical or else each one writing would not write them because when one disagrees (even a little bit) they must think they are right.

I have heard many, many, say that the Bible is written to His people, about His people, and for His people, then speak or write pages about the world or ones whose names are not written in the Book of Life.

How would you like to hear about the world, preached, when you go to hear about the salvation of His way-faring children?

Do you not hope you are one of the heirs spoken of, or would you cast aside your hope and love to hear of the chaff that is said to be burned?

One will say that Satan is taking over more and more, another will praise God for all things and say that He is still at the helm and all things are working according to His holy will, and working for good to them who love Him, who are the called according to His purpose. I lean with a whole heart toward the last. We have more population and more children of the world than was in the Garden of Eden, so we can see the works of Satan more abundantly. Now then, let's seek information about this serpent and where he lives, what he eats and thrives on. The Lord God told the

serpent (who was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had created) that on thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. He (Satan) shall eat of the dust and dust is exactly what man was formed of — dust of the ground, the most shifting part of the ground, can be blown hither and yon by every wind that blows. So of the weakness (dust) of man is what Satan shall feast on.

Satan was not made more subtil than anything except a created beast so therefore he could not beguile, tempt, allure, or deceive any but the natural dust formed into man. Was Adam a created being and wasn't he formed from dust?

If you can see this, then can you not see that Eve had a natural food for Satan? Do not all the children have a natural earthly body and is not this the natural food for a Satan that has an ending? (Having a beginning, he must have an ending.)

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. Can any believer of the truth say that he is not both natural and spiritual — and agree with many who will say they believe more natural if spiritual at all.

Now, the natural man, both of the elect and non-elect, can not receive the things of the spirit, but the man who is born again is the one which receiveth the spiritual things.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God.

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

John the Baptist as he went forth in the wilderness crying Repent ye for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Where was this kingdom of heaven before John said it is at hand. Who was John crying to? Was it to the chosen in Christ before the world began or the non-elect? Would it have done any good to preach to the ones having no life?

My natural livelihood was selling cars, but I have been given more common knowledge than to go to the cemetery to sell my product. The Bible says go into all the world and preach to every creature, however I believe they must be live creatures. I bring this is to show that no matter how hard we try to place the non-elect guilty of everything, we, yes we, are prone to sin as much as they. But thanks be to God we have an inner being, call it anything you like, but I like to hope it is the spirit that raised our Saviour from the dead, and if it is then it is not I that keep myself under subjection but the spirit of God through the righteousness of Christ our Lord.

God so loved the world that He

gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Notice the "in Him", not on His name, not just believe that God sent Him but in Him. Christ in you the hope of glory. Me in the Father, the Father in me, me in you, and you in me. I quote this Scripture to show that it is only the ones in Him that have everlasting life and not a universal salvation.

The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit neither can he know them because they are foolishness unto him. Again, does this mean the non-elect or can it be talking to the regenerated and enlightened sinner, who has seen the light, and knows just how foolish it was, while in darkness, to hear about the spiritual blessings. The children of God are both spiritual and natural. The non-elect have never seen the light, so why talk to them to tell them how foolish they are. Can a leopard change his spots or an Ethiopian change his skin — can the preaching of the gospel change these spots or his skin? The natural man, even though a child and heir with Jesus Christ, can not inherit anything pertaining to the heavenly, but the inner man, which is spiritual, is the one that is raised up and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Do not hesitate to entertain strangers for, etc.

If the children were different (after rebirth) we would not have

to look for the fruits they bear. By their fruits ye shall know them.

We can look at a tree and not know what kind it is until it brings forth fruit, then we know if it is bitter or sweet. The thing we do know is it is a tree. So it is with children of God. We know they are by nature the children of wrath even as others. Why do we, as long as we have breath and are in possession of our senses, always try to fit the children of wrath to the non-elect (as we frequently like to call them). Why can't we see and realize that the children of wrath are (as well as the non-elect) God's own children while in the flesh?

How many Primitive Baptists really believe that they are not wicked, evil, and sinful? How many believe that what blessings they receive from the Lord are merited or that they deserve?

Why did God say He came to call the sinner to repentance and yet He really meant He came to call and save the whole Adamic world? This I do not believe, nor do the enlightened children.)

The Apostle Paul said when I would do good, evil is present with me, and also said it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me. So he said sin has an abode in him — sin lives in him. Now, we are not in any position to say we are any better than Paul. Even the most gifted minister will not, nor can not, boast of more than Paul as we all have sin living in us the same as he did. Why, then, is it necessary to believe the non-elect

are the only ones the Bible speaks about when He calls some wicked and evil, when He told Peter to get behind Him, and called him Satan.

Natural, carnal, made of dust, man — yet until he speaks of the things we love to hear he still has all the appearance of a natural man.

How many can keep the commandments? Why can't you? Because this was a law for a schoolmaster unto Christ and the flesh is too weak to keep a law which says thou shall not lust and our old carnal nature does lust.

So why are we trying to avert the truth that we are just as natural as any of the Adamic race and will be evil, wicked etc. until this weakness shall put on strength, the mortal immortality, etc. We are sown natural and (if children of God) will be raised spiritual.

Let us not be quick to say God is not setting forth His when He calls out the evil or wicked, because we, as natural men are evil and sinful and wicked, and weak and totally depraved and hell deserving creatures.

Why didn't the brothers know Joseph in Egypt if he did not show all outward signs of the flesh? They had to be enlightened before they knew their own brother. Joseph kept the family from starving by furnished corn (or food.)

How did I know a minister could preach until he actually did preach, and not by how good he could preach by his merely saying he was a minister or that he looked like a

preacher.

Joseph knew the family, but they did not know him. God knows them that are His, but we do not know if we are His or not. We can only hope we are. God forbid that I ever think that I'm without evil and without sin. And since I have been preaching I seem to be more convinced of my shortcomings than ever before.

My Mother never had to call me to the table but once if I was hungry, and I didn't make myself hungry — it was my nature. My Father was a member of the Kingman, Kansas church for forty-two years and never missed a meeting. No man ever told him it was his duty to go to church. He wanted to go, he loved to mingle with the Saints and hear the preaching of the Gospel. No man can come to Christ except the Father draw him and Christ only will raise him up (at the last day.)

I am of the Old School, believing in the absolute sovereignty of God who has a blueprint of His whole plan of the world and everything in it.

Written in Christian Love,
Elder W.A. Winfrey

PSALM 1:1-2.

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.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

BAPTISM

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." — Romans vi.4.

Like all the acts enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus, the true spirit of this solemn ordinance is infinitely deeper than the outward form. Mere immersion in water is not the whole of this act of obedience, any more than the literal eating of bread and drinking of wine is the observance of the Lord's supper. As it is the remembrance of the death of Christ in the supper which constitutes that ceremony an act of obedience to his command, so, in the burial in the water there must be that faith by which we really follow him, in order that our act may be true obedience to his commandment, and acceptable in his sight. *"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."* — Hebrews xi. 6. Then, since *"Whatsoever is not faith is sin,"* it is evident that the mere ceremony of immersion without faith cannot be baptism in obedience to the law of the King who reigns in Zion. Even the sincere desire of the candidate

will not answer as a substitute for this necessary qualification.

There is another point on which many dear children of God are bewildered. Having received that faith which is the gift of God, they have been immersed by those who claimed to be ministers of Christ, but who were not in the fellowship of the church at the time. The candidates being themselves sincere, supposed they were obeying the Lord in their immersion, and perhaps felt a joy in the act; but on finding that they have been deceived, they are troubled with the suggestion that they have been baptized, and yet they know that they have no fellowship with the people among whom they find themselves.

Many in this condition are robbed of their privileges in the church, and cannot see how they can enter into those joys. Have they been baptized in obedience to the command of our Lord? They have been immersed, but not in the fellowship of the church of Christ. That cannot be Christian baptism, for the same reason that the church cannot accept the immersion administered by Mormons; that is, because it was not authorized by our Lord, nor done in obedience to his word. Those who are at home among the various orders outside of the church of Christ, are not such as are here referred to. But to those who long for the fellowship of the saints, yet feel themselves imprisoned in those anti-Christian organizations, it is important to ascertain whether their

immersion was really baptism.

In order to make this matter clear, let us present an illustration. When the Lord commanded his disciples to baptize believers, if unbelieving Jews had voluntarily gone about performing the ceremony of immersion, would their work have been valid baptism? Certainly not; because not being in the fellowship of the saints themselves, they could not be competent to discern that Spirit of Christ in others which is the only source of genuine faith and repentance. Again, being without the authority of the Lord, it would have been mere mockery for them to use his name in the ceremony of baptism.

Now, for the same reason, none but those in the fellowship of the church are authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism in this age; and when any others presume to do so, it is no more in obedience to the word of the Lord than the unauthorized offerings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, whom the earth swallowed up, just as the earth now swallows up them who treat with contempt the law of the Lord in this ordinance, by imitating its form while denying its substance by "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Such professors may be highly esteemed by the world, but they are never "approved unto God." The church of Christ cannot consistently recognize the action of any but those who act by the authority of her Lord in administering his ordinances. Con-

sequently she must hold the immersion which is performed by those who are not appointed to that work by his command as being no baptism at all.

To constitute baptism there must be a believing candidate and an authorized administrator. Of the mode it is not our purpose now to write more than that it must be a burial and raising up again, according to the pattern given by our Lord in Jordan. — Matt. iii. 13-17. No argument can make the mode plainer than it is described in the inspired record. Failure to observe any of these particulars destroys the validity of the ordinance; for it can only be administered *"in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,"* when it is done, teaching the observance of all things whatsoever the Lord Jesus has commanded his chosen disciples. — Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

We have dwelt upon the requisite particulars constituting gospel baptism in compliance with many special requests from believers who have been snared in the net of anti-Christian organizations, who desire to be identified with the church of Christ, but cannot see the necessity of being baptized, as they have once been immersed, as they thought in baptism, by those who were not in the fellowship of the church. We now come to consider the text.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." In the preceding verse the fact is cited that

as many as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. This is the reason for our burial in baptism. But in what sense are we thus identified in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ? Certainly not that we were literally nailed to the cross with him. The argument is in support of the fact that we are *"dead to sin,"* as stated in verse two. In this sense all the church whom he redeemed were crucified with him. So Paul says, *"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."* — 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

This *"baptism into death"* is confessed in the literal obedience of those who are buried in baptism in water in his name. — See Acts ii. 38. This burial declares its subjects to be *"dead to the law by the body of Christ."* — Rom. vii. 4. *They no longer labor to secure acceptance with God by that law which cannot give life. Their burial signifies this death to legal hope, and consequently their deliverance from the dominion of that law of sin and death. As it is written in this connection, "For he that is dead is freed from sin."* This comforting assurance being expressed by the act of obedience to their Lord in water baptism, it is as declared by Peter, *"the answer of a good conscience toward God."* Therefore they who have hope of the salvation which is in

Christ Jesus are robbed of invaluable comfort when they are beguiled to disobey the command of their Lord which enjoins upon them the duty and privilege to be baptized in his name.

"That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." The pattern here presented is not merely a restoration to that natural life which was subject to the law, and consequently under sentence of death. *"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."* — Gal. iii. 10. If that were all of the resurrection, the Lord Jesus would not have been *"the first fruits of them that slept,"* since Lazarus and others had been so restored to natural life before our Lord was raised. But the resurrection of Christ was in the power of that glorious life and immortality which is *"the glory of the Father,"* And which had not previously been brought to light. — See 2 Tim. i. 10.

In the flesh he was put to death, bearing all the sins of his redeemed people in his own body on the tree; but in the immortal glory of the Father he lives above the law and higher than the heavens. It is important to observe the fact that this resurrection of Christ is *"by the glory of the Father,"* in distinction from the restoration to natural life which had been effected in previous cases by the miraculous power of God. In those cases no immortality was displayed, but in the raising up of Christ is the manifestation of *"the power*

of an endless life." — Heb. vii. 16. This is the peculiar *"glory of the Father,"* which demonstrates the truth of the unity of our Lord with the eternal God, as he says, *"I and my Father are one."* — John x. 30. This is the manner in which he was raised up from the dead; and it is a display of that life which is superior to death and above all law. Therefore, he cannot die again, but is alive forevermore, Amen; and has the keys of hell and of death. — Rev. i. 18.

"Even so we also should walk in newness of life." The example presented is accurately exact. It is "even so" that we also should walk. As he was raised up from under the law, just so are all the members of his body in him exalted above that system of legal bondage; and as he can no more come into condemnation, so are we forever free from that law which was fulfilled by him. Walking in newness of life, we are not to seek justification by the works of the law; but resting alone in the perfect righteousness of Christ, we should walk in his commandments and follow in his footsteps.

In that old life the bondage of perpetual servitude required continually perfect obedience, which was more than we were able to render; yet the first failure involved us in condemnation and death. In this newness of life we are called to glorious liberty. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. All the requirements

of this law of liberty is freely given us in the unspeakable gift of God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Obedience to this perfect law of liberty is the highest privilege of those who are led by the Spirit of God.

This obedience is the fulfilling of all the injunctions, admonitions and exhortations in the law of our precious Lord and King. Walking in newness of life, we have the witness of the Spirit confirming our hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus; and in every act of obedience to this perfect law of liberty there is the answer of a good conscience toward God, whereby we have assurance that our walk is indeed in newness of life. While subject to vanity in the body of this death, the saints will not fail to find another law in their members warring against this law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members; but while they feel that warfare within, they have the evidence that the Spirit of Christ is leading them; and when they walk in obedience to that Spirit they manifestly walk in newness of life.

By precept and example our Lord has enjoined the ordinance of baptism as the open confession of allegiance to his government; and no service is in order in his kingdom until this requirement is fulfilled in obedience to his direction. In this the humble believer acknowledges his faith and hope to be alone in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation,

and expresses that he is dead to the law by the body of Christ. It is the first act of obedience to the law of the Redeemer, by which self is denied and Christ is confessed before men. In it is included the putting on of the whole law of our King, which is, as he has said, an easy yoke. It is indeed easy to them who are led by his Spirit to love it, and to desire above all things to follow the Redeemer; but it requires that self be denied and crucified, that Christ alone may be all our trust.

This can be done only by the power of the Spirit of God leading us, and working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Thus walking in newness of life, we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's. Those who hope in Jesus for salvation are commanded to follow him in this ordinance. Obedience will bring them into the manifest fellowship of the church of Christ. Any ceremony which fails to do this cannot be baptism. Certainly the church cannot regard any act as orderly which is not done in her fellowship and by the authority of her King; and he has never given to any but his own disciples the right to administer this ordinance. Therefore, they who have been immersed out of the fellowship of the church cannot be regarded as having been baptized at all in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus.

Elder Wm. L. Beebe
Feb. 1, 1884

ARGUMENTS DRAWN FROM THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

The security of the people of God is a subject of the first importance to every Christian.

We may enquire with deep solicitude, is my final salvation in Heaven certain, or are there yet uncertainties about it, although I have been born again and "passed from death unto life?" Is there anything in the nature of the atonement, or in the work of regeneration or the character of God that may justly lead me to believe that, where a person has once been cleansed by the blood of Christ, he shall be infallibly saved? It is my object in these pages to show that the scriptures teach that every one who has ever been born again and "passed from death unto life shall not come into condemnation." If this is bible teaching, it is certainly as well calculated to comfort the people of God as any truth revealed therein. Christians of all denominations ought to be acquainted with this truth and enjoy the comforts that the firm belief of it imparts.

It can not be denied that we all sin and forget God and do wrong, some more and some less, and if God marks our sins against us we would fall to be sure, but if God does not impute sin to us we can not fall. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." We here have it that God's way of saving from sin is by not charging, or imputing sin to those saved. Again it is said, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember against them no

more." Rom., iv: 8, "Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin"; vi: 2, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." David also taught that if God should mark sin against us that none of us should be able to stand.

I have referred to these passages for the purpose of showing that God's way of saving sinners is by not charging sin against them.

The "blessed man to whom he does not impute sin" is evidently the christian, and if God does not impute sin to the Christian he can not "fall from grace." This is the only principle upon which sinners can hope to be saved. Satisfaction must be rendered for every sin, and certainly our obedience can not satisfy a broken law. It requires death; and Christ's death is that which hushes the claims of law. Now, if all our sins were born by Jesus and by him satisfied for, the claims of law by him fully met in its very jots and tittles, then the ground of our hope is in what Jesus did and nothing else. Our deeds may be mixed with sin, and we often go astray, but these shall not overthrow us; because the death of Christ is our only hope. "There is no remission without the shedding of blood." "And the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sins." So there never was nor never will be a single sin forgiven on earth only as its remission is procured by the blood of Christ. From the foregoing we see that works are no part of the cause of our salvation; that God does not impute sin to his people; that the only ground of forgiveness is in the

blood of Christ . All these things being true , apostacy is impossible .

We should neither write nor say anything that would license saints to live carelessly and neglectfully . Neither should we teach that the best of works when done tend to procure eternal life , for certain it is that eternal life can not be wholly the effect of the Savior's death and yet in any degree the effect of good works . Many good men , lest they should license men to live in sin , have intruded on the blood of Jesus and ascribed to good works what the bible ascribes to the cross .

I daily feel the importance of obeying God , and with sadness see many professors fall far short of duty ; yet there are good solid grounds upon which to exhort each other to love , and good works without making them to be the cause in any degree of our being saved .

We will notice some scripture further . Eph ., i : 7 , “ In whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins , according to the riches of his grace .” In this our forgiveness as well as redemption is ascribed to his blood and rich grace . His blood and rich grace is the cause , and redemption and forgiveness of sins is the effect . Also , i : 5 , “ Who died for us , that whether we wake or sleep , we should live together with him .” So that the certainty of our final delivery grows not out of our faithfulness , but out of the very nature of Christ 's death . For he would be disappointed in his death if there should be a failure in a single instance of salvation to those who are interested in his death . Again , “ who gave himself for our

sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world , according to the will of God and our Father .” From this it is evident that God intended , first , to deliver us from this evil world , and that he , secondly , gave himself for that end — not to make that end possible , but certain . Matthew , xxvi : 28 , “ For this is my blood of the new testament , which was shed for many for the remission of sins .” This text shows that the blood was shed to certainly procure the remission of sins . Thus to my mind there is an unfrustrable relation between Christ 's death and our eternal salvation . For further proof see Heb ., ix : 14 , “ How much more shall the blood of Christ , who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God , purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?” It is the blood of Christ applied to us that makes us serve God and not our service that applies the blood to us . Hence Paul says , Rom ., v : 11 , “ And not only so , but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement .” Hence , God applies the atonement , and the success or extent of the atonement depends not on the men 's will or works , but on God 's appointment . The certain relation between the death of Christ and our salvation is seen in Eph ., v : 25 and 26 , “ And gave himself for it (the church) that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word , that he might present it to himself a glorious church ,” etc . Also , Rom ., viii : 32 , “ He that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all , how shall he not also with

him freely give us all things .” The clear reasoning here is , that the gift of Christ for us is a certain pledge that God will never leave off doing good for us till we can say , “ blessed be God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ .” “ For I am persuaded that he that hath begun a good work in us will perform it till the day of Christ .”

From the above it is clear that every Christian will be saved ; and who is not glad that God’s love to his saints is so strong that all our imperfections can not overcome it ? Isaiah , liii : 10 , “ When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed . He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied .” “ And he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors .” So that Christ , in his death , had no uncertain or doubtful end in view , but certainly saw the object of his death accomplished , and this is the joy that was set before him for which he endured the cross , despised , the shame , etc .

Oft have I thought of his suffering ; in the garden , before Pilate and on the cross . I doubt not but that he was allowed to see the end and object of his suffering , and this is why he was so firm , calm , serene and unshaken ; why he could with such patience endure his afflictions and death .

Isaiah , xxxv : 10 , “ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return , and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness , and sorrow and sighing shall flee away .” xxxv : 9 , “ No lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast , but

the redeemed shall walk there .” This language will not admit the possibility of failure . “ Shall return ” is God’s word . Who dare say they may not return ? Isaiah , xlii : 43 , “ But now thus saith the Lord that created thee , oh , Jacob , and he that formed thee , oh , Israel , fear not , for I have redeemed thee .” Why fear not ? Because God has redeemed thee . And , I do say , Oh , Christian , Israel , Jacob , fear not ; I will help thee , saith the Lord , and thy redeemer , the holy one of Israel ; therefore , Christian , fear not . Are not these sentiments precious to all who feel that sin is mixed with all they do ? All our sins born forever away , by the lamb of God , and the word of God for it , that he does not impute sin to us , and that all his ransomed ones shall return , and come to Zion ; that they shall obtain joy and gladness , and sorrow and sighing shall flee away . May God open all our eyes , to see the real riches that lie in this soul cheering sentiment . I hope to pursue this subject in harmony with truth . May I be prepared to write in the fear of God , and you stripped of prejudices , and willing to accept truth , although that truth may be contrary to your previous opinions . How important that we all should know the truth ; for we can not praise Jesus for keeping us , unless we believe he does keep us ; and , if he does not keep us to the end , how foolish we are in singing ,

*’Tis grace has brought me safe thus far ,
And grace will lead me home .”*

Jas . H . Oliphant

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL

The sixteenth annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, June 28th, 29th, and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow signs. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. There will be no business, just preaching and singing. We will endeavor to extend a warm welcome in the Lord.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The location of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association has been changed from Union Church to Weatherford Church because of the illness of one of the deacons at Union Church. Weatherford Church is located at the intersection of state road 760 and 763 about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. The association will meet July 12, 13, and 14 which is the second weekend. We invite all lovers of our doctrine and

order to visit with us.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1991

- Miss Irene Griffin, NC10.00
- Ms. Catherine W. Combs, NC ...5.00
- Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR2.00
- Mrs. Grace E. Manly, FL5.00
- Mrs. Lillian Wood, NC2.00
- Mrs. Lester Haning, WV10.00
- Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL7.00
- Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX4.00
- O.P. Murphy, TX100.00
- Mrs. Mary Amason, AR7.00
- Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC2.00
- Victor H. Laws, MD40.00
- Whitney Mobley, NC10.00
- Dolphus Hall, FL2.00
- Mrs. Martha C. Lunsford, VA ...10.00
- Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA2.00
- Tommy C. Wall, VA2.00
- Andrew C. Agee, VA2.00
- Mrs. Gayle Phillips, AL2.00
- Mr. & Mrs. Elbert Robbins, MD7.00

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

 OBITUARIES

BROTHER LONNIE BANKS

God, in His infinite wisdom took from the midst of Glenwood Park Primitive Baptist Church, our Brother Lonnie Banks on January 17, 1991. He was born August 19, 1908 one of eight children. He was preceded in death by his wife, the former Hazel Marshall, one daughter Aileen Hedrick, one brother Lloyd, and one sister Mayme Horton. Surviving are a daughter, son-in-law and grandson, Mr. & Mrs. Gleen (Ann) Carlock and Glenn Jr. Also three brothers, Waymon, Leonard, and Clayton, sisters Lucille Lewis and Mabel Stanley.

His services were held January 19, 1991 by his daughter's pastor, Dr. William Hasty, in Bluefield, WV and he was laid to rest in Roselawn Memorial Gardens, Princeton, WV.

Brother Lonnie was raised in a home where the Old Baptist doctrine was loved and respected. He traveled many miles attending services for most of his adult life, before being blessed to ask for a home with Glenwood Park Church on September 13, 1980. He was baptized the following day, along with two others, by the late Elder W.E. Branch, assisted by Deacon Richard Lawless. This baptism fulfilled a dream by the late

Sister Maggie Priddy, in which she had seen three rosebuds being laid on the table near the pulpit. One brother had asked a home the month prior and a sister joined the same day as Brother Banks.

Brother Lonnie made Glenwood a most diligent member, always mindful of the church's needs in every way, just as he had done prior to becoming a member. He possessed a quiet and unassuming manner. He almost always filled his seat and served the church as one of our trustees. Thus in many ways the church, as well as the sister churches he often attended, will miss Brother Banks. Yet, we bow in humble submission to the Lord's Will.

The church agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial record; one for inclusion in our minute, one to be given to his family, and one to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Glenwood Park Church in conference the 10th day of February, 1991.

Elder John Wingfield, Moderator
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6 / 91
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

SARAH AGNES WILSON

Sister Agnes was born November 26, 1914 in Stuart, Virginia the daughter of the late Thomas F. and Mary Rakes Edwards. Her death occurred at the Martinsville Virginia Hospital on October 12, 1990. She was laid to rest at Danview Cemetery in Eden, N.C. on Sunday October 14, 1990. Her funeral was preached by her Associate Pastor, Elder Taylor, of the Cascade Primitive Baptist Church. The funeral was held at Fair's Funeral Home in Eden, N.C.

Agnes was survived by one son: James Otis Wilson of Martinsville, Virginia; one sister: Mrs. G.F. Blalock of Prospect Hill, N.C.; five brothers: Howard T. Edwards of Axton, Va.; J. Albert Edwards of Belmont, N.C.; Willie Edwards of Eden, N.C.; Clarence H. Edwards of Julian, N.C.; Robert C. Edwards of Eden, N.C. and Wayne Edwards of Greensboro, N.C.; one granddaughter: Susan Wilson of Martinsville, Va.

Agnes was married to the late Harry Wilson on September 5, 1930. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in October 1937, and was baptized by her Pastor Elder David Spangler. She loved her church and the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. There are two verses in Proverbs that especially apply to Agnes in Chapter 31 verses 27 and 28 it reads: *"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her hus-*

band also, and he praiseth her."

Although Agnes is sorely missed by her family and friends there are so many wonderful memories of her that I feel truly blessed to have had such a precious sister as she.

Wayne Edwards

GOD'S ATTRIBUTE'S : GOD'S OMNISCIENCE

God's omniscience is that perfection of his nature by which he knows all things most perfectly in himself, by one eternal act, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things best (John 3:20). God is and always was so perfectly wise that nothing ever did, or does, or can elude his knowledge. He knew from all eternity, not only what he, himself, intended to do but also what he would incline and allow others to do. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. God knows nothing now, nor will know nothing hereafter which he did not know and foresee from everlasting. His foreknowledge being co-eternal with himself and extending to everything that is or shall be done (Heb. 4:13). All things which comprise past, present and future are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. God did not decree anything, because he saw it as future, but he foresaw it as future because he decreed it. His being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, showing the knowledge is based upon the determinate counsel. As the London confession reads: *"He hath not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future."* But he foresaw it as future because he decreed it.

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SONG

*I Love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer
saved*

*With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.*

*For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn
vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.*

*Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.*

Dwight.



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EDITORIAL

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.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.



ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

believe this, something has hap-

This scripture seems so simple in wording and likely to be readily agreed to by most people that attend church regularly. I think though to really

pened to strike down the natural man. By grace means we must receive of God the greatest blessing mankind ever received and that it wasn't in the least, merited. By grace are ye saved through faith. Is there salvation any other way? Do you think you deserve any blessing by any action of the creature? There are none good, no not one, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. I'm so thankful, he poured out his grace to hell deserving sinners or there could be no salvation for me. Through faith, faith must also be present as the scriptures list it as a combination of grace through faith. By grace we also receive the faith. Even in the days of the prophets and apostles they had this faith, God given faith, a reason to believe. We must have this in all generations, to believe He is, to believe He can and He will heed to the cry of his children. We read a mother may forget her child but God will never forget His sons. To-day believers in Him must see with an eye of faith, One seated on the right hand of The Majesty on high making intercession for the saints. One can never really pray or worship until we have faith to believe that He is, that He hears, that He is of a ready mind to His crying children. Natural children cry for notice if not they would soon cease, don't you think?

The followers of God follow by faith they're following God, The Savior of sinners. That not of your-

selves, it is the gift of God. It says plainly it's a gift from God. A gift has never been worked for or it wouldn't be a gift would it? For work we receive wages and we read again the wages of sin is death and that's the wages all men are promised. Then we don't want what works will bring, do we? We want what God has promised, saved by grace through faith a gift of God.

Not of works lest any man should boast. If we came as a little child as the scripture says we must, if we see heaven we could not come as a workman. Do all men say not of works? I hear often people working for the Lord. I hear often about leading people to Christ. I hear what God wants us to do. *Rom. 11:6 and if by grace, then is it no more of works, etc.* How much work? The natural man will insert works in spite of himself. We read all works or all grace they will not mix.

I rejoice that His people are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. This people are created in Him, that new man, that inner man born of God, that man chosen of God before the world was, this is, the we, that is spoken of that is to perform good works, ordained that we shall do if His people.

Never let us think a work, ordained of God, determined that men should walk therein by grace through faith, all a gift and blessing of Him

that changes not, was ever devised or thought of by the creature; only by the Holy Spirit.

Let us never surmise one act of the creature is pleasing to Him unless motivated from above.

Elder J.R. Williams

ECCLESIASTES 7 : 1-8.

A Good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

 ARTICLES

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1).

Let us think for a while on the subject of faith. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* Just think for a minute what is contained in that statement, all the controversy that has been over that one thing, God created. Once we have learned something about the size of this world, we realize more fully the magnitude of what is being said. Out of nothing, God created both the heaven and the earth. Scientists tell us that the size of space is unbelievable, that there is no end to it, they claim there are many more galaxies like ours and an untold number of stars. Be that as it may, I am sure they know more about the size and limits of space than I do. They say it is about 93,000,000 miles from the earth to the sun, and it has been pretty well proven that the earth circles the sun every year, which would make quite a trip, yet these scientists say we see only a speck compared to the whole. Now these men with all their learning and wisdom do not or cannot believe God created the heaven and the earth and all things therein. When you stop to consider, it seems impossible, from nothing this vast universe and this wonderful earth was created.

Why do some deny it so strongly, while others believe it so firmly. There is really only one way anyone can believe such a seemingly impossible feat such as this. To believe God created the heaven and the earth, the word has to be mixed with faith, as in Heb. 4:2 where it says about those who had heard the word. It didn't accomplish anything not being mixed with faith. See this is like all of God's mighty works, if a man could believe and understand them with natural wisdom, they would be only man's work, not God's work. This is why we have to believe by faith, God has decreed that we walk by faith and not by sight. This is why the so called wise men do not believe these things and cannot understand them by their natural wisdom, therefore they didn't believe. Whereas a child of God not having all this worldly wisdom, but blessed with a eye of faith has no trouble at all believing.

Look at this wonderful body of ours, from a spiritual point of view we know we have some weakness in the flesh. But still a wonder, as the Psalmist says we are wonderfully made. All these so called men of wisdom can't believe God made man, they can't tell us how man got here, but they still can't believe God made man. A child of God has no trouble believing it, because things one can't see by sight is plain enough by faith. For faith is the evidence of things not seen, see what that means, the evidence of things not seen. Things you can't see with

the natural eye, believe with the natural mind, things too deep for our understanding, faith provides evidence for God's children to believe. We know this earthly body will serve us only as long as the good Lord intended then it will be laid to rest. This is as it should be, dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return. To the world of unbelievers who don't believe God created the heavens and the earth, and made man, this must seem like the end to them. Because if they don't believe all these other works of God, how could they believe it when God says he is the resurrection, stating that he will raise the dead. Just think some of the bodies have lain in the ground for thousands of years, the mighty Pharaohs of Egypt with the slaves who they ruled have long ago returned to dust with countless millions more. But at the command of God, our saviour the graves will open and the dead shall come forth, the sea will give up its dead. Talk about the power of God, sure it will be a mighty and wonderful work, but the children of God do not stagger at the promise of the resurrection; instead they receive their sweetest joy and most comfort from that promise and believe it faithfully.

While we are thinking about the great and wonderful works of our God, consider this one.

The Son of this great God, came down to earth, took upon himself a body like unto ours, (sin excep-

ted) with no earthly father. He came to fulfill the law, to redeem his children from their lost and ruined condition, took their sins upon himself, paid the price of their redemption, gave unto all his children eternal life as heirs and joint heirs with himself to live eternally with him in Glory. In his written word he tells us of these things, but the world cannot believe it, only his children who are blessed with this great faith can lay hold on these promises. The Bible says this faith is sure and stedfast, so as the world with all their mighty men and worldly wisdom, stagger at the words, forever and ever, his little children sing with great joy and much comfort. When we've been there 10,000 years, bright shining as the sun, we've no less days to sing his praise then when we first begun.

Now let us consider 1 Tim. 4:1 *In the latter times some shall depart from the faith.* I have talked with some who believe this scripture to mean, that many who have been blessed with this faith to believe the word and promises of God, will lose this faith, or the faith will get weak and they will not believe in God anymore. Not so. The scripture does not say they will fall from the faith, but rather they will depart from the faith. Doesn't the scripture say, It is sure and stedfast, what God says is sure and stedfast, it will not, in fact cannot fail or grow weak to the point a believer won't believe. The scripture means that many will depart from

this belief and believe other things, such as seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, can't we see already that there are far more, percentage wise following the ways of the world and the evils of the devil, with a lesser number attending church. This all brings out the scripture which says, only a remnant will be saved. The world of unbelievers are following after the things they love, the things they enjoy most, which is out in the world. God's children are also following after the things they love and enjoy most. Those who are blessed with this great faith, love the things pertaining to God, the fellowship of their brethren in the church. So here we see and have the evidence that Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. May some of these words bring a little comfort to some of his dear children, I desire your prayers.

Frank C. Hunt

PSALM 131.

Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.

Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever.

PREDESTINATION

Webster defines the word as follows: "*The purpose of God from eternity, respecting all events.*"

Certain Sophists have crept into the church and by their fallacy are trying to deceive God's children, teaching that predestination is an act of God. It is not an act of God in the same sense as his acts of creation and providence. Webster defines it as His purpose. It is His decree or decision, purpose or predestination, respecting all subsequent acts of Himself and His creatures.

Thus God decreed what he would do through time, also what he would incline or cause his people to do and what he would do through the instrumentality of the wicked, using them as his hand and sword. It is that eternal, most wise, and immutable decree of God, whereby he did from before all time, determine, and ordain to create, dispose of, and direct to some particular end, every person and thing to which he has given, or is yet to give being, and to make the whole creation subservient to and declarative of his own glory. God is so infinitely wise that he in the government of the world causes all his creatures to praise him, the dragons, owls, the wrath of man, and everything that hath breath praise the Lord. His will is the fountain, his decree cut the channel, his providence directs the stream. All things are for our good and his glory.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

"And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." (John 11:43).

Jesus spoke to Lazarus whom he loved; and though Lazarus was dead yet he heard the words of his Lord, which were with power, even power enough to cause him to rise from the dead and live again. Now Jesus loved his people when they were dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1); and when the time has come in the life of a dead sinner when he is to be quickened by the Spirit of God (God's time), Jesus by the same power by which he raised Lazarus from the dead, speaks to the sinner with a still small voice, and kills him to the love of the carnal things of this world; and makes him alive in Christ Jesus. This is done by revealing to the sinner that he is condemned to death by the holy and righteous law of God, and makes him to know that he is worthy of death. With the burden of sin so heavy upon him he is buried beneath the weight of sin to the extent that he is just as helpless to rise from that condition, and free himself, as Lazarus was to rise from the dead to life again.

So when it pleases God, he sends the spirit of his Son into the heart of one who has been made to know that he is dead (dead in sin), and speaks to him by the power of his

Word, which is powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing and dividing asunder the soul and spirit, and joints and marrow; and is a searcher and discerner of the intents of the heart. When this is done it causes the sinner to come forth from the dead to a new life, being born again, not by the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but by the will of God. This is a life that he knows nothing about until he is quickened by Spirit of Christ Jesus; which brings about an awakening to the light and glory of God. Then it is that he can say, or experiences, as Paul did when he said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5:14).

When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he was bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and a napkin was bound about his face; yet he was alive. To free him so he could be active in life, Jesus said, "*Loose him, and let him go.*" (John 11:44) Now when a sinner is raised (quickened) from the dead, he also is bound hand and foot with the bonds of nature, so that he cannot by his own power enter into the perfection of Christ Jesus; neither can he speak of the glory of God, nor understand spiritual things until he is delivered by the power of God from the imperfections of the flesh and corruption, and is clothed with the righteousness of the Son of God, shutting out thoughts of carnal and natural things from his mind, of the Holy

Spirit (mind of Christ) to enter into the heart and soul, giving him faith in the Son of God, and hope of heaven and immortal glory.

This operation in the heart and soul causes one to be delivered in his feeling from under the curse of the law of sin and death. And when this has been experienced, then it is that he is raised up into the perfection of the Son of God, enabling him to worship God in spirit and truth by this spiritual mind that is anchored in the mind and soul, turning him from the evil elements of this world and the love thereof, to a way that is not of himself — to a way that is in Christ Jesus our Lord: a new and living way. In this he is made to feel the power of God, and forgiveness of sin, and is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. However, the time comes when he will again be brought down in low places, causing him to pray to God to be delivered. I believe that each one of God's people who has been born again experiences the need of being delivered from time to time, as Paul did when he said, "... *though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*" (2 Cor. 4:16)

When one experiences the delivering hand of God, he can witness with David in the 23rd Psalm, "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." I believe that David, when he wrote this, was lifted up, and made to feel so close a relationship with God that he

desired to continue in this state the rest of his life: and I believe that each child of God is at times elevated by the power of God to the extent that he is blessed to feel this close relationship with God, and see with an eye of faith single to the glory of God, and behold some of the promises of God which He has in store for his people beyond the grave — for them that look for his second coming into the world; which coming will not be for sin, but to gather together the jewels of God's mercy, and take them to that eternal home in heaven to ever be with the Lord . . .

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) S.R. Boykin

NATURE AND OBJECT OF CHRIST'S DEATH

I urged in my last that there is a certain connection between the crucifixion of Christ and the final salvation of all his people; that is, that the death of Jesus will certainly result in a definite amount of Good. *Isaiah, xxxv: 20, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."*

In this, doubtless, the returning ones are those ransomed. Also, *Isaiah, xlii: 16, "But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, oh,*

Jacob, and he that formed thee, oh, Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee." The reason here assigned why Israel shall fear not is, *"I have redeemed thee."* And, if there is not a certain connection between redemption and salvation, how could the prophet say *"fear not, for I have redeemed thee?"* He also goes on, in this same connection, saying: *"I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers; they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee; I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel."*

All these consoling words are said on the grounds that *"I have redeemed thee."* The prophet continues: *"I will bring thy seed from the east and gather thee from the west. I will say to the north, give up, and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name."* *"For I have created him for my glory; I have formed him,"* In all candor, what stronger language could be employed to set forth God's determination to save his people, north, south, east and west? *"All that are called by his name."* This is true, and being true, apostacy can not possibly be true.

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them

that are with young." Why all this care? Because he, as a *"good shepherd, giveth his life for the sheep."* Therefore, *"they shall not be tempted above that they are able to bear."* *"Neither shall any weapon formed against them prosper."* *"Nor shall any ravenous or destructive beast be in their way."* *"He will give power to the faint among them, and to them that have no might he will increase strength."* Every class is considered. The weak and fainting, the little lambs and those that are with young — all are named. He is a fit person to guide his flock through this desert: 1. Because *"he gave his life for the sheep."* 2. He knows all their foes, both within and without, *"for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom."* 3. *"He has all power in Heaven and in earth in his hands."* 4. He himself has passed all the way before them, and it is written of him, *"he shall save his people from their sins."* Mark the words: *"He shall save his people;"* and who dare say, *"he may fail in any instance?"* In view of this, David could say, *"The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He restoreth my soul; yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. Thou annointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over; surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* Psalms, 23rd.

The very grounds on which this was said was, *"He is my shepherd."* As such he died for me, therefore I will fear no evil. He died for me; poor,

unworthy me. *"Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* All this, because he is my shepherd. Blessed shepherd is this who has the care of saints. *"He will not suffer thy foot to be moved."* *"He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold! he that keepeth Israel will not slumber nor sleep."* Oh, Christian! thou for whom Jesus gave his very life; thou also, who art passing through tribulation, tempted, tried, fainting, weak, often exclaiming: *"When I would do good, evil is present with me;"* oft crying: *"Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?"* Don't forget it; God, your keeper, never sleeps nor slumbers.

"The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand and upon thy left." I repeat my proposition, *"There is as certain and unfrustrable relation between the sufferings of Christ and the deliverance of his people, as there is between the payment of the price and the delivery of the property thus paid for, Who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world,"* etc. Not that we might become clear of it if we could, but that *"He might deliver us."* Every experimental christian believes that God does seek, find, turn and save his people, and waits not for them to turn or even do anything else, but saves sovereignly. It would have been unlawful to deliver us without first redeeming us, therefore the apostle keeps this order in view. Again, *"By one offering he hath forever perfected them that are*

sanctified whereof the Holy Ghost is a witness unto us" — i.e., the Holy Ghost testifies in us and to us of Christ's death, and shows us how that our cruel sins received their due in the sufferings of Christ; how that God is satisfied; how that the law is honored, justice fully met with all its claims, as much so as if you had suffered eternally in hell; how that it was for you and in your stead that Jesus died, and how all this is true and us poor guilty sinners saved. This was Paul's mind when he exclaimed with triumphant joy, , *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect."* *"It is God that justifies; who is he that condemmeth?"*

The Eternal Judge solemnly and in all truth and verity (in view of the death of Christ) says of us, *"just"*. He says this not for anything in or of us, or done by us, but because of what Christ has done for us. *"Now,"* he continues, *who is he that condemmeth?"* Where is a power that can unsay what God has said? Where is the court of appeals? Who can say guilty of those whom God justifies? Now if there is no power above God, and none can set aside his decision, then the final salvation of every one so justified is certain, unless God reverse his own judgment, and this he will not do, for he *"is without variableness or shadow of turning;"* and besides, he knows who and what he justifies, and there can no evil conduct come from one that he justifies that was not by him foreseen, neither can any evil influence beset them that was not also of him foreseen.

Therefore, those whom God justifies are securely *"sealed unto the day of redemption."* To say otherwise is to say that God has taken to himself as a bride, and an heir, and a child, one that he knows will desert him and prove unworthy of the relation in the end, or to say he knew not what or whom he is so loving. Now, just as sure as that God is free of such monstrous imperfections, so sure is the doctrine of the possibility of falling from grace a libel on the character of God.

Paul also assigns the very reason why he justifies, saying *"It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again."* Undoubtedly he understood that Christ's death was the whole ground of our hope, and that in view of his death God could justify, but after showing that Christ has died, thus turning our eyes to the cross where our elder brother and Savior was crucified, he leads us on to his resurrection, as though we were destined to enjoy the same glorious mercy, and that his raising is a pledge to us that our bodies shall participate in the whole of his glory. Then the apostle makes another glorious revelation, saying, *"Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercessions for us."* Thus showing that Christ after his death, resurrection, and ascension, is still intently interested for us— *"Who also maketh intercession for us,"* as though this gives additional strength to our hope. In all, showing that the heart of Jesus is set for us, to die for us, to raise even to heaven for us,

and there before God, like a mighty advocate, to plead for us. All this because we are such poor, erring, sinful beings, so forgetful, so unmindful, that no part of our salvation dare be left for us to make sure. Upon this Paul says, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us";* not through our own strength or doings, but *"through him that loved us."* What a blessed faith he had here — no faith in nor mention of self, or obedience or anything but Jesus; yet a happy, triumphant faith in Jesus, one that hushes all fears. He is our hiding place from every wind and covert from every tempest. David could say, *"I will praise thee, Oh Lord, my strength"* — *"The Lord is my light and my salvation."* He then asks *"Whom shall I fear?"* *"The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?"* Oh, Christian! Christian! If God is thy light, life and strength; if he is thy covert from the tempest and every storm, what can harm thee? Danger and deep trouble may be and are before thee. But oh! look, do look! *"To the hills from which thy help cometh,"* and at the mighty bulwarks around thee and sweetly and safely sing praises to God. Christ, as our advocate, has securely guarded every point. To pay our fearful debt of sin, the dagger of justice he received into his own heart, poured out his own blood, not to make

anything possible, but with his eye fixed on one object, i.e., our salvation. He suffered himself reared up on the cross and there, as a true and faithful shepherd, died. Language fails to express the deep intensity of his love to us. Our own imaginations are too weak to mount up to it, and when he arose from the dead he still remembered the object of his death, and now at the right hand of God he prays for us; makes intercessions for us. So, if apostacy or falling from grace is possible, it is also possible that Christ's blood is thrown away; it is possible that the purchase of his blood will remain forever in hell; possible that his father will not hear and answer his prayers, for he intercedes for us, and prays for every believer; possible that Jesus, after all his pains, and after all that has been said of the virtue of his blood, and his power to save, and after all that we have hoped or believed of his influence power in winning the hearts of sinners — yet after all this he may be sadly disappointed. Heaven's expected guests dragged down to hell; seats in heaven unoccupied; God's will not done (which was, that "*of all thou hast given me I should lose nothing.*") The devil a victor (at least to some extent), and we know that such fearful events as these can not occur as long as God is the God of heaven and earth, and therefore we know that apostacy can not be possible.

Jas. H. Oliphant

RECIPE FOR MAKING COMMUNION BREAD

About one-half cup of Plain (not self rising) flour. Sift into a small bowl, and add only just enough cold water to barely moisten the flour. The dough needs to be **STIFF**. At first it will hardly cling together but, after kneading, the dough gets smoother, and almost "Shiny".

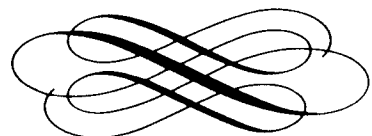
Knead until perfectly smooth, sometimes until you hear the dough begin to "crack", (too much kneading will cause the dough to "blister").

Make out in four small biscuits and roll about as thin as ordinary pie crust, turning round and round to keep it shapely.

Check off with wheel pastry cutter or a dull knife into 3/4 inch squares, which makes it easier for breaking; prick rather closely with fork and bake in NOT too quick an oven. I usually sit right by oven to watch. The bread is nicest when baked to a deep cream shade.

The cakes may be cut square or in banquet cracker shape, if you prefer, but I have liked to make the little round cakes as my mother used to do.

If it should be necessary to make the bread a day or so ahead, by putting it in oven a moment till hot, it will be as fresh and crisp as if freshly baked.



ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(Last Editorial on the subject by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the "Signs of the Times," 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 preaching 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."* — *Ephesians i. 11.* *"Declaring the end from the begin-*

ning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah 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 upon the throne, and worship Him that liveth forever 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."—Revelation 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 forever. Amen."—Romans xi. 33-36.

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, how, or 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 please; 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 long-suffering 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."—Romans ix. 21-23. Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all His pleasure in the army 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 spreadth 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 His thick cloud, and *"given to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment"* (*Proverbs 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 without 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 showeth His handiwork?"*

But say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal govern-

ment 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 bloodthirsty men or devils unrestricted by His predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything 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 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, or 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 good 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 had 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, them 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 the 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 the good 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 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 work, 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 Potiphar'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 Pharaoh and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharaoh 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 Pharaoh 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. 17-22.

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 the 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 transgression of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty of 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 army 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 by 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 His 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 to-day the full control, had He not the same control yesterday and forever? If He has not the full control to-day, 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 all 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 dissolution 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.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7 / 91
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

ISAIAH 66 : 1-2.

Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is he place of my rest?

For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July, 1991. The church is located off highway #221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd turn left onto road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right onto road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, fifth Sunday in June at Big Meadows Church, Chatham County. Take 1-85 North and take the Pittsboro - Graham exit on highway #87. Go approximately 17 miles and turn right after crossing Cane Creek Bridge. Go 4 miles to cross roads and turn left — Go 1 mile to church. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and meet with us. Ministers of our faith and order are especially invited. Song service will begin at 10:00 and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Deacon Casey Johnson, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

Tommie Batts, NC	5.00
Ms. Edna Simpson, AR	2.00
Joseph Plaster, VA	5.00
Mrs. Phyllis Farlow, MD	2.00
Tillman R. Pullig, TX	2.00
Eld. Amos Hash, VA	2.00
Bert H. Knox, WA	10.00
J.O. Harrod, AR	2.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL	5.00
Mrs. Mila L. Vantrease, IL	2.00
James B. Pugh, Jr., AL	2.00
Mrs. Ruby S. Barron, LA	7.00
William E. Mitchell, VA	5.00
H.L. Knight, NC	7.00
James T. Howard, AL	7.00
Eld. John T. Wingfield, VA	4.00
Eunice C. Thompson, NC	15.00
Ruby L. Ogburn, NC	5.00
Miss Catherine Houchins, VA	2.00
Eld. Ben F. Preston, OR	7.00
G.R. Slate, NC	2.00

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Editors

 OBITUARIES

SISTER MARY DIX BRINEGAR

Sister Mary Brinegar (Aunt Mary) of Spencer, Virginia was born December 13, 1900 to Larkin and Mollie Dix. Our Lord saw fit to call her home on January 22, 1991 at the age of 90. Sister Brinegar was married to Hardy Joyce and Alva Pratt, both of whom predeceased her. Surviving are her husband, William A. Brinegar, and one sister, Essie Moose of Reidsville, North Carolina.

Sister Brinegar united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and attended as regularly as she could. She always enjoyed the preaching and singing and was a firm believer in salvation by grace and the resurrection of the dead. In writings found after her homegoing, she confirmed her belief in predestination saying that she believed God's elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and that the Lord's people are born again of the spirit. She also wrote that she was "looking for that bright and cloudless morning when the dead in Christ shall rise and if we be among the chosen, eternal life will be the prize."

Sister Brinegar's funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key, and by Pastor Bruce Hunter. She was laid to rest in the Church

cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord when this mortal must put on immortality and death is swallowed up in victory. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. What a glorious day that will be.

We will all miss her, but we know that our loss is her eternal gain for it must surely be joy unspeakable to be with the Lord. May God comfort the family as only He can.

Jean Moran

THELMA D. DICKERSON

Minnie Thelma Davis Dickerson was born near the Governor Glenn farm in Rockingham County on December 10, 1905, to Richard Barnett and Betty Florence Page Davis. She joined the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1975. She died on February 6, 1991 after a brief illness.

When her mother passed away while she was just five years old, she and her sister, Bessie, went to live with their Uncle Martin and Aunt Minnie Blackwell Davis in the Mayfield Community.

She was married to James Wesley "Buddy" Dickerson on January 26, 1927. Living on a farm in the Happy Home-Mayfield Community, they reared six children. One son, Harold

Penn preceded her in death. The surviving children are daughters, Mrs. Ruby D. Moore, Summerfield, NC; Mrs. Louise D. Edwards, Monroe, NC; Mrs. Leola D. Meador, Ruffin, NC; and Mrs. Lucille D. Blankenship, Reidsville, NC. One son, Claude Franklin Dickerson, Sr., Jacksonville, Fl. She is survived by one sister, Bessie D. Barber, Ruffin, NC. There are sixteen surviving grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Her husband, joined Dan River in August, 1954. They were faithful to take the family to church and the annual associations. Her husband helped haul the logs and build the present church building during the early 1940's. He also hauled dirt with his horses and wagon to fill in and get the cemetery upgraded. He was also instrumental in helping establish one of the very first church perpetual cemetery funds for upkeep which has been a forerunner copied by many other churches of several denominations in the area.

Both she and her husband gave of their time and talents to the community. She was a fifty year member of the Happy Home-Mayfield Extension Homemakers, member of the Area Development Association, Rockingham County Beautification Committee, one of the eighteen NC Mothers of the Year honored in 1970, a member of the Rockingham County Farm Bureau Women's Committee and was inducted into the NC 4-H Leaders Hall of Fame in 1987 for over fifty years of 4-H Leadership

and service.

She loved to sing and regularly attended the second Sunday night singing at Dan River and often those at Malmaison Church. She and a number of the church sisters attended one of the churches of our faith almost every Sunday throughout the years. They visited in the home of members, the sick, those in nursing homes and hospitals. She enjoyed visiting others and sharing her experiences. She was blessed to be up and around until the last few days of her path here on earth.

In the absence of her pastor, the funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood W. Wray. He used the text from I Thessalonians 4: 15-18. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection when *"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."* She had loved flowers and grew so many beautiful ones in her garden and often shared them with her friends and neighbors.

By her daughter,
Leola D. Meador

PSALM 64 : 9-10.

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

BROTHER RODOLPH RAYNOR

Brother Rodolph "Roe" Raynor of Richlands, N.C. departed this world December 24, 1990. The funeral services were conducted by Elder Oliver Allen and Elder J.T. Prescott. Brother Raynor was a life-long resident of Onslow County, N.C., born July 31, 1907. He is survived by his widow, Sister Leona Gurganus Raynor, to whom he was married October 14, 1931.

Brother Raynor united with Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church April 20, 1976. He was baptized by Elder Harmon Brown, assisted by Deacon Albert Manning. He remained a member there until February 7, 1987. Both he and his wife were received on confession of faith by Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church June 25, 1988.

A great love for the Church was manifested by Brother Raynor. He attended church meetings as long as he was physically able. His presence is missed very much, but we trust our loss is his gain.

Other survivors include a daughter, Lois Dean Horne of Richlands; a brother, John Raynor of Afton, Va.; two sisters, Sister Peanie Yopp of Jacksonville, N.C., and Lucy Petty of Pittsboro; three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Written by requests of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church and Sister Leona Raynor.

Evelyn Pratt

BEULAH SKINNER TAYLOR

Beulah Skinner Taylor was born June 1, 1888 to James Rant and Lucinda Skinner. She had five brothers and three sisters. She was married to Henry Taylor who preceded her in death. To this union two children were born, Edgar Taylor and Altha Taylor McGee. Both children are deceased.

Sister Taylor passed away from the walks of this life on Thursday, February 28, 1991 at the age of 102. She was survived by one brother, Gilbert Skinner, four grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren and five great great grandchildren. She also left a number of nieces and nephews.

Funeral services for Sister Taylor were held at Goodwin Funeral Home at Cadiz, Ky. on March 2, 1991, at 2 p.m. Rev. Shoney Oliver conducted the funeral with music by Mae Pardue. Her body was laid to rest to await the resurrection morning in the Futrell Cemetery on Donaldson Creek at her parent's home place.

Sister Taylor joined Dry Creek Primitive Baptist Church, August 1921 and she was appointed Clerk in 1928. She served as Clerk until 1953. She was a firm believer of the old Primitive Baptist Doctrine and was a faithful member of the church as long as her health permitted her to attend.

In respectful memory,
Dean S. Noel, Clerk
Dry Creek Primitive Baptist Church

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SONG

*There is a friend that sticketh fast,
And keeps his love from first to last,*

And Jesus is his name:

*An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,*

But Jesus is the same.

*He loves his people great and small,
And grasping hard embraceth all,
Nor with a soul will part:*

*No tribulations which they feel,
No foes on earth, or fiends of hell,
Shall tear them from his heart.*

*His love before all time began,
Shall through all time the same remain,*

And evermore endure:

*Though rods and frowns are some-
times brought,*

And man may change, He changeth not,

His love abideth sure.

The law demanded blood for blood,

*And out he poured his vital flood
To pay the mighty debt!*

*He toils through life, and pants
through death,*

*And cries with his expiring breath,
" 'Tis finished," and complete.*

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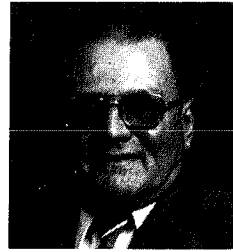
ECCLESIASTES 5:18-20

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.

Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

EDITORIAL



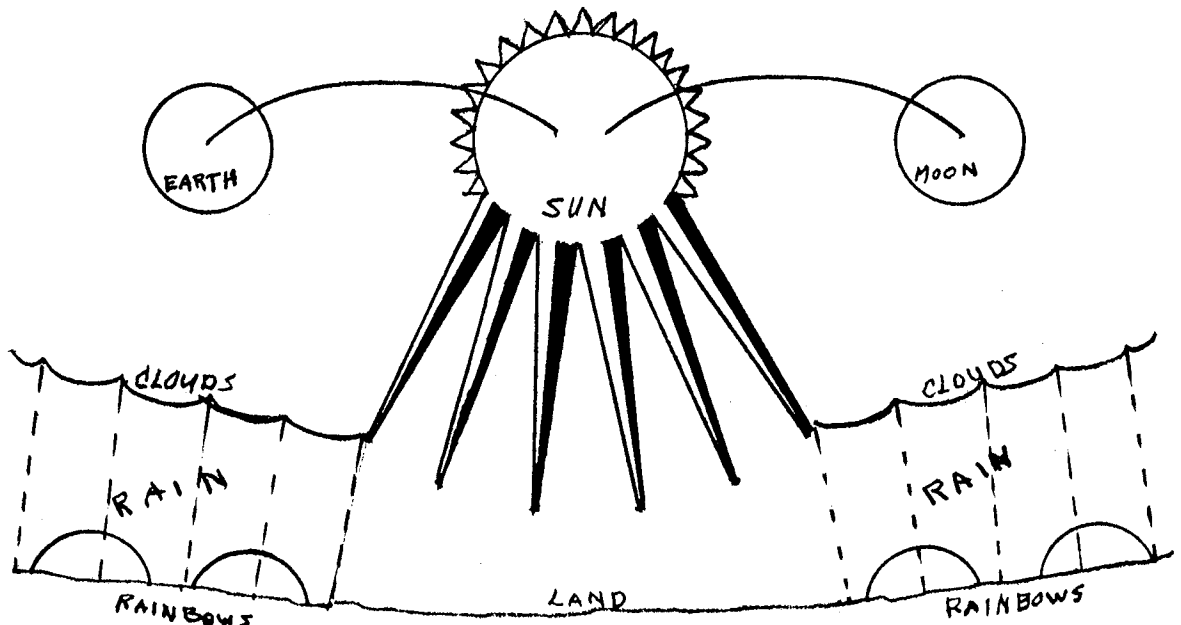
Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

T here is a force of compelling desire to write of an experience I had on the trip we made in May of 1990. I hope to express as best I can what I saw and explained to Brother Jamie Cooper.

In Mitchell, S. D. there is a very unique building called the Corn Palace. The exterior is completely covered with corn of different colors and grains that are grown in the area. There is a large auditorium inside with pictures made with corn of different colors. The pictures were made by an indian who had suffered many afflictions in his life. He desired to learn the language of the white man and because he would slip away to school he was an outcast of his own family. He suffered intimidation, an incurable eye disease and some form of asthma in his later days.

I was totally captivated with what I felt and saw in the pictures and wonder if that indian had his mind on Heavenly thoughts - I shall never know I'm sure. I would like to have talked with this man for I feel he knew something of our God. I feel he had been taught in a way he understood (for Christ comes in a personal way and at a level his people understand) some of the wonders of Grace. I now with fear pursue the task before me.

We saw over the stage a picture reaching from one side of the room to the other. I am no artist but will try to draw enough for you to see the endeavors of the indian.



This picture and six others (three on the walls on either side of the auditorium) making a total of seven are what opened to me a realm of heavenly light if not deceived.

Now we begin with what is first and foremost always - three heavenly bodies denoting the deity - God the father, God the Son, and the Holy Ghost. We also consider the number seven as a complete number in the scriptures as well as the seven angels, churches and candlesticks so often mentioned. Did this indian see the fulness of these things?

We see six beams of light coming down to land devoting the six days of creation. These beams are half white and half black as the evening and morning was the first day etc.

(Gen. 1) These beams being divided then comprise twelve parts (another complete number) and the number of the tribes of Israel. We know as the beams reach over the land that Israel was to spread over the earth and God commanded and Moses and Joshua led. (Joshua Chap. 4 & 5).

We see clouds spread under the heavens and rain coming down to land. We see in this the heavens opened and the flood of Noah's day. (Gen. 7) We then behold the rainbows or the covenant of God with Noah and all the earth. (Gen. 9) The evidence of this covenant is ours even today for when the storm is past we behold the bow in the cloud which causes us to always look up toward the heavenly bodies.

There is more in the rain that we see than just the flood. There are five lines on either side denoting the five books of the law. The total of both sides is ten, the same as the so-called ten commandments. These commandments touch the rainbows and thus are covered in the promise of God (the covenant) through Jesus Christ. (Gen. 34:28) We also note that Isaiah in chap. 55:10 expresses that the rain comes down and the snow from heaven and the earth flourishes for the benefit of man.

We now will attempt to touch upon other pictures previously mentioned. We will number them 1, 2, 3 etc. as I try to point out views of merit.

1. This picture shows two people with one planting and one harvesting. They are surely trusting in God and mother earth for food on which to survive. The mind considers that God has made a promise that as long as the world stands there shall be seed time and harvest. (Gen. 8:21-22.) We thus understand Solomon writing in Eccl. chap. 3, a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted.

2. The next picture is one of a person beside a campfire and in the background all is covered with snow. This too embodies the word of Gen. 8:21-22 that heat and cold, summer and winter and day and night shall come and go as long as the earth exists. This one also gives reference to the sun and moon and earth in the large picture before discussed. The warmth and light of the sun

which is the natural basis for all living things stems from heavenly power. The light of the moon is a cold light and is borrowed as it were from the sun. The glory of the moon stems from the sun and thus is proof that we as carnal men have no glory (light) of our own but that it is borrowed for a time. God loans us the light of Christ for a season and we are mindful that we cannot bring that light into being.

3. This picture is of a woman giving food to what appears to be a traveler. We thus think of Elizah who asked a woman for food as he traveled. The answer she gave was that she had but a little meal and oil left and she was preparing that knowing when it was gone she and her son would die. (1 Kings 17: 12, 14, 16). We find though that the meal and oil never gave out and this is symbolic of the storehouse of Grace. We find the barrel and cruse (Grace) always in supply and know from whence it comes. God blesses His people in many ways and forms and these blessings oftentimes come through another individual because God has touched their heart.

4. This one depicts two indians, one shelling corn and the other preparing some to be consumed. We immediately think of Joseph and Israel (Jacob) and the corn that was shelled and ready for Joseph's family even before the need arose. (Gen. chap. 42) Joseph who as a type of Christ had charge of the storehouses of Pharaoh would give to his brethren

freely as our brother in love Jesus Christ freely gives to us. This corn clearly denotes grace and the perfect work of salvation by Christ. The corn was ready in every sense to be poured into the bags of those starving individuals. It takes no effort or self works to obtain Grace or mercy for its free as Joseph's brothers learned it could not be paid for.

Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 4:7 that He (God) has given us treasures in earthen vessels. Thus God pours into our bag (earthly being) that which will cause famine to end. We are a hungry people and surely must depend on heavenly manna as it seemeth good to our God to give. There is also in the background what appears as buffalo and lush vegetation and we think of Joseph sending for Jacob to come and dwell in a land of plenty in Goshen. We believe Christ will come for us some day that we may dwell forever in a perfect world of bliss.

5. This one is of three individuals killing birds for food. This denotes of itself the God head (Deity) for it is He who supplies and feeds us. We know that when Moses was leading the children of Israel through the wilderness they desired meat for food. (Ex. 16:13). God sent quails to be a feast for them and thus their prayers were answered. There is also another occasion when God sent quails (Num. 11:30-34) but these were sent to admonish Israel because they were beginning to listen to false prophets. God has many ways of teaching us

and always as an expression of His love.

6. This picture shows a being in what appears to be a long robe and there seems to be a halo over the head. This person is looking at what appears a building partially destroyed or not yet complete. We think of a time with Elijah when the alters and temples were torn down and he said they had slain the priests and sought his life also.

We know of the great temple that Solomon built and of the different woods and stones used in its construction. The picture shows different colors in the wall, porch and pillars. We think of all the different peoples that the true temple (church) will be made of. God deals with us in order we be accepted for the temple and as no sound of tool was heard in the building of Solomons temple so no works can make us fit to till our place in the church. (Rev. 5:9) There are three parts shown of the building here pictured and we are reminded that Christ said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again"

(St. John 2:19, 20, 21) We understand He was speaking of His body, His death and His resurrection. We believe that because of Him we shall be resurrected on that great day and will have our place in that eternal temple not made with hands.

Now beloved if I have offended anyone please forgive me and count any mistakes as mine for our God has never made any. If there be

any merit in this writing give God all the praise, honor and Glory that He blessed that indian to build and this lovely creature to behold.

Praise His Holy Name,
Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

NOTICE

May 19, 1991

This is to certify that the church known as Pleasant Valley Primitive Baptist Church of Kingman, Kansas met this day to grant the wish of the pastor, Elder W. A. Winfrey, that the above named church be dissolved.

Pleasant Valley Church was organized in the late 1890's by Elder J. B. Hardy. W. F. and Eliza Winfrey, parents of the present pastor, and A. E. Combs, his maternal grandfather, were charter members.

It is with sadness that he has asked to be relieved of his church duties, but due to the distance Elder and Mrs. Winfrey must travel to and from meeting; both being 82 years of age and neither in good health, they feel that they cannot continue to make the trip.

Elder Winfrey hopes the church in Kingman will someday obtain another pastor and be revived.

With the fondest memories of the love shown by the brethren and friends and of visiting brethren who came in contact with us in Kingman.

May you at times remember us in your prayers and have a little love for us in your hearts. Even though we are small in number, we have a big belief in sound doctrine and we have kept the faith. Goodby until we may meet again.

A special thanks to God for the faithfulness of Brother and Sister Richardson.

May the covenant-keeping God keep you as he did Jacob when He found him in the wilderness.

W. A. Winfrey, Pastor
Maradell Richardson, Clerk
Robert E. Richardson, Deacon

ST. MATTHEW 5: 2-11.

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

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.

 ARTICLES

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Messengers and Elders that compose the Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association and to our Correspondents -

Greetings:

According to the law of averages, this will be the last circular letter, I shall ever write. So we might call it a farewell address.

I implore you that we might make this a time to associate, rather than to legislate and all that is within us seek to keep peace. May this association never attempt to Lord over the churches that it is composed of. May it not interfere with the internal affairs of our Sister Associations. Above all, let us remember that we too are frail.

Let the beautiful words of the bible - grace, patience, longsuffering, forbearance, forgiveness, and charity, which is the love of God, rule in our hearts. When we add all the good sermons, all the sweet fellowship, all the good meetings, and the precious memories of days gone by, and subtract peace from it, we have nothing left.

The time is soon coming when our voices will be silent. The earth will claim our bodies. "The mourners

go about the streets. Because man goeth to his long home." (Ecclesiastes 12-5).

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (Colossians 3:15).

O. K. Tench

CHURCHES I HAVE SERVED

BY

O. K. TENCH

It won't be too long that my voice will be silent and my service shall end. Not for any glory that's due me, for by the grace of God, I am what I am. If in my life or ministry, someone has felt to have been benefited . . . give God the praise. Perhaps, after I am gone, someone might like to know what I believed and where I served.

I was born January 23, 1911. My parents were Isham F. Tench and Sallie L. "Campbell" Tench. I was the third of seven children. My life was like most of poor boys. I went to school until I was thirteen years old, barely finished the seventh grade. In 1926, my parents sent me to Ferrum Training School which was very religious at that time. The first night I was there, we were told to go to our rooms and pray and if our roommates refused, to report to the authorities and they would take

care of them. At that time, I thought everybody there but me was a Christian. I felt to be such a sinner that I was afraid to try to pray. On Sunday, the only Sunday I was there, we had to go to church. It has been fifty eight years ago, yet I can close my eyes and see that scene. The president sitting inside of the round railing during the service and a group of students kneeling around the outside. This service I witnessed there caused me to want to leave the place more than any other thing. I felt that I would be forced to engage in this worship. So after six (6) days, I came back home. My mother was very disappointed. As time passed, I still had serious feelings about my soul. At a revival meeting, the old minister said, if we would give him our hand or join the church, the things that caused us to sin or our unworthy feelings would be taken away. So I went up with others that were joining. I remember one lady saying to me, "Kinsey, I am glad you have joined the church, you have always been a good boy." Down in my heart, I knew it wasn't true. The next day I was miserable, now I had become a hypocrite. I thought maybe when I was baptized, maybe I would feel better, but this also failed to give me relief. Then I thought when I take communion, I'll feel better. After the one time, I was so condemned, I never took it again. One of the members said to me, you must have done something wrong, yet he would get drunk and still take it. I still went

there, but took no part in the service. I started to dance, but never really learned how. But then I began to be miserable on the dance floor.

One Sunday, on the outside of the church a boy said that the bible said, "Jacob have I loved" and "Esau have I hated" and I disputed it but he told me where to find it. I found the scripture and began to read and had never read before. I found that the bible taught election, but I wasn't in it. There became a great conflict in my life. It seemed that there were two of me - one was against the other. I began to talk of the bible to anyone who would listen. I really didn't know who believed this doctrine. But when I went among the Old Baptists, I could detect a difference in their preaching and others. In my mind, I could see each of them building as if it were a house of logs. The difference was the Old Baptists finished it and topped it off, while the others always left it unfinished, as if I had to finish it. I could find no comfort in this doctrine. Also, when I began to talk on the scripture, someone would say, if they didn't believe it, "That's Old Baptist Doctrine". Others who believed it would say, "You are going to preach". I began going down to Old Chapel Church to hear Elder Stegall and I found comfort in the gospel of grace. But I became afraid if I kept going, I was going to join. One Saturday afternoon when they had services down there I had a great conflict of mind, I decided to take the mule and plow that afternoon. I got

about half way to the field when something caused me to rush the old mule back to the farm and get ready as quickly as I could and go to church. In the year of 1930, something very drastic happened to me. I think for a few days, I was very disturbed in mind. I left home on a T-Model Ford car and went to Roanoke. As I think of those days, I have a very hazy memory. I found myself staying just a few doors from the Old Baptist Church. On a Sunday, I went into their service. It seemed I had just found a home. However, I did not join that day. But since that day, I have never doubted the Old Baptist is the true church. These were the depression days, but I got a very poor paying job and worked there a few months. I was satisfied just to go to church for awhile. But one day, Elder J. P. Helms was preaching about the shepherds hearing the angels, saying glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to men. I couldn't keep my seat; I went up and was received in the church. I didn't know anyone there and they didn't know me. They asked me about being baptized and I told them I had been baptized. They said, they didn't accept that, so I left then and came home. After a few weeks I became anxious about it and asked Elder Stegall to baptize me. One cool morning in May, he baptized me, and something was left there that hasn't bothered me since.

I had my membership at Old Chapel. Then I became impressed

to preach, and Elder Stegall encouraged me. I went with him to meetings. We went to Town Creek Church and stayed all night at Dock Davis's home. They had a service at someone's home that night and we went. Several preachers preached and I couldn't hold back any longer, so I got up and tried to talk a few minutes. I really don't remember what I said. Elder Stegall was very kind to me under this burden. At times at Old Chapel and Bethel where I was known, I tried to preach without much liberty, until one Saturday afternoon at Old Chapel. It seemed to me as I began to talk, the words flowed to me and the most pleasant sensation I had ever had. The members rejoiced with me. And me a fool, thought . . . Now I have learned how and it is so pleasant and easy. In my folly, I thought now that I had learned how, - I'll dress up tomorrow and come here and really preach.

I believe now the Lord had a lesson for me. The next day it rained so hard nobody went, and it was six months before I had liberty anymore. Now after 50 years, I know that I can't preach, unless it's given to me at the time. In the year of 1937, I was ordained. That year I was called to Union Church. I went the first time on the first Sunday in October 1937. I had married on Friday before.

In the year of 1938, I was called to Weatherford, which I am still serving. After six years, I gave up Union Church because of the lack of interest of the members. I had

concluded that the Lord had not called me there.

In the year of 1946, I was called to Chapel Church, where I am still serving. In 1947, I was called to Springfield, where I am also still serving. In 1952, I was called to Malmaison Church and am still serving there. I think sometimes I am greatly blessed to have these churches.

I was quite a bit younger in the year of 1937, and I would like to recall some of the pleasant memories of the past when I started to Weatherford. There was a little boy named Raymond Goad, just three years old who came with his parents and often sat with his grandfather. I saw him grow up to manhood. In the meantime, I baptized his grandfather and his mother. After he had sown his wild oats, I baptized him and his wife, Phyllis, and his sisters, Mabel and Dianne. I shall never forget going with Raymond and Phyllis' home one day for lunch. We sat down to eat and I felt impressed to encourage them to join the church, they both began to shed tears. The next month, they were received. After a few years, Raymond was burdened to preach. We think he has a great gift. Most of the old members who were there at Weatherford in 1938 have passed on. We now have about 50 or 60. One Sunday, I baptized 12. Some of them went to Springfield, some went to Malmaison and some to Weatherford. We have good attendance. A lot of young people, boys and girls, bring their friends, which we appreciate.

In the year of 1946, after I had served Chapel Church several years as the pastor, Elder Stegall had been absent serving Roanoke Church. After He resigned, they called me to serve. We now have 18 members, as the older ones passed on, others come in. I baptized 5 on one Sunday. We have good attendance.

In 1947, I was called to serve Springfield. Elder Stegall's health had failed. Several years ago, Elder Denver Simpson felt impressed to preach, and is now serving as co-pastor. Under his leadership, the building has had many improvements such as new pews, and an addition with tables and bathrooms. I couldn't name all the members I have pleasant memories of. I think often of brother Louis Willis, a deacon who I baptized - the most spiritual man I ever knew. Sometimes, it seems I can hear him say "Amen" when a preacher said something that he loved.

Another member, Raymond Dalton, a deacon who carried mail until retirement. Before we had telephone service up here, when I needed to conduct a funeral at Gretna, many a night have I heard a car drive up to my yard, and maybe I had already gone to bed, but I'd come to the upstairs window and he'd call, "Brother Tench, they want you to hold a funeral service" - many of them I didn't know.

I wonder how many funerals I have had, and tried to remember them a few years ago, but after four or five hundred, I knew I couldn't

remember them all. I baptized a young man named Melvin Shelton at Springfield, who was impressed to preach. After a period of time, he went to another church and now he is their pastor.

In the year of 1952, I was discharged from Roanoke Church where I'd been supplying.

Upon receiving a letter from Malmaison Church, I went and have been going since. I have many pleasant memories of things that happened there. Years ago, a lady came to me and said, "I am a member of the Methodist Church - they are good friends of mine, but I am not happy there, and I want to join Malmaison." I advised her to go there and tell them just how she felt and then to come back. I thought if she was sincere, she'd be back. She took my advice and came back with the blessings of her former friends. I baptized her and she became a faithful member until she died.

Time and space will not permit me to mention all the members and memories. But sister Kate Dodd, who passed away two years ago, was a person to someone who knew her, you just couldn't forget. She was clerk at Malmaison for many years. She had her place to sit and she said what she thought. She attended long after her body told her she wasn't able to. If one tried to help her, she would say, "Get out of my way." I can still close my eyes and look to the left of the pulpit and see her sitting there looking like she was asleep,

but she wasn't.

Sister Mattie Williams who passed away several years ago, had her place that she always sat. When we built the new church, she found the same geographical location in the new church that she had in the old one and sat there. She was facing from the pulpit about the center of the left row of pews about the third pew from the front. She was very kind to me and faithful to the church. It has been a pleasure to baptize two of her sons, Julian and Burnell and the daughter, Naomi. After brother Julian joined the church, he'd write me rich letters. I asked him if he was impressed to preach, he denied it. But it was like fire shut up in his bones, he couldn't resist it. He is now co-pastor at Malmaison and is serving other churches. Brother Burnell Williams is a deacon at Malmaison and song leader - one of the best that I know.

I regret that there isn't space enough or time enough to mention all the members of these churches we've tried to serve. But I'd like to mention the deacons who have taken much of the load and responsibility off of me and are such a blessing to the churches.

As an overseer an elder is called to have faithful deacons to council with; this is a great blessing. The deacons at Malmaison are Burnell Williams and Richard Stegall. At Springfield, Homie Dalton and Walter Hamlett. At Weatherford, Stafford Houston and Marvin Brumfield. At

Chapel, Clay Brown and Fred Murphy.

I don't know how long I'll live or how much longer I'll be needed at these churches, but I have no ambition other than to finish my course in the service that I feel to be called to.

Elder Tench died May 24, 1991.
(See obituary this issue.)

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (St. John 14:27).

Pace I leave with you, can you think of anything better, Peace — even the word has a sweet peaceful sound — Peace, peace I leave with you. The Good Lord was about to finish his earthly mission, soon to lay down his life here on earth and return to the Father, he would soon be leaving these apostles so he was telling them now. Trying to prepare them for what lay ahead. These apostles at this time were not well grounded in the faith, as they would be later, they had of course been taught by Jesus, learned a lot from being with him all the time. But much more was to come their way with the passing of time. But now at this present time they were disillusioned, they had expected things to be somewhat different, they had been blessed with love for this their friend

Jesus, and now he was leaving them. They told him they knew not the way so how could they follow him. Peter said, Lord why can't I follow thee, I will lay down my life for thee. So now as they were in deep sorrow, hurt because of Jesus leaving them, after all they had been together and close for some time, Jesus said unto them. Peace I give unto you my peace I leave with you. Do you know of anything better Jesus could have said unto them, or anything better he could have left with them. In a time of deep loss, grief, sadness and disappointment what could be better then to have peace. This blessed peace that takes away all these troubles and trials from a man's heart and mind. There is a hope instilled within the breast of man, this hope makes one not ashamed, see it is the Holy Spirit abiding within. This action then by its power and growth gives a man what we know as blessed assurance, all this is done by the work of the Holy Spirit, for doesn't the scripture say, the Spirit must the work perform. This I have been describing here is spoken of in the scripture as the new birth or being born again. This action and these things take place with a man at such a time and manner as is pleasing to the Good Lord. The result being, that this person may, can, or will be blessed with this wonderful peace. One way the Spirit accomplishes this is, it causes man to see the natural or material things of this world to be all vanity, the things he once thought to be so important he is now shown

they are less than nothing and will all vanish with the using. Not only is he given to see their unimportance, but the love, the desire for these things have been taken away, the things he once wanted and desired has no appeal to him now. His appetite has been changed, see now it takes spiritual things to satisfy a spiritual man, because now he has experienced a new birth, now he is a different person.

Now with a different love and view of things about him, all these natural or material things which happen and cause trouble, sadness, heartbreak and sorrow, don't bother him now as they once did because he sees they are not that important anymore. So now can come this wonderful blessing, Peace. My peace I leave with you, with natural troubles of this world losing their value to him, this person can now enjoy peace from the Lord. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you, this gift from the Lord is surely not as the world giveth, to begin with the world doesn't have a gift such as this, the world can give troubles, heartaches, sorrows, persecution and all sorts of this type thing. The world can promise this, that and the other but all its promises are subject to the whims of men or laws of government, they are all subject to failure with no dependence to be placed in any of them. However when God makes a promise it is both sure and steadfast, no way possible for it to fail, after all it is impossible for God to lie, and Him with all power how

could it fail to happen. So when he told his apostles, my peace I leave with you, he meant just that. He didn't say they would never again have any trouble or sorrow because we are promised that, it is left on record that they did enjoy this blessed peace. For instance once when Paul and Silas was bound in jail, not knowing what the morrow might hold, they were heard singing praises to their God. Do you believe the bars or locked doors had them worried, don't you believe they were enjoying a sweet peace within, My peace I leave with you. Many more examples such as this have been recorded in the scripture, I could look them up and write them here, but I believe this one will suffice.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, ye believe in God, believe also in me. What gracious words to say to this small group of men who were soon to go through such trying experiences, they would see the great mass of people turn against their Lord, see him suffer cruel and shameful things even unto death, and death even by cruel crucifixion. As followers of Jesus, believing his teachings, being his apostles they could under these circumstances expect the worse, Jesus knowing all that was going to happen, also knowing their every fear and weakness, knowing also the heart and minds of the wicked, had this to say. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. How comforting this must have been

to these men at such a time as this, fear not what the world can do to you. Far greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. It is only natural for men to fear the unknown, and at that time death was an unknown something to dread, but no longer does it remain unknown, for God has lain down his life in death, then took it up again, proving that he has the power over death, hell and the grave. Now he can say, O grave where is the victory? So now men don't have the fear of death as they once did, because of what Jesus did and what he has promised. Most all men I guess fear the messenger of death, for we know not what kind of death awaits us, and we all know some are quite painful while others are blessed to pass away quietly in their sleep. But the dread of death, the unknown factor has been removed, and we have this great promise. I am the resurrection, and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. So now to a believer we know that Jesus is there on the other side of death, with power enough to bring us through, power enough to raise us from the grave on that great day, and Love enough that we can rest assured it will happen. Let not your heart be troubled, how we need to heed these words. How often, how many times are we troubled over things that don't amount to nothing. I firmly believe all our blessings come from God, we can't even count our blessings unless he in his tender mercy shows them

to us. But I do believe that sometimes we allow ourselves to be troubled or upset over little things that shouldn't matter. Jesus said, I am come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I do believe my life would be better if I thought more often on, let not your heart be troubled, instead of the things I do sometime.

All things work together for good, to those who love the Lord, to those who are the called according to his purpose. Some of these things that are working together for our good, does not always have to be good at the present, but like the scripture says, they are working for our good. He also says I will never leave or forsake you. With all these blessed promises from such a God as is ours, why should we not take heed and let not our heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

I desire your prayers, with love
a brother, I hope
Frank Hunt
102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153

ST. JOHN 15: 11-14.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

And I, brethren, when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of men's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. (1 Cor. 2:1-4).

As the Saviour came under the law and dwelt among and lived among those under the law, even so, He taught them to pray and His manner of praying while under it. Equally so, when He had finished the day's work (John 9:4). He then taught them His prayer (John 17). Thus we find full instruction for every precept and example given in the Bible. This is true in this day of preaching to the Gentiles. The Holy Spirit is our Guide into all truth (John 16:13), and Jesus made the day's journey into this low ground and then performed the day's work to a jot and a tittle. There is a "thus saith the Lord" for every step of the way, and He hath not left us comfortless.

The manner in which Paul came to Corinth is the only way to be found in the written testimony of Jesus Christ, and there is no need to

seek any other way among the works of men. Dear yoke-fellow in the ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, will you examine with me the manner in which Paul appeared before these brethren? And will you beg the Lord to verify the truth as He leads us into it by leading us to examine ourselves as to whether we have a "thus saith the Lord" for our manner of appearing before the saints of God? There is an injunction to the man of faith for self examination. (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:9) Who is going to rule out that examination? We must remember that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Faith causes the children of God to examine themselves to see if they are walking in truth. When not walking by faith, but some other way, (however cleverly or elaborately, or, for that matter, however humbly) it is wrong. It must meet the discerning eye of the Spirit to be right.

Many false doctrines have been spoken and published about Paul's preaching, as well as what he preached. There is not any doubt at all in my mind about what he preached. It was grace every step of the way. He attributed his being born from his mother's womb to the Lord; likewise he attributed his being called to minister to the grace of God. (Gal. 1:15, 16) Now I do not know a member of a single faction of our people that claims a call to preach that does not attribute that call to the grace of God. However, I know many excellent men that do not have the

same experience as regards his life after the initial call, to the same thing that Paul does. He tells us that what he was, was by the grace of God. However, they utilize the grace, but if business or family or other things come along and get in their way, then the grace is failure. I have searched as diligently as I know how to ascertain the difference in graces, that is, which and how much is it of effectual grace that saves a man the first time and the grace that he wastes and neglects and because of this, that, and the other, he still doesn't get saved. I have found but one grace that saves sinners, and it is the same kind of grace that saved and called him the first time. It's the same grace from that time to the end of his life.

Paul did not preach one doctrine for time and something else for eternal salvation. It is a good work to be called to preach the gospel (1 Tim. 3:1), and since Paul declared that truth to us, I desire to preach the same doctrine that he did, to wit, not to know anything among my people except Christ and Him crucified! If language means anything, that was all that could be preached for the comfort and edification of the Corinthians.

The prophet declared that a virgin would conceive and bear a Son; that His name would be called Immanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us. (Isa. 7:14). Hundreds of years later an angel announced the same good news. That announcement carried with it the message that

Israel had been waiting for, to wit, "He shall save His people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21).

As I look back at the long solitary watches of the shepherds as they tended their flocks, and as I look back and hear the groans of Israel as they sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, waiting and watching for the rays of the Sun of righteousness, I think I feel for them. What a tender fellowship springs up in my trembling bosom for that humble servant of God that has persecuted unto death those that called upon the name of Jesus. He was arrested by that same Jesus and sent to that church with his memory blotted out about that he should have done in the name of Jesus. But now he is determined not to know anything save that same Jesus and Him crucified.

His faith enabled him to overcome the world (1 John 5:4), for there has been no greater faith than the kind with which Paul was possessed. It armed him for the great conflict before him, of going out to face his former associates and preaching so boldly to them the opposite of what he formerly preached. I have not time to, and it is vain and useless to talk about a man-made faith. Faith is a gift of God, and it not only overcomes all fears of the world, but it enables us to overcome ourselves, so that we are made willing to go into the very jaws of death with the determination to follow on through thick and thin, through good report and evil, our

blessed Lord and to preach Him as an all sufficient Saviour.

Come poor sin-burdened reader and behold the theme of Paul; Jesus Christ and Him crucified, the Way, the Truth, the Life, yea, the only Name under heaven given among men whereby poor sinners must be saved. At the mention of such a theme my mind is carried to the search that God made for one worthy to bring salvation unto Him. None was found. Ah, dear reader, the world says that we are behind the times, that we are in a worn out rut, because we have depended only on grace, and that we need a modern outlook. Do we? Had an Old Baptist been standing near at hand when the Lord looked and found none to help, we, of all people, would have understood, and would have agreed that there was none able to take the Book and loose the seals thereof (Rev. 5:4), but the world at large (the unborn world) would have persecuted him there as they later did persecute Him on earth, and had the people of God been there in the annals of eternity and have heard the Lord say, *"Since among men I find none to help, therefore mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me,"* we would have heard the same good news that the church has ever heard, to wit, *"The strong arm of God has brought salvation unto Him."*

My friends sometime say to me, "You have an open mind, so don't you think you might be wrong about salvation being solely and wholly of

the Lord?" My reply is always the same; "No sir, I do not. My mind is closed about the way sinners are saved. It is by grace! If it is not by grace, then it is by works, for it cannot be this way or that. It is by grace. Paul was separated from his former way of thinking in regard to salvation. When God called him by His grace, He called him all of the way from works, his own testimony and experience bearing him witness in the Holy Ghost (Rom, 9:1). His mind was closed, and my mind is likewise closed to any conditions and works that I must do in order for me to come before God's people.

For Paul to do that, for me to do that, or for any of the people of the Gentile race to do so is to cast aspersion and reflection on the crucifixion of our Lord, for who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Christ has been crucified — is that not sufficient cause for rejoicing in the kingdom of heaven? Was that not sufficient for Abraham to be glad when he, by faith, saw His day? Was that not sufficient for the angel to say unto the people of God, *"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."* (Luke 2:10-11)? Was this not reason enough, after Paul had experienced the saving grace of this Saviour applied to him as he journeyed towards Damascus to persecute the saints for him to have this divine determination not to

know anything among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and Him crucified?

Now let us notice the manner of his coming to them. As we leave the purpose of his coming, let us remember that none of the "lo here and lo there" are to be believed. In fact I have no hesitancy in saying to you that if you have discovered the falsity of Babylon that you come out of her that you be not partakers of her falsehoods and other evil, and that you be partakers with the heirs of the kingdom, Jesus Christ having been crucified for you. That is one of the ways that Paul came to the brethren. He did not tell them that it did not make any difference if you belong to the church or not; he did not come before them telling them fabulous doctrines such as that God is as well pleased with you staying in a false way as He is when you obey His commandments. Paul did not write nor preach that way. This worm of the dust would beseech Him that wisdom be imparted to come among the churches expounding the full doctrine of God, the whole counsel of God, graced by the Holy Spirit to be able to follow the instructions of this servant. Paul, to his own son in the ministry; not to be afraid, not to please men, not to know any man after the flesh, but to preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For (verily, therefore) the time will come when they will not

endure sound doctrine, etc.

"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

No man has the authority nor the ability for long) to be all things to all men. Yet, to be truly and wholly the servant of the Lord, there are times when the servant must be in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling. For a man of Paul's background, the overthrow of his legalistic training and the instilling in him the grace of God was such an experience that he never forgot it. In fact, when a man is spoken to by the power of the Holy Spirit, whatever he does and says in serving God will be in fear and in trembling. The cruelty and audacity of Saul of Tarsus before the Damascus road experience, was such as to make the saints tremble at the mention of his name, but after that experience he, and his former associates, trembled and feared and were abashed in his presence. However, their trembling was not because of the work of God's grace but because of their fear of man.

The demonstration of power of God was such that Paul never did forget it. He worked with the Pharisees before this demonstration of power; even after he openly rebuked them, and the same spirit in one and all that he met afterwards, but also, even after that demonstration, he was filled with a reverential fear of Jesus who demonstrated to him that He was Saviour, and his salutation to all those calling on the name of the Lord was as his brethren

in Christ, and when writing or visiting among them, it was in weakness, and in fear and in trembling, and this spirit was accompanied by much humility and self abasement.

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." He separates his speech and his preaching. Putting on in speech is forbidden, and let it be known once and forever that using incorrect language to make it appear that you belong to an ignorant, backwoods kind of people is as far from preaching the gospel as it is to make use of a superfluity of words (2 Cor. 9:1) to make people think that you are a learned man. Hypocrisy for either cause is strictly forbidden by common decency (1 Cor. 14:40), by the general tenor of the scriptures, but more especially by Paul's appearing before and with the brethren at Corinth. It certainly would take as much forethought and practice to use corny language to create an impression of ignorance, as it would to use too many words to create an impression of learnedness. The instruction of Paul by telling about his appearing among the brethren at Corinth is as much towards too much of a thing as well as to little of it.

He is saying, so it seems to me, that any attempt to be other than what I am, a poor sinner saved by the grace of God, is not according to what was taught me on the Damascus road, and what I learned in solitude in Arabia. It is not too much to say that

in this solitude, being in seclusion with only the Holy Ghost to teach and direct and to bring again to Jerusalem, he was taught what and how to preach, and what his manner before the saints should be. And it is exactly right; not too much, and not to little, of the demeanor, both in what is preached and in how it is preached then, now, and forevermore by everyone that is called of God's grace to minister to the churches.

Elder W. D. Griffin

PSALM 142

I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.

I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Union Church the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before.

Old Union Church is located in Floyd County. Those traveling from Floyd, take U. S. Rt. 221 south through Willis, turn right on Rt. 787 (Indian Valley Road) go 5.7 miles, turn left on Rt. 622, go .7 miles and turn right on Rt. 754, go 2.2 miles to Old Union Church.

From Christiansburg take Rt. 8 south, turn right on Rt. 693 (Childress Road) go 5.4 miles. Turn left at Rt. 787 (Indian Valley Road) go 8.3 miles, turn right on Rt. 619 (Horse Ridge Road) go 5.7 miles. Turn right on Rt. 754, go .3 mile to Old Union Church.

All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Amos T. Hash, Moderator

ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church. Located off Highway 167 north of For-
dyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273

about one half mile to Church.

Session beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September 13, 14, and 15, 1991, beginning at 10:00 a. m.

Frances Townley, Church Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Lord willing Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas will have a fifth Sunday meeting in September.

We invite all of our faith and order to come and meet with us.

Elder C. C. Morris

SOUTH OUACHITA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association is scheduled to convene with Rehobeth Church beginning Friday, September 20, 1991 and continuing until noon Sunday, September 22, 1991. Rehobeth Church is located at El Dorado, Ar., 5 miles north on Hwy. 7 and 1/2 mile west on Hwy. 335.

Brethren and friends of the Old School Baptist are invited to meet with us.

Ned Barron
318-778-4217

JOHN 3:1-3.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

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.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

- Mrs. Margaret Smothers, NC ... 2.00
- E. R. Graves, AL 5.00
- Norris M. Hall, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Olive Hastings, MD 10.00
- Charlie Fox, AR 2.00
- Mrs. Lois E. Cloud, AZ 5.00

ELECTION

The Bible teaches that there is an election of men to Salvation: That this election is absolute and unconditional, that it is personal, and from eternity, that the elect are chosen in Christ, that it is founded upon the everlasting love and grace of God. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (1 Peter 1:2). According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world (Rom. 8:28; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; James 2:5; 1 Peter 1:2). It is absolute because based alone on the good pleasure of God's will (Eph. 1:5). It is personal because particular persons are chosen to Salvation. "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth and causes to approach unto thee" (Psalm 65:4). God's election is from eternity for by one act he decreed all things. The elect are chosen in Christ, and all their spiritual blessings are treasured in him. It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. God loves his elect with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. If God loved his people in eternity, he loves them now. To cease to love them would destroy his immutability. Nothing can separate them from his love.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1991

- Mrs. Rachel Smith, NC 2.00
- Mrs. Connie Page, NC 5.00
- Mrs. Kathleen Martin, VA 2.00
- Charlie F. Johnston, VA 2.00
- Hartzel Nelson, WV 10.00
- Mrs. Dorothy A. Smith, NC 10.00
- Mrs. Muriel Strader, NC 2.00
- Eld. C. M. Haygood, TX 2.00
- Mrs. Edward Hodnett, VA 2.00
- Lloyd Chance, TX 5.00
- E. H. Chandler, LA 7.00
- Garner Horne, NC 5.00
- Miss Reidy Pickral, VA 50.00
- Mrs. Letcher Smith, FL 10.00
- Mrs. Joe Kee, TX 15.00
- Mrs. Pearl Law, VA 5.00
- David M. Spangler, VA 2.00
- Mrs. H. A. Harlow, TX 5.00
- Marvin A. Curnutt, TX 2.00
- Norman Jenkins, NC 2.00
- W. D. Godwin, LA 2.00

 OBITUARIES

VIRGINIA BUGG CEARLEY

Virginia Bugg Cearley was born on April 9, 1907 to Sarah and Robert Bugg. She was married to John Cearley, who preceded her in death. She is survived by several nieces and nephews. She was a nurse for Dr. Hal Smith in Christiansburg. She was a member of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized June 15, 1975.

Her health was poor; however she attended church whenever possible. After a lengthy illness she passed away on August 28, 1990. She will be missed by all that knew her.

Written by request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

In Loving Memory,
Naomi W. Agee

DELMA WHITENECK CUMMINGS

Delma Whiteneck Cummings was born on April 28, 1904 to Eliza and Enock Whiteneck. On January 4, 1937 she married William (Bill) W. Cummings, who preceded her in death. To this union were born two sons. She passed away on September 5, 1990 after a stroke that left her paralyzed and in the hospital for

several months. She is survived by two sons and daughters-in-law; Ralph E. and LaRae Cummings; Paul L. and Nancy Cummings. She also leaves behind two sisters; Ella W. (June) Thompson and Blanche W. Duncan and three grandchildren; Ralph E. Cummings, Jr.; Christopher W. Cummings. and Amy Suzanne Cummings. Graveside service was conducted by Elder Raymond Goad. Two great joys in her life were her church and family. She was baptized July 15, 1979. Until her stroke she was an active, independent, and vital person. Her top priority was attending church - especially her home church and listening to the gospel. A memorial service was held at the request of her family on the third Sunday in September, 1990 at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church. She is greatly missed by her family, friends and brethren.

Written by request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

In Loving Memory,
Naomi W. Agee

INEZ STRADER DICKERSON

Sister Inez Strader Dickerson departed this life Dec. 12, 1990 was born January 12, 1928 to the late Andrew Jackson Strader and Allie Martin Strader. Surviving are sons Wayne, Charles and Jerry, daughters Nancy Mosley and Sara Perdue six grandchildren two great

grandchildren, one brother A. J. Strader, Jr.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church July 31, 1977 was baptized the same day, along with her husband who joined a week earlier on July 24, by her pastor Elder D. V. Spangler.

Sister Inez was a quiet little lady who loved her family and church and attended meetings when she was able to, her husband was an invalid for five years, she cared for him with kind and loving care I never heard her complain. She spoke of the church how she missed the meetings.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key at Dan River Church with a beautiful array of flowers and many relatives and friends burial was in the church cemetery.

Written by,
Gradie Strader

FRANCES BLALOCK KING

Sister Frances Blalock King departed this life December 24, 1990, making her stay here 76 years, 11 months & 24 days.

Surviving, is her devoted husband, Arthur Wilson King. Two daughters, Mrs. John "Nancy" Gant and Mrs. Kirk "Linda" Loy of Burlington, N. C. and one son Gary W. King

of Prospect Hill, N. C.

She is also survived by five sisters, Mrs. Amos "Sallie" Aldridge of Prospect Hill, N. C.; Mrs. Charlie "Lizzie" Pritchett of Yanceyville, N. C.; Mrs. Alvis "Margaret" King and Mrs. George "Lou" Blackard of Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. Bernice "Allie" Clayton of Mebane, N. C. Three brothers, Franklin Blalock of Prospect Hill, N.C.; Joe Blalock and William Blalock of Burlington, N. C. Seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Sister Frances had a very close and loving family. This was manifested throughout her life and especially during her affliction in the latter part of her life. Not many men could have or would have cared for their wife as Brother Wilson did for sister Frances in her failing years.

She was united with the Primitive Baptists in 1951. She manifested her love for God and his church by showing her love for this people. She and Brother Wilson loved to entertain their brethren in their home, and would visit others especially the sick, far and near; never going empty handed but most always going with a gift of love; a pie or cake or a piece of her crafts made with her own hands, or vegetables from their garden and a smile and lots of love from their hearts. As a virtuous woman "she looked well to the ways of her household, ate not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." Pro. 31:27, 28.

Her funeral was conducted in McClure Funeral Home by her pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key, assisted by Elder C. B. Davis. Burial was in the Blalock Family Cemetery.

In our book of "remembrance" are written many precious memories of sister Frances of which we thank God for.

May the family be given to know that God has given and God has taken away, and he maketh no mistakes. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Written by request of her husband.

A little brother in hope,
Kenneth R. Key

ORREN KINSEY (O. K.) TENCH

With a sad heart I shall attempt to write a few lines in memory of our dear pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

He was born January 23, 1911 to Isham Ferguson and Sallie Campbell Tench.

He married Helen Bennett Tench in 1937. To this union was born four children. Betty T. Ellis, Danville, Va. JoAnn T. Meeks, Williamsburg, Va. Darnell T. Barnes, Roanoke, Va. and Orren Kinsey Tench, Jr., Weathersfield, Conn. Surviving also are six grandchildren, and one sister Emma T. McCrickard, Silver Springs, Md.

Elder Tench was baptized 3rd Sunday in May 1932. Ordained as an Elder in the Primitive Baptist Church, August 1937. He was called

as pastor at Chapel (his home Church) July 1946.

He served Weatherford Church near Gretna from 1938, Springfield of Gretna at Gretna from 1947 and Malmaison Church near Danville from 1952 until he had a stroke Feb. 16, 1991 which left him totally disabled until his death May 24, 1991.

He was blessed to believe and preach Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. He loved to sing the songs of Zion. Seldom visited in homes that he didn't have song service before he left.

We believe he could witness with Paul when he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, Henceforth there's 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 that love his appearing."

His funeral was conducted at Lynch's funeral home Rocky Mount, Va. by Elders Julian Williams, Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield, Thomas Solomon and Melvin Shelton. Five Elders he was blessed to baptize.

He was laid to rest in Franklin Memorial Park, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the Lord be with his dear family, all his Church people and friends through this time of grief and sorrow.

Written by one who loved him and at the request of his dear wife.

Mary B. Brown, Chapel Ch., Clerk

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POEM

*Great was the day, the joy was great,
When the divine disciples met;
Whilst on their heads the Spirit came,
And sat like tongues of cloven flame.*

*What gifts, what miracles he gave!
And power to kill, and power to save!
Furnished their tongues with wondrous words,
Instead of shields, and spears, and swords.*

*Thus armed, he sent the champions forth
From east to west, from south to north;
Go, and assert your Saviour's cause,
'Go spread the mystery of his cross.'*

*These weapons of the holy war,
Of what almighty force they are
To make our stubborn passions bow,
And lay the proudest rebel low!*

*Great King of grace, my heart subdue,
I would be led in triumph, too,
A willing captive to my Lord,
And sing the victories of his word.*

Watts

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EDITORIAL



Elder C.C. Wilbanks

When Jesus and his apostles had eaten the last supper and Jesus began to wash the apostle's feet Peter asked, **Why?** Jesus answered, **What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. And Peter said, Thou shalt never wash my feet. But Jesus answered, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Peter did not then know — and most of the world does not yet know — what Jesus was setting forth. But the children of God who have received the Holy Spirit and been born again, and have been washed in the precious blood of Christ have been given to understand. We read in Isa. 1:18,**

*"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." And David said, "Wash me with hyssop and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." All men are sinners, for they fell in Adam when he partook of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden of Eden. However there are many who do not yet know they are sinners. Many of them say they know it, but they give no evidence of repentance. Others simply do not care. Many say that some day they will accept Christ and let him come into their heart and save them. Do they have the power to keep him out now? If so, they have more power than he and have no need of him. We read in Ps. 14:2-3. *"The Lord looked down from the heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* Does that leave out any who have ever lived in this world? *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* Even the children of God who have received His Holy Spirit do not know*

from whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. Certainly no one in the flesh can discern this, for, *"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."*

Dead men can do nothing, and all men were dead in trespasses and sins before any were quickened into divine life. *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."* And this is because of his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins.

I did not say so at the beginning, but the scripture on my mind is, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."* Jesus is the way, the only way, that any man will ever see heaven and immortal glory. After Jesus had washed the apostle's feet he told them many wonderful things. And one of those things embraces our most precious hope: *"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* There should be no doubt that Jesus did go to prepare a place for his children who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. But where did he go? to heaven to build places of abode? No, heaven was prepared before the foundation of the world: it is the throne of God, and Christ is sitting now on the right hand of his Father

making intercession for his beloved saints. Then where did he go? To the cross of Calvary, where he shed his precious blood that poor, helpless sinners might live. He laid down his life, and he took it up again as his Father had given him commandment. Jesus came to do his Father's will, and his Father's will was that of all that he had given him he should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day. And the only way that it could be done was for Jesus to lay down his life: for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. God's just and holy law demanded death, and his justice could be satisfied no other way. The blood of animals could never remove one sin. If it could, then there would have been no necessity for the shedding of Christ's pure and precious blood. But with one sacrifice acceptable unto God, Jesus hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Jesus would return unto his Father, but he gave unto us another very precious promise first. *"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 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. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall also live."*

The world saw him with the natural eye, but they can no more

see him. If we see him, it is only through the eye of faith which is the gift of God. What a gracious promise is this! *"Because I live, ye shall also live."* Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."* We are raised out of our dead, alienated state and translated into God's marvelous light. Like unto a natural child born of the flesh, we know nothing; but in God's appointed time we are taught all that we need to know. *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*

In another place Jesus said, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* The eternal life which Christ gives his children has always been theirs. It was in him before the foundation of the world, but he now makes it manifest unto them: as the scripture says, *"who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."* And it says in another place, *"For in him we live, and move, and have our being."*

Brethren, to those who believe in Jesus, he is our prophet, priest and king; he is our all and in all. And if we believe in him it is because this belief is given unto us. *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not*

only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Christ was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was despised and rejected of men and we esteemed him not. But he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Brethren, our Lord and Saviour suffered and died for the sins of his children, and if we be his we must also suffer. The things that we suffer, the world knows nothing about. Our trials, tribulations, and persecutions because of the very things that we believe and preach which are so precious to us, and the pain we suffer because of our sins, they know nothing about. We find that in our flesh dwelleth nothing good; we desire to do good, but cannot. The evil that we would not, that is what we do, and it causes us great pain and remorse, and to cry out as did Paul, *"Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?"* Brethren, we should thank God that we have a sweet hope that through Jesus Christ our Lord we shall be delivered, *We were dead in trespasses and sins, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us*

sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Though we suffer with Christ we also at times are given to greatly rejoice when he makes us sit together in those heavenly places in Christ. Brethren, let us rejoice that we are given hope that we are his when he shall come again without sin unto salvation.

Jesus said, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* Jesus is that strait gate: he is the door of the sheep. It was not an invitation, but a command, when he said, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate."* He calls us, and we hear his voice, for he calls us by name, and he leads us in and out to pastures that others know nothing about. No one else can find this gate, and must follow the broad way, the way of the world or flesh, for they are not his sheep, and Jesus said unto them, *"And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life."* Why? *"Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."* and, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."*

Brethren, let us cast not away our hope, regardless of how small it may seem at times, for he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until

the day of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Amen.

May God bless the truth, and pardon the errors.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES: GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE

This attribute of God is defined as follows: That attribute of God by which he is present at all times and places. *"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me"* (Psalm 139: 7, 8, 9, and 10). Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord; Am I not a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off, thus saith the Lord. Behold, heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee. Though he dig into hell, thence shall my right hand take him; though he climb up into heaven, thence will I bring him down; though he hide himself in the top of Carmel, I will search and take him out from thence. In him we live and move, and have our being. He filleth all things. All space is his habitation.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

ISAIAH 2:1-4.

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This is the word that Isaiah received. It is not received by any except those called, as was the prophet. His calling does away with the idea that men can volunteer for the office of a bishop. This message to and for the children of Israel starts out as the work of God in calling the message-bearer, and then it is a certain word that she is to receive. After establishing the fact that the word is sent by the hand of God, we are comforted with further

proof of God's unconditional work in caring for this people. It is not sent to just any kind of house, built by just any kind of builder, but it is sent to the house that the Lord builds. He does not build just anywhere, but in the top of the mountains.

How wonderful it is to contemplate the work of God in saving his chosen race from sin and degradation. It is God that chose them before the world began its day and night; bringing forth in due season. This choice was not based on any foreseen merits in the creature. Had the creature been worthy of choice, his worthiness would have abrogated the necessity of a choice. By the grace of our Lord, it is our desire to take this irrefutable position, that the creature was without merit when God beheld him in his eternal wisdom before the world was formed. Even now they are as helpless as they were when he looked on them. Thus they were chosen in a safe place, and in a place of eternal righteousness. If I know my poor heart, I am glad that he did not choose them and leave the building of a house to them. There is a laboring in the Lord, laboring in the kingdom of him that has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light, but any laboring for the purpose of building or of keeping the kingdom of heaven is vain. When the blessed Saviour declared his purpose in building a church, not a word did he say about any help. This word does not mention anything about any intermediate agency in the establishing

of this house in the top of the mountains: he does not hint that the Lord is liable to need any help. I have never had any desire to ascribe honor to any man for this wonderful work, either in the beginning of that building or the keeping of it. I hope the dear Lord has given me a desire to comfort, rebuke, reprove in this kingdom, but that not the first thing of it is to purchase blessings beyond those that the Lord procured for us in his offering of his own body on the tree of the cross.

I have not been very apt in the water, but I have found that floating is easy. Yet all that men can do is to float in smooth water. Water cannot be forced up hill without being enclosed in pipes, and this could never mean floating. But this house that is so high is easy for the children of God to get to. I do not mean that they can get there by just a little effort. I mean that the mode of travel is of the Lord and that it is such a wonderful way that they travel in perfect complacency and satisfaction. This house and this traveling is not limited to just the Old Baptists in some sense of the word, but as far as manifestation is concerned it is to them alone. It is all nations that flow unto this house, and I am persuaded that this is the people that Jesus redeemed when he ascended Calvary's hill. As they come to this church they are all just alike, and I am not very patient with the thought I have heard expressed by Old Baptists, that the German people are not worthy to eat anything we have in America. These

people are cut down in the forest and each one of them is hewed and made ready by the cunning workmen. They are all floated in it and up hill. How wonderful it is as they travel the road or stream to that dear refuge of God's humble poor, how interested they are in one another and how they speak to one another about the home of the dear lambs of God. Come and let us go to the house of God is their greeting to one another. If this is not a good and precious thing in our lives, as children of God, what would it take to constitute a good and happy home in the Lord? Ah, dear child, do you not remember those first days when these things first became so precious to you. Not a time since then has it been any more pleasant to go to church than it was at that time. We were glad about our companionship, and we wanted to be with those whose minds were inquiring for the house of God. This house is made ready for Jacob and there is not a more fitting character in the Bible for our study than that of this poor pilgrim. I am not glad that I am a sinner and I doubt the propriety of saying such a thing. I am glad that the Lord came to save sinners and prepared a home for them to live in here in the world; that it was such sinners as was set forth in the life of Jacob; that it is called his house because he is the most helpless and dejected sinner the whole Book tells us about, and right at this time the only one referred to as being a worm. It is the habit of worms to cut down and destroy instead of building

up. This is exactly the way with Jacob; he will not do to depend on. It is not best to depend on any man, for their judgment is not to be relied on, having nothing better than the judgment of a worm. Furthermore, how long would Jacob have been in building a house? Was he not lost in the wilderness? And was he not just as lost in the desert as he was in the wilderness? Can a lost man build? No, for he is not interested in staying there, but in getting out. Would he not be as helpless without the presence of the Lord, after being found, as he was before? Then the only building that he would ever have in this place would be one that the Founder built.

Now we come to teaching and to walking. Oh, my brethren that we could some how come to an understanding about teaching and walking. We have spent so much time in throwing brickbats at one another about a thing that we know very little about. We cannot mention the teaching of God in an abstract way without running into somebody that calls our ideas antinomian. Well sir, it is the truth that God alone teaches. It is our main tenet of faith that all of God's children shall be taught of him. If we want to lose our identity let us imbibe the current arminian doctrine that men can climb up to God without any regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. But this teaching of the Spirit, works in his people a teaching of one another. Part of the work of the minister is to teach, but to say that he teaches by the volition of the crea-

ture, is running into something that we want to stay as far from as saying that men can, of themselves, know God. Yet when we say anything about this teaching that belongs to the ministers, then we run into another school of thought, and they are just as vehement in their denunciation of that being conditionalism as the other is of something being antinomianism. Our text is plain on the whole thing to me, and I hope if we cannot agree about its contents, that we may yet be blessed to have patience one with another. *"He will teach us" and "we will walk in his paths."* Is that something to spend time contending about? Isn't that consoling to you? Isn't that a wonderful God, for meditating on his glorious name? The teaching comes from God and our walking comes out of the teaching. It is not that we are taught and then we can later walk; but we walk as we are taught to walk. He teaches us to walk, not in the old paths of sin but in his paths. Are his paths the paths of sin? No sir, and I have just as much impatience with the thought, as I do that the creature can walk without the direct and compelling influence of God's Spirit. His paths are the way he has gone and the things that he has done. Left alone Peter went fishing, and all the others went along to keep him company and to make manifest how unable they were to tread the paths of the Lord. Fishing was an old path; and it was a path that belonged to Peter — in fact while he had on his own girdle he always went in those

paths, but when girdled by one mightier than he, he then went in the paths of the Lord. When left alone David could not walk in the paths of righteousness, but went right back to the paths of sin. The Lord loved David and, contrary to David's own feeling of right in the matter after he had been overtaken in his fault, he came and restored to him the joys of those days when he was walking in the right paths, and even enabled him again to walk there. I have been in the school-room with my little charges, trying to do that that had been enjoined on me. I never told my pupils how a thing ought to be done and expected any satisfactory results. I showed them; I taught them; I had them to do the thing for themselves. That is teaching; that is the doctrine, child, in this New Covenant promise under consideration. Did you listen at the understanding of the church under the law dispensation? "*He will teach us*" was the sum and substance of their doctrine. We are unable to learn anything without him. We are not able to walk without being taught to walk. Out of that teaching comes our every sermon, prayer, or anything else pertaining to the travel of the church in time. I want to be understood just here. I believe this is a promise for that future day when Jesus shall have finished the will of his Father concerning his mission in the world. It is a day that the children of Israel saw and longed for, and, while blinded to many things, they did not see that in some measure, at least, they were in

possession of the substance of that day. My reason for saying that is found in the language of the prophet when he said, "*that unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.*" This would be called a short passage in some respects, yet it covers the whole gospel dispensation. This promise is sufficient to last from the time that Jesus left until he comes again. This is the only scriptural way that the church can ever be like her Lord and Master in time. It is when she can be found walking in his precepts and examples. We hear it said sometimes that a church is a live church. True, for he is teaching them, and that teaching comes right down into their every day lives. The life that they live, they live by the faith of the Son of God, and you could not have faith in God unless he taught you to have it. Here is the simplicity of the perseverance of the saints, of the church of God. He teaches you, and you are taught. What is it that he teaches you? He teaches you to walk. Where? In paths of sin? No sir, not that, and if I was called a conditionalist every moment of my remaining days on this vain and transitory globe, I'd still say as long as breath and accompanied strength remained that the Spirit of my glorious Redeemer has not led any man to sin. But, let abuses be mine to endure, and this world and its perishing cargo be all taken away from me, yet I must ascribe unto him my every step in this kingdom, be that step preaching, praying, singing, teaching, rebuking, reproofing, or any

thing else pertaining to the travel of God's poor and afflicted people.

I want to hasten on to the time when the rebuked people shall go to the beating of their weapons into tools. I must cross somebody's opinion about this, for I know that we have people among us that believe in a future and coming millenium. I am not crossing your views to get an argument, but I want to state mine for the sake of my own brethren that made the request for me to write out what I saw in this text. We hear so much about this among the statesman of the day; that some time we will have things perfected where we can beat all our weapons into tools, and our government sometimes scrap quite a few as a gesture towards this beautiful picture. We have not done that yet but that the time soon came when we needed those things to defend ourselves against some enemy that had not yet gotten to the millenium. It will always be like that, because it does not have a shred of reference to such a time.

After this rebuke these nations (many people) shall beat their swords into plowshares. I think the Scriptures are plain on what a blacksmith is for. They had them in the olden days. The ways of a smith have not materially changed. To do much smithing requires much heat, especially in order to do much changing of an item from one thing to another. Now I think I know that God must kindle the fire that brings this needed heat. Not only must he kindle it but he

must keep it fueled and lighted. People tell me that there is not a thing for the children of God to do. I do not believe a word of it. Please tell me that there is not any activity about the children of God. I do not believe a word of that fable either. I came into the world a natural man and so did all of Adam's race. We had it deeply imbedded in us that for Christ to win this world and keep it, he needed us. We have never gotten over that when the Lord called us to him, for we see that Peter thought it was necessary for him to fight with carnal weapons. But that material sword was sheathed, and that hateful, domineering, gutting, sword of his mind must be beaten. God did not say that I am going to beat the sword into a plowshare, but he said that they shall do it. They shall do it. And this is experience, this is the place when the Lord begins to work in you. Now dear saints you cannot help this fire being kindled, nor can you help taking this sword in your hands and take it to the fire. You need not be afraid little one, for you remember that you have another promise about handling deadly and poisonous things. This is God at work in you and he has made you willing to this beating. Oh, how trying the day when our sword is being transformed into a tool. We have liked this sword business right well. We liked the folly of war because we got much spoils in the conflict. Now in a glorious way we are brought to the place of beating, and having been born of God and given the

teaching and leadership of his Spirit, and a hope, which hope is Christ, it is in the personage of no less than the blessed Son of God that we do this beating of this sword and spear into a plowshare and a pruning hook. We are thus made to quit fighting to win anything, and put to work in a kingdom that has all things provided. The ground is good. The plants are the planting of God. The church is the place all this takes place in as far as manifestation is concerned. Here is where workmen are sent out to labor in the kingdom with the tools that we could not in ANY WAY escape having. Our work? It is plowing and pruning.

War? It is gone. Forever gone, precious thought. Not another lesson shall we ever learn. Not another time shall we ever lift up a sword again. Oh, that the Lord would keep this foolish, wandering heart of mine on the grand and eternal things of this kingdom, teaching me to walk, holding my weak and sinful hand in his, guiding, my tottering footsteps through all these changing scenes before us, enabling me by conquering, sovereign grace, to keep on approaching the consuming fire to the beating of this sword and this spear into the tools prescribed for the saints of God. Only by this sovereign grace, this kind, providential and parental care, will this poor servant, if a servant, be kept living at the feet of the dear children of God.

Elder W. D. Griffin

2 TIMOTHY I. 13.

"Hold fast the form of sound words."

Amid the darkness and confusion of this present evil world, God's afflicted and poor people stand out as distinct from the world as an oasis from the desert that surrounds it. To the traveler in the desert the clear, refreshing water and the palm trees are greatly longed for and enjoyed, so the fellowship of the saints and the truth as it is in Jesus is what our souls crave in this wilderness world.

*"Behold, how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together, such as brethren are,
In unity to dwell."*

That there are two of us united, is to the praise of the glory of God's grace, for this is not a fleshly unity, a unity of man's devising, but a result of the work of God's Spirit within. If brethren are not dwelling together in unity it is because of the flesh. Not only is it necessary to be brought down and laid low, but we must be kept low in the dust, to dwell together in unity. It is only the mighty power of God that can make the leopard to lie down with the kid. Not only must we be brought low, but the living word must come to us, producing a living faith in us, which faith, being the gift of God, excludes boasting and teaches rather that every man look not upon his own, but upon the things of another. This faith also believes that God's word is true. *"Through*

faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Thus faith receives and gives credence to the things recorded in God's word, believing God, even though in so doing it gives the lie to the opinions and gainsayings of all flesh. Opinions and ideas of men, be they ever so wise, have always been proven false when contrary to God's word. Men believe a lie, but it is God who has spoken the truth, so Paul saith to Timothy, *"Hold fast the form of sound words."* In Paul's day there were some for Paul and some for Apollos and some for Cephas. Thus some would hold fast to what Paul said, while others would regard Apollos as a man who would be safe to follow, while yet there were those who were positive that what Cephas advanced was sure to be sound. They were all, in so judging, prompted by a wrong spirit, and one need to examine himself, and brethren need in this day, as never before, to examine carefully and prayerfully those whom God has seen fit to raise up among them as elders. *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* It is the light that makes manifest, and when they testify contrary to the word, *"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* Now there was a "FORM" of sound words that Timothy had

received from Paul. It was the same form of sound words that Paul delivered to the Corinthians. (1 Corinthians xv.). It is the same that Jesus gave to his disciples when he sent them to teach all nations. *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."* — Matt. xxviii. 20. In this form of sound words there is a simplicity, so that to the wise Greek it was foolishness. It is foolishness to many to-day in this wise world. May we not thank God if it is not foolishness to us? On the simple words of our Lord the church has been fed and sustained, as the Holy Spirit from time to time has blessed them to her, and she has desired no adding to nor taking from. There have been, and will be until the end of the world, those who, though brethren, oppose the form of sound words, and in so doing oppose themselves (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26), for their only hope is in the fulfillment of every word of God. Perhaps it is because of such men that the church has, from time to time, been forced to express herself in what are known to us as confessions of faith. Forced, we say, because of men who would not hold fast to the form of sound words. Such men have generally been self-seekers, having more thought for themselves than for the flock of God, and such are in the snare of the devil, taken captive by him at his will. How necessary to be vigilant, knowing that our adversary, the devil, as a roaring

lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom, saith Paul, resist in the faith. Eve, our first parent, fell to his snare, and it is easier, while in the flesh, to believe Satan's lie than to cleave close to the word of God. Fleshly men have always erred, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. The disciples, while Jesus was present with them, heard his words, and saw the miracles that he did, yet they did not understand, for they had not yet received the Spirit of truth. They needed their understanding opened, they needed the Spirit that moved holy men of God in old time, and when the Holy Ghost came upon them to dwell with them they understood and remembered the things he had spoken. They immediately began to preach the word, *"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will."* Thus they were encouraged to "hold fast," and as time went on and evil men and seducers crept in unawares, mixing law and grace, denying the eternal sonship of Christ (1 John ii.22), and the resurrection of the body (1 Cor. xv. 12), denying the second coming of Christ, the end of the world and the eternal judgment (2 Peter iii.), the necessity for holding fast the form of sound words became more apparent. From the days of the apostles until now, there have been men, holy men, led by God's Spirit, who have contended earnestly for the

faith once delivered unto the saints, men after God's own heart, who preached his gospel faithfully, the whole and not a part. Such men always carried the sword (Matt. x. 34), and turned the world upside-down, and were called contentious, because they would be faithful to their God.

We mentioned above that churches were forced to declare their belief, in the form of confessions of faith, because of the twisting and denying of the word of God. It was a departure from the form of sound words that led to the Black Rock confession of faith in 1832, for many men and churches were departing from their former confessions of faith, and from the word of God. Of course these designing men thought that the articles of faith of their forefathers were not in accord with the Scriptures, so they were departing from them. The devil, as an angel of light, is very deceptive. If he appeared in his natural form he would deceive no one, but he comes with worldly wisdom and a feigned love, and often his greatest lie is that which has a part of the truth in it. Let us be careful, especially would I address the ministry at this time, let us be careful to hold fast to the doctrine of God our Savior, and remember that nine out of every ten troubles that come in the church come through the pulpit. If you want to poison a people poison their water, and whoever deals out sentiments and expressions contrary to God's word deals out poison. *"Preach the word,"*

was Paul's counsel to Timothy, but it must be in love to be preached aright. There is enough in the word of God that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished, and it is expected of a steward that he be found faithful. We would humbly cry, O God, make us and keep us faithful. It is not hard to be faithful in a truth in which the church is well established, as at present, with most of those with whom we correspond, there is no question about the new birth, and that it is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. There is very little dissent to the doctrine of predestination (and by this we mean the predestination of all things) among those of our fellowship. We rejoice that this is so, and that brethren are glad it is recorded in the word that it is by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. We love to preach about the grace of God, and the church rests in the security that such doctrine, which is another word for the "sound words" of our text, gives when preached in love, and we sincerely feel that there are many other things in the "sound words" of our text, things we desire to present to our readers for their consideration. We believe in eternal and unconditional election and the final perseverance and eternal happiness of all the sons of God by grace, and we would hold fast to the form of sound words, sticking to the old landmark that our fathers have

set, and here, as our mind is led, we would mention the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. The Sadducees say that there was no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit. (Acts xxiii. 8.) We do not therefore feel that it is exactly right for any to be called Sadducees who do believe in the resurrection. We question if there are any of our brethren to-day within our fellowship who can be called by that name. Now while there are perhaps none that deny the resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, there are those, like Hymenaeus and Philetus, who believe the resurrection is past already, and there are those who believe that when we die we rise in Jesus' image to be forever with the Lord. There are, of course, those who claim they do not know, and so will not touch upon the subject; in other words, they will not hold fast the form of sound words. To believe that the resurrection of the soul from the condemnation of the law to the liberty of the sons of God, which is known and felt experimentally, is the only resurrection we shall experience, is virtually saying that the resurrection is past already, and such a view is wrong, for it denies the resurrection of the body. To believe that when we die, and the spirit returns to God who gave it, is the resurrection, is just as wrong as the former conclusion, for it is contrary to the form of sound words. There is a resurrection of the dead that is a bodily resurrection, or the question would not have been asked, "How are the dead raised up?"

and with what BODY do they come?" and this resurrection is in the future, and the form of sound words says it will be at the last day. All died in Adam, and all must be quickened by Christ, and these characters who are quickened, who were once dead in trespasses and sins, when they die they die in the Lord. These are the ones who are spoken of by John: "*Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.*" They cannot die in the Lord unless they have lived in the Lord, and if these rise not, then Christ is not risen, but Christ is the firstfruits. There would be no need of the body of Christ to rise if the bodies of the saints shall not rise. We have the assurance of this, that Christ is risen because his Spirit is manifested within us, as we confess that the body is dead because of sin, yet his Spirit witnessing within us is not the spirit of bondage, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We are in the likeness of Adam, but have within us the spirit of adoption which calls God our Father, yet groans under the bondage of corruption. "*The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the ADOPTION, to wit, the redemption of our body.*" Thus what we have already tasted as the firstfruits in this spirit of adoption we shall enjoy fully when He shall appear and we shall be like Him. This resurrection of the body is in the future, yet Paul

speaks of the dissolving of the earthly house of this tabernacle, and we would here state that dissolve does not mean annihilate. You may dissolve salt in water and it is still salt in a suspended form. Paul prayed a prayer of faith when he told the Thessalonians, "*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.*" In the previous chapter Paul has given us the form of sound words when he says, "*The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout.*" — *Thess. iv. 16.* Thus adoption seems to be linked up with the resurrection of the body, and much more truth also is vitally connected with this cardinal doctrine, such as a judgment to come and the punishment of the wicked; that is, those who die impenitent. There is a resurrection to glory and a resurrection to damnation, therefore could we prove the annihilation of the body we could also prove that there is no future punishment of the wicked, whether they be devils or men. It is advanced by some that Christ's body did not see corruption and that the bodies of the saints do, therefore the bodies of the saints do not rise. If that be so, why did Paul assure us with "sound words" that the creature would be delivered from the bondage of corruption? and again, "*This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*"? Why do men in this late day ignore God's word, or try to twist

it? The resurrection of the body cannot be understood by the natural mind. We know in this body we are dissatisfied, and never shall be satisfied until we awake in His likeness. Thus death is spoken of as a sleep, asleep in Jesus, or dying in the Lord, and we believe by the word of the Lord that those who are asleep in Jesus will God bring with him, that the dead in Christ shall rise first. We shall be changed. We are glad it says that. We want to be like him. We are not interested in this opinion or that, we are interested in the word of God and desire to hold fast to it. How much shall we know hereafter of what we have known here? We know in part now, we see as through a glass darkly, but we do learn here, by faith and love, songs of praise to sing above, and we feel that we could not sing the song of the redeemed unless we have some knowledge of what we are redeemed from and are redeemed to, yet the form of sound words says there will be neither male nor female, neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

We have tried to touch upon our subject, but how very much is left unsaid. May God bless all his servants to speak the same things, to be patient, and may the height of their ambition be to rightly divide the word of truth. We are confident that God's word will stand, and our unbelief will not change the purpose of God, but it may cause our brethren distress and bring confusion in the church we love. Let us hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love which

is in Christ Jesus, and consider that what was given by Jesus to his disciples and preached down through time until the present day cannot be changed, but must be our testimony if we are what we profess to be. The church we serve calls for these things, confesses them in her articles of faith, the prospectus of the Signs, 1832, calls for these things, and we bless God that he in his mercy hath given us an understanding in these things, and we know by his word that they are true. We do not expect to make brethren believe them, but brethren will believe them, yes, every one who desires to stand or fall by the word of God. We do not know how the three Hebrew children could walk in the midst of the burning fiery furnace, or how Jonah could be in the whale's belly three days and three nights. You say the Lord was there, and that is enough. If our God could and did make the worlds which were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made by things which do appear, can he not at his voice and trump bring at once all his children forth to be forever with him in a world to come, where they shall be like him? Blessed be our God, we know he will, because his word says so. Let us, therefore, not only for our own peace, but for the peace of Zion, "*Hold fast the form of sound words.*"

Elder George Ruston
December 1934

"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."— 1 Peter i. 24, 25.

All flesh, and everything that springs from the flesh, and is connected with the flesh, is as grass, which, for a time, looks green and flourishing, but touched with the mower's scythe, or scorched by the midday sun, soon withers and fades away. Such is all flesh, without exception, from the highest to the lowest. As in nature, some grass grows thicker and longer than other, and makes, for a while, a brighter show, yet the scythe makes no distinction between the light crop and the heavy, so the scythe of death mows down with equal sweep the rich and the poor, and lays in one common grave all the children of men. You have seen sometimes in the early spring the grass in flower, and you have noticed those little yellowish "anthers," as they are termed, which tremble at every breeze. This is "the flower of grass;" and though so inconspicuous as almost to escape observation, yet as much its flower as the tulip or the rose is the flower of the plant which bears each. Now, as the grass withereth, so the flower thereof falleth away. It never had, at its best state, much permanency or strength of endurance, for it hung as by a thread, and it required but a little

gust of wind to blow it away, and make it as though it never had been. Such is all the pride of the flesh, and all the glory of man.

But is there nothing that endures amidst all that thus withers and falls away? Yes, the word of the Lord. *"And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."* Now, the same gospel which was preached by the Apostles is preached unto us in the word of truth which we have in our hands; and if we have received that gospel into a believing heart, we have received for ourselves that word of the Lord which endureth for ever. And thus, though all our own flesh is as grass, and all in which we might naturally glory is but as the flower of grass, and though this grass must wither in death, and the flower thereof shall fall away, when the place which now knoweth us shall know us no more, yet we have an enduring substance in the gospel of the grace of God, and, so far as we have received that gospel, and known it to be the power of God unto salvation, when our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

J.C. Philpot

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9 / 91
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

MEETINGS

**CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Stump Sound Church, Onslow County, Holly Ridge, NC on October 12-13, 1991. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located off US Highway 17 at Holly Ridge on Airport Road. Those coming from the North on US 17 turn left one block before the light and proceed approximately one half mile and turn left on Airport Road. The Church is approximately one half mile at end of the road. Signs will be posted.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

**EASTERN KEHUKEE
ASSOCIATION**

God willing the Eastern Kehukee Association will meet with Williams Church near Leggett, N.C. on the first Saturday and Sunday in October which is the fifth and sixth. From Leggett take Rt. 44 West. Turn left on the first paved

road. The church is about 1 1/2 miles on the right side. We invite all who are of like precious faith to come and visit with us.

M.W. Lupton, Clerk
Eastern Kehukee Association

**GILLS CREEK
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Minutes of the Presbytery**

Pursuant to the request of Gills Creek Primitive Baptist Church, County Franklin, a presbytery met July 13, 1991 at Gills Creek for the examination of brother Jack Walker, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows:
Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Elder Noel Conner, Elder Clarence Stone, Elder Willard Cox and Elder Hale Terry.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Larry Hollandsworth as Moderator and Deacon Guy J. Holley as Clerk. Elder Willard Cox was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Fred Murphy having been duly appointed

by Gills Creek Church in conference July 13, 1991, spokesman for the church delivered brother Jack Walker to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Willard Cox and Noel Conner using scripture reference 3rd chapter of 1 Timothy. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Noel Conner. Elder Hale Terry delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked Members of Gills Creek if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Jack Walker and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Gills Creek.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Willard Cox.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Deacon Guy J. Holley, Clerk

Eld. Larry Hollandsworth
Eld. Hale Terry
Eld. Willard Cox
Eld. Noel Conner
Eld. Clarence Stone
Deacon Clyde Johnson
Deacon Posey Lee Poindexter

Deacon Grey Ingram
Deacon H. D. Ingram
Deacon F. W. Murphy
Deacon Guy J. Holley
Deacon Tiras Conner
Deacon H. Clay Brown
Deacon Grover Semones
Deacon Hansil Conner
Deacon T. G. Lovell
Deacon Harry Perdue

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held with Mt. Ararat Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in September 1991, the Lord willing.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder H.W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Church Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in Sept. 1991 at 10:00 a.m. Preaching will begin at 10:30 a.m.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1991

Mrs. Mabel Ray, NC	\$2.00
Walter F. Griffith, NC	2.00
Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA	5.00
Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL	5.00
Donald E. Ferguson, CAN.	12.00
Mrs. Leonard Key, NC	2.00
Nolan Lanier, NC	7.00
F. Mae Williamson, LA	
In memory Norman & Fannie Pace	
Willie Edd Pace, Alva Pace	100.00
Eld. John F. Simpson, FL	7.00
Marvin Fulton, OH	2.00
Mrs. A.W. Walker, NC	2.00
John T. Brooks, CA	2.00
Mrs. L.F. Kurpies, TX	2.00
Mrs. Ruby T. Gusler, VA	2.00
A.W. King, NC	10.00
Mrs. Ora Adams, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

ELLEN WALKER BRUMFIELD

God in his infinite wisdom has called home our beloved sister Ellen Brumfield. We wish to bow in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well.

She died in Duke University Medical Center, Durham, N.C. after a six month decline in health.

Sister Ellen was born April 23, 1914, in Franklin, County, VA. She was the daughter of the late William Henry Walker, and Maude Adams Walker. She lived most of her life in the Mount Hermon Community of Pittsylvania County, and retired in 1980 after many years with Dan River Inc.

She was married to Brother Perrow A. Brumfield, who died June 26, 1962. She was the mother of Nancy B. Stow, who died Sept. 28, 1965. Sister Ellen joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church, May 27, 1950, and was baptised with her husband, Bro. Perrow Brumfield, his mother sister Maria Brumfield, and his sister, sister Minnie Willis, by their Pastor, Elder W.R. Dodd.

Sister Ellen was a loving and faithful member, and loved by all that knew her, that was evident by the hundreds of people that attended her funeral.

She looked well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praiseth her.

She leaves to mourn their loss six daughters, Dorothy B. Emerson, Alese B. Cox, Vickie B. Yorbrour, Lois B. Crane, all of Mount Hermon, Jane B. Hawker and Lucy B. Haynes, both of Danville; one son P.A. Brumfield Jr. of Danville; four sisters, Evelyn W. Hall, Mildred W. Thomas, both of Danville, Mable W. Pascal of Ruffin, N.C. and Ada W. Pleasant of Purley, N.C. one brother, Jeff Walker of Dan-

ville, VA 11 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The funeral was conducted at Barker Funeral Home by Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Danny Parker.

Her body was laid to rest by her husband in Highland Burial Park, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the glorious day when all the saints will awake with the likeness of Christ and be carried home to ever be around the throne of God to sing endless praise for ever more. May the family be reconciled to his will, is our prayers.

Humbly Submitted,
Sarah Barker

BERTHA CARTER

Sister Bertha Carter, who was born in Caddo Mills, Texas, on September 22, 1892. She was called home on March 16, 1991, at the age of ninety-eight years, five months, and twenty-two days.

Sister Carter was the daughter of Henry E. Williams and Sarah A. Jones Williams. She was preceded in death by her husband, Brother Edward R. Carter, who was also a member of Saints Rest Church and who passed away on July 30, 1969.

Sister Carter united with Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, on November 6, 1954. She was faithful in her attendance as long as her health permitted, which

was almost up to the time of her departure. Sister Carter rejoiced in hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and salvation provided in His blood and righteousness alone, by the free and sovereign grace of God. She freely talked of her hope in Christ and her love for the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, letting her beliefs in these precious truths be known in her conversations.

She is survived by her son, Oliver G. Carter; her two grandsons, Major Keith Carter of the United States Air Force and James Carter of Celeste, Texas; her two granddaughters, Rebecca Carter of Los Angeles, California, and Theresa Dixon of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and three great-grandchildren, and many nieces, nephews, and other relatives.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.C. Morris. Her mortal remains were laid to rest beside those of her husband in Simmons Cemetery by Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Cash, Texas, to await the return of her Lord and Savior in that last great day. She is missed and will be missed by all who knew her.

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in conference on June 2, 1991, with the direction that a copy be sent to her family, a copy sent to the Signs of the Times, and a copy be retained in the church records.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

ARIZONA MOORE PHILLIPS

Arizona Moore Phillips was born on August 10, 1898 to Charlie and Serena Moore. She was married to Perry Phillips. She passed away January 20, 1991. She resided with her daughter, Miss Goldie Phillips of Louisville, Kentucky. She is survived by three other daughters; Mrs. Opie Phillips, Christiansburg; Mrs. Carrie Lester, Roanoke, and Mrs. Lillie Lester, Hardy. She is also survived by one son, Oden Phillips, Hampton, Virginia. Two sons preceded her in death, Lawrence and Clyde Phillips. She also had 14 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, and 5 great great-grandchildren. She was a member of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church and has been a member for more than 45 years. She was faithful to her church even though she had poor health in her latter years. While enduring many illnesses, she recuperated and attended church to hear the gospel. Her faith in God gave her strength. As the years passed, she became weaker and life seemed to be a struggle. Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Willard Cox conducted the funeral at Mayberry Funeral Home, Floyd. Her presence will be greatly missed by her family, friends and brethren. Written by request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

In loving memory,
Naomi W. Agee
June 15, 1991

ELDER O.K. TENCH

As I attempt to write in memory of our dear beloved pastor Elder O.K. Tench, who was called home May 24, 1991, it is with deep sadness and an emptiness in our hearts. May God grant that we be exercised in the admonition that he always gave us when we had lost a loved one. *"Think on what you have had instead of what you have lost."*

We at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church have had a faithful and devoted pastor for 39 years. Faithful in that he was always there. There have been times I was not at meeting, and that other members were not there, but he was always there, even though he had to come almost 40 miles. There on Saturday night as well as Sunday, no matter what the weather conditions were. He would say *"you may not need me, but I need you."*

We have had a friend that would listen when our hearts were troubled. Also friendly to his congregations, telling them that they did him a service to come and listen to him. Always wanted to speak to all that attended the meetings.

We have had a peacemaker. *"Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God."* His prayer was sacrifice your feelings for the sake of peace.

We have had his fellowship and brotherly love for lo these many years. With so many blessings why should we grieve.

When he had the stroke back in February, I wanted to be reconciled to God's Holy will, but in my nature I would have liked for his health to have been restored. As time passed, I begin to realize there was very little possibility this would happen. It was as if God was preparing us for the realization that it wouldn't be long before he would be called home.

When the end came and I was notified, I was given to thank God, and felt He was gracious to take him out of his afflictions. Though he is sadly missed we feel he is resting in paradise, awaiting the day the King will say *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

Besides Elder Tench serving four churches, one of those almost 60 years, he farmed, raised cattle, and ran a one man sawmill operation. He preached hundreds of funerals. There were 13 Elders present at his funeral, five of whom he had baptized, and they conducted the service.

Other than the friends and members of the four churches he served, he leaves to mourn their loss, his wife Helen Bennett Tench, three daughters Betty T. Ellis, JoAnn T. Meeks and Darnell T. Barnes, one son O.K. Tench, Jr., one sisters and six grandchildren.

He was born Jan. 23, 1911, the son of Isham F. and Sally Campbell Tench, His funeral was held at Lynch Chapel in Rocky Mount, VA. Sunday May 26, 1991. Elders officiating were

Raymond Goad, Julian Williams, Thomas Soloman, Marvin Brumfield, and Melvin Shelton. Interment was in Franklin Memorial Park. It was said by Elder Raymond Goad "here lies a man that preached what he believed (which was salvation by Grace) and believed what he preached."

His memory will always live in the hearts of the members and friends at Malmaison Church.

In loving memory,
Peggy Wells, Clerk

CARRIE NICHOLS THOMPSON

A dear sister in Christ, Carrie N. Thompson died March 12, 1991, after several years in a Salem Nursing Home. She was 95. On July 17, 1921, she was married to Joshua Walter Thompson, and to this union was born six children — Aileen St. Clair, Avis Beckner, Lois Hammond and Richard, Harding and Roosevelt, two sons, Richard and Harding proceeded her in death.

Sister Thompson also had eleven step children. She, along with five other candidates united with Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder Odell Thompson August 27, 1954. Sister Thompson was a faithful member and all felt a sweet membership for her. She loved her church and believed in the principles of the Primitive Baptist. She attended her church, and others,

as long as she was physically able.

Her funeral was held at her home church March 15, 1991 by her pastor Elder Hale Terry and Rev. John Ingram. Sister Thompson was laid to rest in Radford Cemetery. We miss her, but believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by Ora T. Nichols
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sister Beulah Nichols, Clerk

GAY AKERS THOMPSON

It has been our Heavenly Father's will to remove from our midst another of our dear sisters in Christ, Gay Akers Thompson on May 28, 1991.

She was born in Floyd County, Virginia April 3, 1895. A daughter of Jeff and Della Cannaday Akers, and was married to Elder B. Odell Thompson in 1914. He preceded her in death in 1975.

Sister Gay united with the Primitive Baptist Church on Oct. 4, 1925. She was a faithful member, attending meetings and visiting in homes. She loved to talk on the scriptures and to sing hymns of praise. She often told the writer and her husband that she could sing with us all night and not get tired.

She is survived by a sister and brother-in-law, Irene and Ralph Vest, several nieces and nephews as well as Beloved Friends and Neighbors.

Funeral services were held Friday May 31, 1991 at the Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head of the River) by her pastor Elder Hale Terry. She was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord. We feel our loss is her Eternal Gain.

Written by request of Paynes Creek Church in their conference meeting on June 1, 1991.

Humbly submitted by,
Marie D. Cannaday

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Sis. Beulah Nichols, Clerk

CORRECTION

The fourth line on page 174 in the August issue of the "Signs" should read — lowly creature to behold. Please correct this in your copy.

Editors

MOVED OR MOVING?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

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.

Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

SAFELY HOME

*I am home in Heaven, dear ones;
Oh, so happy and so bright;
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.*

*All the pain and grief is over;
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever
Safely home in Heaven at last.*

*Did you wonder I so calmly
Trode the valley of the shade?
Oh, but Jesus' love illumined
Every dark and fearful glade.*

*And he came himself to meet me;
In that way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' arm to lean on
Could I have one doubt to dread?*

*Then you must not grieve so sorely;
For I love you dearly still;
Try to look beyond earth's shadows
Pray to trust our Father's will.*

*There is work still waiting for you;
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now while life remaineth
You shall rest in Jesus' land.*

*When that work is all completed;
He will gently call you home;
On the rapture of that meeting
On the joy to see you come.*

Sent to Dorothy Smith by a friend in memory of Dora L. Alverson who died Oct. 8, 1990.

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 EDITORIAL

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.



ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

How wise and powerful were all of Christ's teachings to his people in the days of the Apostles, but no less today. *Heb. 1:2* ***"Hath in these last***

days spoken unto us by his Son." We don't believe Christ ever spoke an idle word or ever failed to accomplish it's intended purpose.

The question was asked to hear the response of his disciples, but he knew before what he had been called, as well as what their answer would be, because He is the Son of God.

We may hear similar answers today by an unbelieving world, if not in word, by implication. How many would say He is the Son of God, then deny He was born of a virgin or deny His Father is God. Who would say they believe in God, and deny He has come and has finished the work of salvation the Father gave Him to do. Who can say of all the Father gave Him He has lost none, but will raise all up at the last day. Can we say He is the Son and deny He is in perfect control of all things? Can a sparrow fall without him, are not every hair of the head numbered?

The world could not believe in the disciples day He was the Son endowed with all the power of the Father. The world does not believe it today, especially those along with many others that would take His name in vain. ***"But whom say ye that I am"*** I believe as Christ called

Peter by name, it was an example of being called by an earthly name, that part didn't really matter, to have revealed that He was the Son of God was to be blessed from above?

Today that knowledge can come from no other source. Jesus answered for *"flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."* Does that not dispute worldly wisdom ever teaching one to know God. Of all that saw him, listened to his teaching and beheld His healing power, just those that had this revelation, knew He was the Son of God.

We read "to know God is life eternal." If the world by wisdom can know God, then all have the ability to become Sons. Thanks be to that revelation from on high we know, to be a son we must be born a Son. John Chap. 6:44. *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day."*

What a blessing in every age to have a knowledge of God, he is a Son, he has finished the work, He is the Lord and will not, has not, and cannot change. He declared, *"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Malachi 4:6.* Therefore His people, chosen in Him before the world was, do know the Son, are embraced in His promises, and are the ones that make up that Church which He calls His Church built upon this rock, The Christ, the Son of the living God. What joy! the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He didn't say

there would not be trial, but never will prevail. His church is as safe as Christ, all surrounded by the love of God, awaiting that call home at His second coming Amen!

Hopefully,
Elder J.R. Williams

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure you of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

Editors

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10 / 91
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

JOHN 3: 1-3.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

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.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Shipman and Darlene,

I have had a mind to write before, during the fall meetings, but since we got home from Hopewell Association in Ala. last night, it seems I could think of nothing else.

The brethren at all the churches were mindful of your absence, as you could tell by the cards circulated among us. Its been many years we've had you in our home and our meetings, and I prepared for you this time, too. We know our comings and goings are already laid out by the Lord, and we try to be patient, and reconciled to his will, even though it is hard at times. I do hope you are convalescing nicely, and will soon be up and about your daily life in better health. I remember your writing a lovely, comforting letter to Cisco and me, when you had heart surgery before, and hope the Lord blessed your thoughts and mind, as then, through this ordeal.

At this time last year you visited me and the children in the hospital, as we waited by our husband and father, as he left the walks of man in this life. You especially were so comforting the day you spent with me when I was alone. I felt utterly forsaken, till God put it in your hearts to come in that morning, after Ned left. I knew

you had driven those many miles to be with the brethren here, and yet spent those comforting hours with someone as forsaken and unworthy as I felt.

Maybe that is why my heart and mind have been on you, in missing our wonderful meetings this year; because I missed them all last year, and can sympathize with your longings to be among the brethren, in the love and sweet fellowship we have for one another.

My heart is most bursting with the feelings imbedded there the last two days, Sisters Clemmie Murphy (Bishop) and Marie Hicks, went to Ala. with Graydon and me. The communion was sweet among us as we rehashed the sermons, prayers and fellowship etc. on the way home.

We arrived at the home of Bro. Ronnie Graves about 8 o'clock Thurs. night and were treated royally there. Then to Pleasant Ridge Church Friday A.M. The drive was lovely, especially as we found the church at the top of this winding climbing hill. The others had been up there before but not at this church, so we all feasted on the beauty of nature.

The meeting was opened by Elder Lon Dee's welcoming speech. It set the stage for a lot of sweet, loving fellowship, and if I know my heart, I was blessed to "hear" the marvellous spoken words of the doctrine of grace as it was richly proclaimed by all his ministers there. Bro. Lon Dee's speech was more of an introduction to Elder Cabbage, who was appointed to preach the introductory sermon.

I feel that association in Powell Valley is richly blessed to have a gift like him, to oversee the flock of God. I was so uplifted during the whole meeting, I enjoyed every sermon and prayer, and the pretty singing. That afternoon Elder Niekirk went forward, followed by Elder Haygood. They both spent time in my home during our association, visiting with each other and hearing them after the meeting was over. I had the Niekirks here till Tues. I played Mary's part that day and enjoyed his fireside preaching, while Sister Niekirk prepared their clothes for the rest of their trip.

On Sat. in Ala. we heard Elders McCormick and Graydon that morning, and Elders Campbell and Cabbage that afternoon. I felt indeed as if "My cup runneth over." I enjoyed the prayers too. Everything seemed so peaceful and lovely, even providentially, the weather was perfect.

We had to come home yesterday for Graydon to fill his appointment at Ringgold, Mt. Olive Church, but my mind has been on the meeting back there. It has been raining all day, and I've been alone in body, but I am still rejoicing and feasting in heavenly places, which I hope are in Christ Jesus.

This has been the loneliest, most sorrowful year of my life. I have felt so forsaken and bare spiritually, until I felt he was clean gone forever. However, I have a hope that our God of mercy, blessed me to go to these

meetings and gave me a hearing ear, so that I can rejoice again.

After my last surgery, Graydon and Dale took me to Florida, where we visited in the homes of Elders Niekirk and McCormick. Then in August I went with him to the Memphis meeting, and we spent the night in Elder Chapell's home. During the fall I've been to our own association, the one at Sulphur Fork in Texas and now Hopewell in Alabama. Also the fifth Sunday meetings at Ringgold, La., Hopewell in Winnsboro, Texas. Reflecting back I wonder why I ever murmur and complain, for I don't remember having become weary or disinterested in a single sermon. I should be on my knees in thankfulness to the merciful God who guided my feet to the these places of love and sweet fellowship, where the world and its wicked ways are shut out for a season.

I hope I have not bored you with my scattering thoughts, but felt the need to talk to some one, and chose you. I've missed you so at the meetings, and your visits here. May it be the Lord's will to restore your health and send you our way again soon.

The church folks around here are well as usual so far as I know.

In bonds of hope and love,
Ruby Barron

ACTS 15:18.

Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

Feb. 28, 1990

Dear Brother and Sister Shipman,

I've thought of you in much love since the Sunday you came by Memphis on your way from Benton, Ill. and being with us at Church that night. I hope you all are well. I wish there were less miles between us all. I have just finished reading March Signs. It may be my age but it seems the warning or admonition in Elder Philpot's article was very timely. We are living in fearful times, but "All our times are in God's hands," David said. It seems T.V. and all the worlds are crushing in upon us. Everyone is too busy with things that are worldly, to have time to sit and talk of God and Godliness and of the Mercy He has shown us. So many doctrines are flowing through the land, radio's, T.V.'s, perhaps it has always been and God is not unaware of it. I try to pray and ask that He will strengthen and keep me in the Truth. I think I know how weak we are in nature — and except He keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. We are so few in number, but I don't believe there will be one child missing for whom Christ died. I love to hear Christ's name praised and His power proclaimed to the highest not man's. I must close — I am one of many words, and I wonder and fear at time, if they are like clouds without water. I have many fears. For I am such a sinner but there are such comforting

words about the Fear of God. I hope mine is the right kind of fear. Somewhere one said "Come all ye who fear God and I will tell you what He has done for my soul. I live to hear ones tell how they feel the Lord has dealt with them. Rehearse the pleasing story over and over. Love is a powerful thing.

May His Love and Mercy rest upon us all.

Lucille Young

JOHN 1: 1-7.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

 ARTICLES

**EXPERIENCE AND CALL
TO THE MINISTRY**

Dear Brethren: feeling impressed to write some of my thoughts in childhood and youth upon the subject of death and religion, and at the request of many brethren to write my experience and call to the ministry, though feeling incompetent to the task, I attempt it. I was reared between two mountains of the Blue Ridge, where my opportunities were limited. I went to school only three months. No church was nearer than seven miles. My father and mother were Primitive Baptists. My mother's conversation on the subject of death brought solemn thoughts on my mind. On one occasion, at the age of five years, she was taken sick very suddenly, and looked down at me at her feet and said, "Matt, without a change I shall have to leave you, but I have hope that I will be with my blessed Jesus in heaven. Be a good boy, and it may be he will bring you to me." I left the room, but did not get out of her sight. An awful gloom arrested my mind. I felt that I wanted to do as she told me, for I loved her. I could not sleep — when I would retire at night, my mind being so concerned about dying, and being put under the ground. As I grew up to the age of nearly thirteen my

mother was taken suddenly ill and in a few days passed away. She called the family to the bed and bade them farewell. When she gave me her hand she said, to me, "I am going to heaven, be a good child. The Lord will bring you where I am." She then sang, "Bright angels crowd around my bed, To carry me home when I am dead," and then passed away. But there was not power enough in her language to make me feel that I was a poor lost sinner. Something very strange took place with me a few months hence. On the 14th day of February, 1848, some of the larger children mortified my feelings, and the first thing on my mind was that I had no mother to comfort me. I went to her grave, and got on my knees to beg the Lord to send her back to me. While there I felt as some voice said to me, It is not my will that she should come to you. But I will bring you to her. I left the grave somewhat reconciled to my lot. I believed that there is a great God, and there must be a great change in me before I could meet him in peace, and that depended on the life that I lived. Many times under the fears of impending danger I would say, if the Lord would let me live I would live a better life. But as soon as danger was past I was the same in practicing the vanities of the sinful mind, but often troubled in mind about death, until about the age of twenty when it was suggested to my mind to not concern myself about religion — that it was an unpopular thing — that the world would slight

me. Wait until you are married. Then will be time enough. On the 18th day of January, 1855, I was married. I passed on in the delight of the world until the 16th of June 1855, when in my field about 1 mile from home, in a moment I felt that I was going to die, and eternal judgment was now what I dreaded. I left work and went to the woods to confess to the Lord what an awful sinner I was, and to beg him to let me live to get home. I returned to my work feeling a little relieved. But in a few minutes the same trouble fell on me again. I left and went home. I wanted to see my wife before I died. When I reached home she came to the door. Her appearance pierced me, for she knew I was a poor condemned sinner. I bursted into tears, and went to search for some secret place to try to pray. I did not want any one to know that I was in any such deep distress. I felt that I had committed the unpardonable sin, the day of grace had past, the door of mercy was forever closed against me. Sometimes my heart was so hard that I could not shed a tear, and yet I felt sensible that I was a dreadful sinner. In a moment I would be in tears and my cry was, Oh Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinner. When I would try to pray my words would seem to fall to the ground. I viewed myself to be so sinful that I became afraid to lie down for fear the Lord would smite me with death. At the same time the breathing of my heart was, Lord, Have mercy on me. I felt that I had some fatal disease that would

soon take me away. I thought that every one knew that I was in this condition. I had not told any one, but condemnation must be visible to all. On the 16th day of September, 1856, about 4 o'clock in the evening, I was impressed with the attempt that I had made to pray, and my words did not go above my head and that Jesus was above all heavens. My words could not reach him. No comfort could I find, nothing but condemnation to me in the Bible, and oh that it had been my lot to live when Jesus was in the world, when I could fall at his feet and beg him for mercy, there might then have been some chance for poor sinful me; but wicked men have crucified him, and if I had been there I would have fought for him until I lost my life to rescue him, and thereby there might have been some chance for me. But in a moment I viewed him on the cross with his hands and feet expanded. I felt that I could hear the hammer driving the nails in his hands and feet, and the words sounded in my poor soul, Your sins helped to nail him there. My poor sinful body fell to the ground. I know not how long I lay there, but when my strength returned I went to the house. I wanted to see some of God's children. I loved them, and the great grief with me was that I had sinned against such a good and merciful God, and now to be cast off from him and his beloved children was more that I could bear. The next morning was Sunday. Mother Barnard was going to visit our house. I wanted to see her

come, and felt that I wanted to beg her to pray for me. When morning came I looked for her with eager desire. But when she came in sight with her two little twin boys in her arms, my beloved and much esteemed brethren E.M. and E.P. Barnard, I felt to be too great a sinner to be in her presence. I left and went to the woods remaining there for some time. In the evening I concluded that I would go with her, and help her carry her babies, and ask her to pray for her poor, wicked and sinful son. I went about three hundred yards when I suddenly felt that I was not worthy to be where she was. I made a moan, and she turned and looked at me. I handed her the babies and her looks at me sounded in my soul farewell, poor condemned sinner. I walked a short distance and fell to the ground. I wanted to see some way to be saved if it could be without God changing from his perfect holiness. I could not see how that could be. All that evening and at night when the sun set I bade farewell to it in feelings. I lay down that night, whether asleep or awake I know not. I viewed my life as a candle dazzling in the air. I felt that I was dying and called my wife, and told her that without a change I could not live, and not to sin against a good and merciful God as I had done. I begged her to go after her father and mother to come and pray for me. She cried aloud and said she could not leave, me, to go with her. I made arrangements to go, but was

pierced with the feeling that I would commit a sin in disturbing those good people. I told her to lie down. I sat by the bed side, and walked the floor that night. When day broke I felt thankful that the Lord had let me live to see another day. I went to the woods to beg — remained till called to breakfast. I went to the table with my hat on to conceal my grief. I made an effort to eat, but felt that I was not worthy to partake of the smallest of God's blessings, and burst into tears, and left, and went to the woods again. I fell on my face, and wanted to be more humble. Oh that I had never been born was my cry. I wanted to be anything of God's creation but that sinner. I remained there until about 9 o'clock in the morning, when I felt to go in the field in sight of my wife for her comfort. When I come in sight of her she was looking after me. In a moment I felt that I was sinking, and turned to tell her that I was gone. But the burden was gone and I felt that I was changed soul and body. I cried, "as far as the East is from the West, so far hast thou separated me from my sins O God." There were a few minutes that seemed that everything was praising the Lord for his blessed salvation. But it was here, if the Lord has ever called me to the work of the ministry in these words, "*Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain.*" In a moment the depravity and helplessness of a sinner was presented to me. I cried Lord, I cannot do them any good. In a moment I sensibly felt and

saw that all power is in Jesus, and that every sinner that mourned on the account of sin would be not turned empty away. I stood amazed and wondered what it all meant. I went back to the woods to try to pray again, and when I got on my knees to beg as before, to my surprise I asked the Lord to pardon my sins, if he had not pardoned them. I was amazed at my request, so I paused, and aimed to leave out the if, but it was the same thing again, and I found myself praying for a lady relative who come out of a Methodist family. In less than two years she professed a hope in Christ, and joined the church. I loved the brotherhood. My soul was weighed with prayer, and supplication for sinners, and to try to comfort the mourner.

Owing to my impressions to preach I remained out of the church till July 5th. My distress during that time I cannot express. I concluded that if I would join the church that my mind in regard to preaching might be relieved. I joined at State Line, and was baptized on the 2nd Sunday in September by brother J. Lackey. When he raised me out of the water my soul leaped with joy. As I reached the bank the text again came with great force, "*Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain.*" It was of such weight that I burst into tears. I hope that I felt the unction of the Holy Ghost. We returned to the house, and at the close of the meeting there were eleven persons came and asked brother Lackey to pray for

them. Among them was the companion of my youth who I hope had been in trouble for a long time. I returned home feeling joyful in part. But owing to my impressions I was cast down when I would view the perfect holiness of God, and compare it with my sinfulness, oh how I would shrink, and one scripture after another would come on my mind, "*Let the dead go bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.*" Let me be where I might it was so. I was almost continually begging the Lord to send some other and release me. I was not eloquent, and had no learning, I roved in the mountain to try to ease my mind in regard to preaching, but could not. I think I have realized as loud preaching between my plough-handles as I ever heard. I lived in rebellion against my impressions to the sorrow of my soul. I could not help fearing that it was all imaginary, or Satan was thereby endeavoring to entangle me. I tried to beg the Lord to give me some sign whether he called me or not, and to take me out of the world rather than I should attempt to preach uncalled. Many times did I feel that death would be sweet to me.

When the war broke out I felt that I would rather go to the war than to the pulpit, for I would be in obedience to the law of my country, but could not know that the Lord had called me to preach. I believed the war would test the matter. If I was wounded I might know the Lord had not called me. I served three years and was not

wounded, nor even my cloths cut with a ball, but passed through many dangers. At Resaca, Ga., I well remember, in a charge on the enemy's work, my front man was shot dead, and a cousin on my right was wounded. The line charged to their works. They were firing on me from two ways while I was in a few feet of their breast-works. I believe that the Lord was with me. I feared no danger. It was one of the brightest times of my life. It seemed to be said to me, "*Fear not, no harm shall befall you, for you shall testify of me before many people.*" I turned and looked each way, and I was alone. No man except one was on the whole line. I went back to the line, carrying with me a wounded companion, feeling humble and I trust meek. I felt from that time on if the Lord would let me live to get home that I would not rebel any longer. I reached home the first of April, 1865. Oh how thankful I trust I felt to meet with my family, and the dear children of God. Our meeting come off. The brethren, Arrington and Plasters, asked me on the stand, but the cross was too great. I wanted a greater sign to satisfy and confirm me in this great matter. On Sunday evening of our July Meeting, when I left the congregation, in my feelings, I bid farewell to them. I reached my father-in-law's. I felt that the Lord was going to kill me for my disobedience. There was a time I was unconscious, I know not how long. But the first I knew old mother Barnard was consoling my wife in her

humble manner, telling her there was no danger of my dying until I had filled my course in the ministry. I reached home that night feeling feeble. I lay down on the bed; my companion standing by me. I was begging the Lord to tell me what my duty was, and I would obey. Oh what vehemency, oh what desire of soul and mind I felt—that I could not live. In a moment I viewed Jesus and the apostles in the kingdom of glory. In a moment I viewed the obedience of them to the fulfillment of the Father's will. I realized my disobedience so sensibly that I was not worthy, and the scripture came again, "*Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain.*" I cried aloud and said, "Lord, let me live, and if thou wilt give me one word to say, let it be to the glory of thy name." The next meeting came, I went on the stand with a heavy cross, begging the Lord to convince me by the feelings that followed my labor. After talking some minutes I sat down, and I think I felt as pleasant as I did when I received my hope.

I want to relate two events that I have passed in my ministry. On Friday night before the second Sunday in November, 1865, I dreamed that I was south of my house, standing on the bank of a beautiful stream of water. Some distance in front I saw six beautiful men walking on the water leaning on staves in their hands, and drawing a net having seven wings. One staff there was no man by it. I was taken up and carried,

and my hands placed on it, and it seemed to carry me with ease for a short distance, when I became weighty. I let loose, and I fell into great distress. The next morning I left for State Line where I expected to meet with Elder Cassell and Lackey on a funeral occasion. I met brother Lackey and attempted to preach, and I felt well a few minutes, and stopped in a few minutes, an awful dread came on. I went with brother Lackey to the widow Hill's the wife of Elder James Hill, to attend some funerals on next day. My distress that night I cannot tell. My wife and three children I felt would perish if I did not return and provide for them. About 9 o'clock next morning I parted with brother Lackey in the yard in tears. He went one way and I another. I started to the hills of Dan River to stay till the meeting was over, and then to return to my poor wife and children, to try to care for them and never try to preach any more. I went to the river hill, and looked for the most comfortable place, as it was cool. I made an effort to go, and fell on my face, and felt that I should die. I begged the Lord to let me go home to my poor wife and children and care for them. While there I viewed my wife and the three children between the heavens and earth with a wreath of light around them, and it was said to me, in my soul, *"Let the dead bury their dead. Go thou and preach the kingdom of God. I will sanctify your labor to their support."* I arose re-

conciled, and went to the house, and met with brother Lackey. We burst into tears and he said to me, "Brother Blanset, you can't get out of the bounds of God's power, go on and preach." I willingly went, and felt in my labors that surely I was not in this sinful world.

Just one year after the church at Bell Spur liberated me to exercise a public gift, they licensed me to preach; and the second year, to a day, they ordained me. I felt that they were too hasty, and that they were putting me under greater responsibilities than I was able to fulfill to the glory of God and the good of the church. But the Lord, I hope, has been my only trust, both in preaching and the administration of the ordinances in the church. But owing to the perverseness of my human nature, it all seems to have been imperfectly done. And, were it not for the evidences received in my labors in preaching and baptizing, and for the dreams and visions of those whom I esteem as being the children of God, I should have sunk in despondency long ago.

I have served five churches as pastor and have baptized three hundred and forty-five persons; and the most of them have expressed in their experiences, in some way or other, some relation to me or my labors. I now have the care (in the true sense I hope) of four churches. I never would accept the care of a church till it had been made known to me that the church was a unit in

the choice made.

Oh, what a joy and consolation we find when we meet all of the brethren and sisters in peace and fellowship, filling their seats and manifesting their love, one to another. But how discouraging it is to find them in confusion and striving one against another. These things ought not to be.

I will now relate one of the most consoling and blessed seasons of my ministerial life. My only son, who was afflicted with a serious lung trouble, and the lord having blessed him with a good hope, sent to me, on Saturday of our July meeting, to have preaching at his house that evening; and that he wanted to see all of the church. He had not been able to speak for sometime above a whisper. So I made the appointment and served in preaching, and when I closed he said, "Pa, I want to talk to the church, if I can be heard. The church assembled about his bed; and, in a few minutes, he received strength in speaking so that those in the yard could hear him. The brethren sisters united in singing "Amazing Grace;" and then my dear niece, that we raised, Molly L. Hall, became so wrought upon by the Spirit that she came forward and was received. It was a time of inexpressible joy realized by all that were present. The next Sunday meeting was set for their baptism. When the time came, my son had not stood alone for about five weeks. Some of the brethren visited him in the morning and gave up all hopes of him being able to go to the church. He said with

power, "I want to go to meeting." He arose from his bed and walked alone to the door, and they put him on a buggy with his father-in-law, Brother Simmons. When I met him he was looking very feeble, but was strong in the faith.

After a joyful service at the stand, and after hearing the experience of Brother Ambros Jessup, I said to my son, "Do you want to be baptized?" And he answered, "I do." He was lying on a spring couch, and they picked him up and, as he was being borne to the water, the brethren and sisters sang; and it seemed, to me, that their singing entered heaven, while the holy unction from the blessed Lord filled my soul.

Brother E.P. Barnard helped me carry him, with several others into the water, and I baptized them all, four of old Brother Sanders Jessup's children and a daughter-in-law were of that number. That was one of the most heavenly days of my life.

I have now given some of the reasons why I hope the Lord has called me to the ministry, and some of the blessed seasons that I have enjoyed, which have encouraged me to continue to labor for these forty-five years. I have merited none of the blessings of God; and can truly adopt the language of Jacob, who said, "*few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.*" — Gen. 47:9. I only live by hope. For over fifty-six years election, predestination, sanctification, and the holy calling, unmerited by the sinner, has been

my meat and drink, believing it to be the doctrine of Christ and the apostles.

I have given some of my reasons for trying to preach, and would say to all, who may profess a call to the ministry, that they should weigh their impressions by the scriptures, and take the advice of Paul, who said, "*Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*"

Yours in hope of eternal life,

Elder James M. Blanset
Mayberry, Va.

PSALM 119 : 73-80.

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word.

I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.

Let the proud be ashamed: for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts.

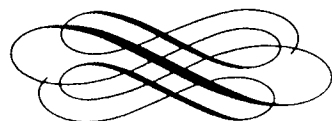
Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY

Webster defines this word as follows: "Crookedness, perverseness, the state of being depraved or corrupted; a vitiated state of moral character, want of virtue; extreme wickedness; absence of religious feeling and principal."

The above definition is in line with the Bible teaching. What then says the Apostle, are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; so it is written there is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seek after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open Sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the ways of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes. They have no ears to hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches. There is no soundness in them. Destitute of will and power to serve God, cannot come to Christ except the Father draw them. And all the Father gave Christ shall come to him, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.



VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

EXPERIENCE

I was born in the mountains of the Big Sandy River section, on August 3rd, 1869. In this birth I was born of natural parentage, born to die. In August 1914, I was born of a spiritual parentage, born a new birth, and born to live forever. At that time I did not know anything about the Old School or Primitive Baptists. I really thought all denominations that professed to be christians were right. There was an old Methodist preacher, a very pious old man, who lived close to me. I wished to be baptized so this old gentleman baptized me. I began to read the Bible every day, and read it prayerfully. I made a vow to my God that I would take his word for my guide. Soon after I commenced reading the Bible I found that the Methodist brethren and I were far apart, and at this I became troubled. At last I heard a United Baptist preach. I thought he and I agreed, so I joined the United Baptist denomination, was duly baptized and remained with them about ten years. I kept on reading and studying the Bible and contending for the truths I could see that it taught. They soon began to call me a "Hardshell." I dearly loved those people I had lived with so long, but how can two walk

together except they be agreed? (Amos iii. 3.) At last I heard a Primitive Baptist preach, and he preached my belief so completely that I was convinced I was one of them, and that they had the true doctrine of the Bible, and that the world cannot overcome, so I am at last firmly settled on the following faith concerning eternal life. It may even be too hard for some of the Primitive Baptists.

The first points we will notice will be regeneration and conversion. A number of our preaching brethren say they both mean the same thing, but I do not understand it that way. The God that I believe in and worship is a God that knew all things; purposed all things in Christ Jesus before time began; never made a failure; never was defeated; never tries to do anything, but speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast; one who does his will in all things.

The difference, as I understand it, I will endeavor to set forth as follows: First, regeneration, or the new birth, or the new creation, or becoming a new creature, is the work of the Holy Ghost, in which a vital change is wrought in the heart of the individual, is the implantation of eternal life in the soul by the operation of the Holy Spirit, for no man can turn himself to God. Regeneration is a passing from death unto life. It is purely spiritual life implanted in the heart. I think much confusion of mind and the consequent error of statement often result from giving the same meaning to regeneration as to con-

version. Regeneration is the creative work, and means to quicken, to be born again, or to give eternal life. Conversion should be used with reference to change of mind, views, intentions or purposes. Men may be converted from one error to another, from error to truth, or from truth to error, for the process is only mental and is generally accomplished by persuasive arguments or evidence (or what is accepted as evidence, be it either good or bad) which they may receive from others, or from their own meditations or reasoning; but regeneration is accomplished only by the direct work of the Spirit of Almighty God in the soul of man when it is entirely destitute of even a spark of spiritual life. The soul, or spirit, of man is entirely passive in this miraculous work, and no earthly hand or influence can possibly aid or assist in the least. So while there are earthly means used in conversion, nothing but the heavenly means of divine power can regenerate men. In their vanity and blinded zeal, men are compassing land and sea making proselytes, but are entirely powerless to give a single one of their converts a new heart or spiritual life. Exhortations, persuasions and arguments may, and very often do, change the mind, but such feeble means can never change one from nature to grace, for that is a radical change. A change of mind or intention is very far from giving life to the dead. Regeneration makes no vital change in the flesh, but in the spirit. There

is nothing in the flesh made holy. Conversion may in some respects be called a moral act, but regeneration never is. Exhortations to morality and right living are certainly commendable, but regeneration is not a duty, for men are not commanded to be born again. Men may justly and sincerely thank others who have converted them from errors of any kind, but they should always be very careful to give all glory and honor to the blessed God for the gift of eternal life. If God has through his mercy and pity made one to be partaker of his grace and called him out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light, that one should give God alone the glory and praise for it, for he alone can do it. Men with all their zeal and monied efforts cannot in the least assist the gracious Lord in the genesis of spiritual life, and they should not undertake that which is positively not within their ability to do, for their labors are only destined to failure. Men may aid others to acquire knowledge of many things that may come within their knowledge and ability, and this certainly in many respects is commendable, but they can in respect aid in the giving of life, which work is far above all earthly powers. They may teach the head or cultivate the intellect, but they absolutely cannot change the heart. They may even teach the gospel in the letter of it, but they cannot convey the spirit of it. It surely is an awful delusion to think that the training of the natural mind or the giving

of intellectual knowledge of Jesus Christ is the means of making people His children. If all of any one's knowledge of the blessed Savior is but historical, intellectual or head information, where has he any more valid claim of a better faith than the devils? (Mark i. 24-34.) So if mere intellectual knowledge alone would make one wise unto salvation the devils should have some claims, for they told Christ that they knew him. But they did not know him as the saints do, for it is most surely through the work of free and sovereign grace in regeneration that any one has a saving knowledge of that glorious and blessed Redeemer. God alone has the power to work such knowledge in the heart. Saving faith that trusts and relies upon him alone is the work of his Spirit. The devils never possessed the least particle of this kind of knowledge, neither was salvation ever designed for them. Head knowledge without heart influence will rather lead from God than to God, and to have the understanding convinced, while the heart remains unregenerated, is among the most awful delusions of the present day. There is no doubt but that in point of mere knowledge the devils themselves know more of Jesus Christ than many of his dear children, for we read that when Christ was upon earth the devils came out of many crying out, and saying, We know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of Israel. But what was their knowledge? They knew him in a way of his own eternal power and

Godhead, but not in a way of salvation. They knew him as the Savior of his redeemed, but not as their Savior. Devils they still remained, and devils they must remain forever. The natural birth gives no right to grace. The church of Jesus Christ is composed of real regenerated believers. All who join the church of Jesus Christ without this qualification only constitute what may be called a nominal church. Grace when renewing the soul makes no alteration of the flesh. The body is wholly a mass of flesh and blood and bones, and it remains carnal. All its pursuits, desires, affections and appetites are suited to its nature, and it daily tends to corruption, so grace makes no change in this part of our nature, neither was it ever intended to. The original sentence at the fall of Adam must be executed: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. (Gen. iii. 19.) Hence, it is to be sown at death a natural body as it was first formed in the Adam nature of our creation, but by virtue of our redemption by Christ it will be raised at the resurrection a spiritual body. This is to form the triumphs of Christ in raising our vile bodies to be then fashioned like his own glorious body. This is what the apostle calls the redemption of our bodies, and which they who have the firstfruits of the Spirit wait for. (Rom. viii. 23.) But in the meantime a corrupt, sinful body, whose whole tendencies are corrupt, cannot but be in opposition to the renewed part of the child of God, who by

regeneration is wholly spiritual, being quickened, which was before dead in trespasses and sins. It is no wonder, therefore, that in a constant warfare between the two opposing natures of the child of God that he should go mourning. How shall it be otherwise, when a man's own nature is everlastingly opposing his own soul? The flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit lusting against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Gal. v. 17.) The doctrine of regeneration, namely, that God by an instantaneous act imparts spiritual life to the sinful soul without its cooperation or assistance, so that the new birth is not dependent upon or conditioned upon the act of man, but that he is born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but by the will of God. (John i. 13.) Again I state that regeneration is the solemn, holy and instantaneous work of God by the Holy Ghost in the soul, and our will or inclination has no more to do with it than the creation of a world, or or bringing ourselves into existence. It is the God of heaven that works it by his power. Religion to be worth anything must be a living religion, a religion that proceeds from a work of grace upon the heart. Regeneration, or the new birth, by which we experience a change of heart, is to be distinguished from baptism, which is an external rite, though some have confounded them as the one and inseparable thing. A new heart also

will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. (Ezek. xxxiv. 26.) So it is a new creature, not merely a new opinion or a new name. I am sure that if our religion has never humbled us it has done nothing for us, but has left us where it found us: in nature's pride and ignorance. The supposition that the Spirit is begging, beseeching and wooing sinners to become saints, but because of weakness it is dependent upon the sinner for success, as often is pictured out, is certainly dishonoring to God. The powerful hand of God is too often overlooked in this vain and fashionable showing, of too much use for the weak and puny hand of man. While the apostle Paul writes the Thessalonians to quench not the Spirit: but as they were already church members, such exhortation must have been intended along the line of obedience suitable to them in that position. Paul was not addressing alien sinners, or unregenerate characters. While I think it possible for those born again to quench the prompting of the Spirit, at least to some extent, I fail to see how the unregenerate can do so, for they are sensual, having not the Spirit (Jude 19), and so of course can have none of the Spirit in them to quench. I believe in the doctrine of election by grace, and that God chose a definite number in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world and ordained them to eternal life and glory. This choice being wholly unconditional upon their part. I believe that Jesus

Christ was set from everlasting as the Mediator of his elect people, and that in the fullness of time he took upon himself a perfectly sinless body and nature, and in that nature and body he suffered and died in the room and stead of his elect only, and that he thereby obtained eternal redemption for them. I believe that sinners are justified before God only through the gracious imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. I believe that God's elect are born again, or regenerated from a dead state of trespasses and sins (or spiritually lifeless state) by the Holy Ghost, and that all shall persevere through God's grace unto eternal glory. I believe there will be a resurrection of all the dead, and the joys of the righteous and the misery of the wicked will be everlasting. I believe that the gospel is to be preached publicly as a statement of the truth and as a witness of Jesus Christ, for his praise and for the comfort and instruction of unregenerated persons, but I deny that it is an offer of salvation to the unregenerate or that it contains any obligation for them to believe that he is their personal Savior. Many errors arise from wrong application of the Scriptures, because they are, with few exceptions, addressed to and therefore should be applied to the people of God, those quickened, or born again, and who alone are given ears to hear and hearts to understand. The power of preaching can reach no further in a spiritual sense than to instruct, comfort, cheer and en-

courage the weak, wounded and needy sheep of the Lord. We positively have no command to make, sheep, nor to assist the Lord to do so. The church should not be considered some kind of a workshop where children of God are made, for out of such an opinion will grow a false zeal that will lead to many erroneous practices.

In the conclusion of this article I wish to repeat the answer to the statement that heads this letter: **Why I am a Primitive Baptist.** It is because they are the only ones I ever heard or read after who take all of God's word and explain it in a way that all the wisdom of this world cannot contradict it. My reason for writing the foregoing article is that I might lead one of Christ's little ones from error. Do not for a moment think that I believe it might save one from eternal destruction. Far be it from me, for I believe that the salvation of all who will ever be saved was made secure when Jesus said, "It is finished," and all the gospel preaching, writing, praying and every other effort made by mortal man will not add one to that redeemed number that Christ redeemed from hell on the cross. Christ's precious blood redeemed all his people, and his finished work is being manifested in his dear children, and will continue to be until he comes to take them home.

I do not want any one to think I do not believe in good works, for I believe in them as much as any one can and stay within the Bible, but I do

not believe in works in the way of saving the soul. I believe that good works spring from salvation, and not salvation from good works. Good works are only the result of salvation, the fruits. I have not said much in this article about good works, as I have been considering the doctrinal side of the great question. A great number of preachers will tell you that if you will perform certain conditions Jesus will save you. There are absolutely no conditions in eternal salvation.

I will now bring my remarks to a close, hoping that at least some one who reads this will compare it with the "Thus saith the Lord," and if it is not contradicted by God's word it will stand until judgment day.

Your weak brother in the Lord, I hope,

William Branham.
Hitchins, Kentucky

"But we see Jesus." — Hebrews ii. 9.

Did your eyes ever see him? Do look into conscience — did your eyes ever see Jesus? I do not mean your natural, your bodily eyes; but the eye of faith, the eye of the soul. I will tell you what you have felt, if you ever saw Jesus. Your heart was softened and melted, your affections drawn heavenward, your soul penetrated with thankfulness and praise,

your conscience sprinkled with atoning blood, your mind lifted up above all earthly things to dwell and centre in the bosom of the blessed Immanuel. Do you think, then, you have seen Jesus by the eye of faith? Then you have seen the perfection of beauty, the consummation of pure loveliness; you have seen the image of the invisible God; you have seen all the perfections and glorious character of the Godhead shining forth in him that was nailed to Calvary's tree. I am sure such a sight as that must melt the most obdurate heart, and draw tears from the most flinty eyes; such a sight by faith of the beauty and glory of the only-begotten Son of God must kindle the warmest, holiest stream of tender affection. It might not have lasted long. These feelings are often very transitory. The world, sin, temptation, and unbelief soon work; infidelity soon assails all; the things of time and sense soon draw aside; but whilst it lasted, such, in a greater or less degree, were the sensations produced. Now, if you have ever seen Jesus by the eye of faith, and ever had a tender affection going out toward him, you will see him in glory. But you will never see him in glory, if you have not seen him in grace; you will never see him eye to eye in the open vision of eternal bliss, unless you have seen him now upon earth by the faith of God's elect in your heart.

J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

THE PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The Pleasant Valley Association will be held at Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas 77060. Commencing on Friday, the first day of November and ending on Sunday, the third day of November. All lovers of the truth are invited. For directions, call O.P. Murphy, (713) 649-5779, or Marvin Curnutt, (713) 987-0250.

**Marvin Curnutt
Church Clerk**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1991

- Mrs. Frances Townley, AR
- Memory Eld. John C. Townley.....5.00
- Mrs. Amy Heppler, AZ7.00
- Charles F. Stewart, NC7.00
- W.C. Lake, FL.....2.00
- Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC2.00
- Mrs. Celeste S. Welch, NC2.00
- Mrs. Vivian Underwood, VA.....2.00
- Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA7.00
- Walter L. Thomas, LA2.00
- Mrs. Joel S. Alexander, AL.....7.00
- H.C. Brown, VA.....2.00
- A Sister, NY2.00

- Jesse A. Ramsey, VA.....2.00
- A Friend, NC.....12.00
- Mrs. Pattie Krewatch, DE.....20.00
- Mrs. Ida Taylor, MD.....10.00
- Alpha Sears, OH.....2.00
- Charles V. Kirkpatrick, TX
- Memory of wife Mrs. Kirkpatrick ...100.00
- L.W. Nichols, VA.....2.00
- Eld. James C. Young, NC7.00
- G.W. Carter, NC2.00
- Mrs. Lessie W. Tilley, NC.....5.00
- Joseph C. Henry, MA5.00
- Mrs. Mary E. Poff, VA4.00
- F.J. Plaster, VA2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER MILDRED EASON

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write a Resolution of Respect for Sister Mildred Eason.

Sister Eason was born on May 20, 1926 and died on June 19, 1991, making her stay on earth 65 years. She was married to Elder Lester Eason and to this union were born seven children who survived her. Sister Eason was blessed to have a good family that loved her and stood by her to the end.

Sister Eason joined Williams Church in 1967 and was a strong believer of Salvation by Grace. She knew everything was in the hands of her God and that is where she put her trust.

Sister Eason worked on a public job for many years and had made

many friends during this time. To know her was to love her.

Written by John Coker as requested by order of August conference meeting.

Elder Henry Jones, Mod.
Sister Lovie Thompson, Clerk

ELDER WILLIAM W. FLEET

Elder William W. (Bill) Fleet passed away on May 3, 1990 at the age of 86 years and 13 days. Brother Bill Fleet was born on April 20, 1904 in Dickson, Tennessee, his parents were Dave W. Fleet and Victoria Jones. The family moved to Gladewater, Texas in 1910, which has been Brother Bill's home most of the time since. Elder Fleet was married to Miss Euna Ramey on February 16, 1924 (were married for over 66 years). Three daughters were born of this marriage: Grace Nail (passed away in 1975), Jewell Dooley of Gladewater, and Carolyn Fleet of Irving, Texas. Brother Fleet had one brother and three sisters who survive him, five grandchildren, fifteen great grandchildren, one great grandchild, and a host of nieces and nephews.

Brother William W. Fleet and wife Euna joined the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church at East Mountain in 1951 where his father who died in 1934 had been a deacon and his mother was still a member (she died in 1952). Brother and Sister Fleet

moved their membership to Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Weslaco, Texas sometime in 1955 and he was liberated to speak in the same year. On 4th Sunday in December 1955, Brother Fleet was ordained to the full work of the ministry. In January 1956, he was called as assistant Pastor of Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church, Houston, Texas and became pastor in December 1956 at the death of the pastor. Elder Fleet served this church through 1961. After this, he was very active in Mt. Olive and Mt. Zion Churches for several years. In the later part of his ministry, Elder Fleet due to poor health was normally only able to go to his home church of Fellowship.

Elder W.W. Fleet was a strong predestinarian minister. He preached a God who was first, last, and only in the salvation of his people. Brother Bill believed in a sovereign God who has all power in heaven and earth and has declared 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 46:10). Elder Fleet believed in the predestination of all things.

Elder William W. Fleet's funeral was conducted by Elder Loyd Wall, assisted by the writer at the Stone-Goodwin Funeral Chapel, Gladewater, Texas with the burial in Union Grove Cemetery.

Written by one who loved him,
Elder Gerald D. Shipman

MARVIN HILL HOUSTON

On June 16, 1990, it pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our dear Brother Marvin Hill Houston. He was born on January 23, 1915 near Beulaville, North Carolina, where he grew up and married Mary Lee Kennedy. To this marriage were born two sons and six grandchildren. Brother Marvin was the son of the late Thomas J. and Mamie Q. Houston, both of whom were born and grew up near Beulaville, North Carolina. Brother Marvin's church membership was, with Hancock Primitive Baptist Church near Ayden, North Carolina, pastored by Elder Joseph Sawyer. Brother Marvin was a faithful member and Deacon, who professed to and gave evidence of a belief in Salvation by grace and predestination of all things. He was much loved by all his brethren who were of that same faith and order. Brother Marvin was 75 years old at his death. The love I had for him grew from what he was enabled to manifest of God having worked upon and within him while I was in his presence. Surely I have missed and will miss him, but not as one without hope, for I remember where it was and is spoken, "*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints,*" and surely his spirit is in the presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Written at the request of his companion Sister Mary Lee Houston, and friend, Troy G. Shepard.

NETTIE PAGE RICE

It is with a very sad heart we had to give up a dear and beloved Sister, Nettie Page Rice.

Sister Rice was born December 13, 1897, in Pittsylvania County. She was called away March 22, 1991, at age 93. She was the daughter of Albert Edgar Rice, Sr. and Maniza Page Rice. She was survived by two lovely sisters, Susan Ema Rice and Mary Elizabeth Rice. She had two brothers, Edgar and Eugene Rice who preceded her in death.

Sister Rice spent her life in the Danville area where she was employed as a bookkeeper for 23 years at F.A. Dix Grocery Store and later at Henry & Turner Grocery Store.

Sister Rice joined the Danville Primitive Baptist Church May 10, 1964, and was baptized by her pastor, Elder H.W. Wray. She was a faithful member, attending church every time she had the opportunity to go. When she became disabled to go to meetings, she would sit at home and follow through the meetings until time for the meetings to close.

Sister Rice believed in the absolute Sovereignty of God, and Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. It was a real joy to hear her talk of the things she believed.

She was laid to rest in the Highland Burial Park of Danville to await the second coming of our Lord. We hope our loss is her eternal gain.

Submitted by Sister Bernice W.

Marshall, by request of the church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

**IN MEMORY OF
BROTHER JOHN B. TATE**

On March 14, 1991 the Lord called home Brother John B. Tate at the age of 84. His funeral was held here at Dan River Church the following Saturday by his pastor Elder Kenneth Key and Elder Haygood Wray. He was a native of Rockingham County and the son of the late Ed Y. and Mary Chilton Tate. He is survived by three children, Betty Carol Ellington of Reidsville, Glenda Gunn and Wayne Tate of Eden; five stepsons, four stepdaughters; four brothers, James and Fletcher of Ruffin, Henry of Reidsville, and David of Eden; three sisters, Addie Ellington, Virginia Hylton, and Lillie Wood all of Eden; seven grandchildren and 23 step grandchildren.

Brother Tate joined the Church on May 21, 1966. The Lord blessed him to live a quiet, peaceful life. He was a shy, soft spoken man but was always blessed to lend a neighborly hand. The Lord enabled him to earn his living by the sweat of his brow. I believe he loved being out on his tractor tilling the land. When passing his home, the absence of his garden and the untilled land are silent reminders of his absence. I have many child-

hood memories of working with him and his family in tobacco. We all miss him but trust that our loss is his eternal gain. May the Lord bless us all, especially his family, to be reconciled to the Will of the heavenly Master in taking him, and may the Gentle Shepherd be their strength and help in the day to come.

Humbly submitted,
Mary Hawkins

PSALM 146.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul.

While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.

Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God:

Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:

Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners:

The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous:

The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord.

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HE MAKETH NO MISTAKE

*My hope seems small I know,
My heart may throb and ache,
But in my soul, I'm glad I know,
He maketh no mistake.*

*My cherished plans may go astray,
My hope may fade away,
But still I'll trust my Lord to lead
For He doth know the Way.*

*Tho' night be dark and it may seem
That day will never break;
I'll pin my faith, my all in Him,
He maketh no mistake.*

*There's so much now I cannot see,
My eyesight's far too dim;
But come what may, I'll simply
trust
And leave it all to Him.*

*For by and by the mist will lift
And plain it all He'll make.
Through all the way, tho' dark to
me,
He made not one mistake.*

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.*

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 EDITORIAL

We who work to carry on and publish the "Signs of the Times" want to acknowledge a most generous gift from the estate of Donald Elliott Cole. He left notice in his will that we receive one third of his entire estate. We are humbled by this gift as we believe God who controls all things put it in the heart of this quiet, meek and good man to do what he did. We have seen so many times as we look back in the past, and to this present time how the Lord has blessed "The Signs", this being 159 years of continuous publication.

To show more, our appreciation to Brother Cole and to God, we ask each of our subscribers to send us names of anyone you think would enjoy reading the Signs, and who are unable to pay for it, and we will send it to

them free of charge. By this most recent gift "The Signs" will be able to operate for many years to come without any increase in subscription rates.

We want to share with our readers the comment below that was attached to Brother Cole's will. The wording of which must have been inspired by God.

Attachment to Will of
Donald Elliott Cole
(Dated January 13, 1978)

— COMMENT —

Inasmuch as Almighty God has graciously and generously provided for my earthly needs and in view of the fact that all which I still possess belongs to him and that I have only acted as his custodian for a little while, I feel that it is both my duty and privilege to distribute such possessions in a manner which is most likely to be pleasing and acceptable to him. Therefore, with whatever wisdom he has seen fit to bless me, I have earnestly, conscientiously, and prayerfully used in the preparation of this will.

Finally, I bequeath my humble but sincere thanks to God for the many great things he has done for me, for his gracious and merciful longsuffering, for his constant and faithful watchcare, and for his bountiful providence. All praise, honor, and glory belong to him, the source of every good and perfect gift.

A sinner saved by God's grace and mercy, if saved at all.

* Donald Elliott Cole, Testator

Elder Julian R. Williams
Elder Kenneth R. Key

 ARTICLES

For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Rom. 8:28.

I hope to write a little on a subject that has at times been quite controversial among our people, the subject is absolute predestination, which seems to my understanding taught very clearly in the scripture. Some want to take the word absolute out of the phrase, but why? You can't make the doctrine of predestination any stronger, or any weaker by adding or taking away certain words. The scripture says, *for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate*, isn't that a sure thing, it doesn't say, I will try to predestinate, or almost predestinate, but I did predestinate. Some seem to think when you use the word absolute, it teaches that God makes men sin, I surely can't see it like that. Webster's dictionary defines the word absolute as meaning, "freed from limitation or condition," or unlimited extraneous power or control, complete within itself — finished — perfect. Doesn't that describe the doctrine of predestination just exactly, a finished work, a perfect work, it has to be predestination or not predestination. There is no way it can be one half, or almost, but true predestination, the work of predestination is a finished work, a perfect work.

The scripture says, *"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?"* That is speaking of a sovereign God, who has all power, who can and does work all things according to the good pleasure of his will. I believe that, I believe it is just as the scripture says, he does all things according to his will, and none can stop him or question why he is doing it.

When he sent Moses to bring the Jewish people out of Egypt, the scripture says, I will harden the heart of Pharaoh that he won't let my people go. No doubt some would say, if he wanted Pharaoh to let his people go, why would he harden the heart of Pharaoh that he wouldn't let them go. That was done according to the good pleasure of his will also, then he states why he is doing this. Speaking of Pharaoh, God says, *for this very reason I raised thee up, to show my power throughout the earth.* Therefore had Pharaoh let his people go there would have been no need to work the mighty work which he did, so no demonstration of his mighty power. I believe any and all of the wants which are taking place today are happening in the same manner, all according to the good pleasure of his will, and I believe they are fulfilling the exact purpose for which they were ordained, as strange as some of them may seem to us, they are all working together for good, to those who love God.

He does according to his will and

none can stay his hand, so when he says, whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. What power, or what group of men, or what court can stop him or question what he is doing. Some would say, why God would be unjust to ordain some to eternal glory and not others, doesn't the potter have the power over a lump of clay to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour. God is not bound by any court, if he takes my life, or your life or 10,000 lives, can anyone call it murder, of course not. The scripture plainly says none can stay his hand or say what doest thou. Who can question God when he takes the life of a young child, while blessing others to live to be 100. He knows and teaches his little children to know that natural life and worldly things are far less valuable than spiritual things, therefore the length of life here is not all that matters.

Some believe that people are predestinated but events are not, look at Rom. 8:28 *"And we know that all things work together for our good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* I can't possibly see how all things could be working together for our good unless someone was controlling them, now if God is controlling them, and I believe he is, he either decreed, or ordained, or predetermined all these things to come to pass, or to be fulfilled, in the exact manner which they are, in the

counsel of God before time, or else he is moving around now, having this one to happen, this one not to happen, and so forth. As Peter said, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God you men have done this thing, I believe all things work the exact same way, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, or how could they be working together for our good?

Remember when Jonah thought he was fleeing from God? He got on this ship and a storm arose, the men blamed him for the storm, threw him overboard and a large fish swallowed him, took him and vomited him out on the ground where God wanted him. Don't you believe God had prepared that fish for that very person? I can't believe God waited until the men threw Jonah overboard, then saw he would have to do something, then quickly prepared the fish. I believe the purpose of that fish was decreed in the mind of God.

We are all familiar with the way Joseph was taken down into Egypt. All the events that came to pass to take Joseph where God wanted him. I don't believe God waited until his brothers threw him into that pit, then saw he would have to help him out, but I believe the caravan which came by and bought Joseph, all the dreams, the false accusations, and the many other events that came to pass which placed Joseph in power there in Egypt were purposed in the counsel of God before time.

As I mentioned earlier, Peter said

by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God you men have done this thing. I can't believe all those events just happened, but they came to pass as the counsel of God had predetermined, even to the casting lots for his nature. Some may object to events being predetermined when there is evil action committed, such as jealousy of Joseph's brothers, the beatings and stonings of Paul, the cruel and shameful treatment of Jesus, if so read this scripture. *Prov. 16:4 The wicked was made for the day of evil.* He made the wicked for this purpose, and I believe they are doing what they were ordained to do Jude 1:4 says they were ordained for this condemnation.

Some people talk about Satan and the great power he has as if he was almighty himself, he may have some great power but only what the almighty God allows him to have. The scripture says all things were made by him, and for him, therefore I believe he made the devil, and I don't believe he made anything he couldn't control. If he did he wouldn't be an Almighty God, with all power. If he couldn't control Satan then how could he say, I know the end from the beginning, and I will do all my pleasure and no one can stay my hand or say why doest thou?

When we read of all the great and precious promises which Jesus has given us in the bible, I have every confidence of these all coming to pass, I also believe regardless of how bad things sometime appear, or dif-

ficult they are to understand, I believe they are working together for the good of those who love the Lord, to those to are the called according to his purpose. In these verses of scripture Rom. 8: 28-29, we believe God by the spirit told Paul to write them, I also believe God by the spirit told Paul to write them, I also believe the Apostle Paul had learned something, he had been taught something. He could look back on his life and see the many difficult situations he had encountered, the punishment he had received, all because he was an Apostle for Christ. In one place he said, he counted himself fortunate that he had been able to suffer for Christ's sake. Maybe at times during these trials he was made to wonder, but eventually he was given to see the blessings in these things, and to know they had been working for his good, for he wrote we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. Just as when God shows to his people their sinful condition, and they see and feel themselves less than nothing. They could never feel or enjoy the wonderful feeling of being forgiven unless first they were made to see their sinful condition. So we can see how that also was working for our good. Sometimes we seem to be placed under a heavy burden, and we are made to wonder and sometimes despair, finally we are given relief and we feel like the poet who said, each burden only taught me how to pray.

Read acts 4: 26-28 — The kings of

the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. I know this is speaking primarily about the events which took place around the crucifixion and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, I believe this is the way it is today, the way it was yesterday, and the way it will be tomorrow. Any or all of the people on this earth are here to do whatsoever His hand and His counsel determined before to be done. No matter how great the people may be, or how important they seem in the eyes of other men, or how small they are all here to do his will, for doesn't the scripture say, He maketh kings and he teareth them down. Prov. 24:1 Man's heart is in the hand of the Lord, he turneth it whichsoever he will. How could it be any plainer, how sweet it is when one is blessed to see and feel what the merciful God has done for his little children.

Some say this is a hard doctrine, but the hard doctrine is that which says, a man has to do what he can't do, to obtain salvation. This true doctrine states from the written word of God, that God has done it all, for whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate. It is a sure thing, something no man can help and thank God, no man can hinder or destroy.

May He continue to bless us and keep us thankful, strengthen us in our weakness, and keep us at the feet of our brethren.

A brother, I hope
Frank Hunt



LITTLE THINGS

T here are innumerable and great blessings which are graciously bestowed upon us. So good is the heavenly Father to us, that we are often like spoiled children — unappreciative of the little things.

The past few days I have been conscious of the many little, precious things. The larger blessings are not lacking, but for some reason my mind has been occupied by the little, so-often-overlooked-things.

Usually precious things are small, and they are easily lost in the confusion of things with which the life is filled. So often the mind is all absorbed with some great problem which vexes us, and because of this, we are not aware of the many, many little helps, the small deliverances along the way. When we begin to look for them, they are all about us, in too many ways to count them all. The fact that we are such ungrateful and forgetful creatures, and yet the Father continues His blessings upon us is

eloquent proof of His great mercy and goodness.

LITTLE THINGS. The removal of pain; the safe return of a loved one; the improvement in the condition of another afflicted one; the solving of small unhappinesses — these, and many, many more things are usually taken for granted. The little happy things. The well-being-of-the-family-things. The beauty of the season. The happiness of being together things — oh, just the myriad, shining, little everyday things. And yes, the troublesome, fretting, causing-us-to-pray things. These, too, should be accepted gratefully.

“THE LITTLE MOMENT-BY-MOMENT-THINGS.” If we could see and realize the blessing of these, we would not be fretful over the many things that vex us. Minds and hearts all absorbed with these cannot become all confused and weary over larger, and often imagined things in the future. Thanking the Father for the blessings of the moment, we do not look with fear into the unknown future. As we fully realize the blessings of the present little, direct-from-the-hand-of-God-things, our hearts know peace.

Life is really composed of these “littles.” We do not have a year at a time — a month, a day, an hour. It is a moment by moment experience. Oh, to fully appreciate the blessing of this moment! If we are in pain, it can be borne this moment. It is when we are in real pain or trial that we are forced to narrow our life down to

moments. This perhaps is why there is such a blessing in affliction. We live in that moment, entirely apart from past and future. There is enough suffering, but also enough grace for that moment. And as we see this, our hearts trust Him for the next moment. When in sorrow it is His moment-by-moment strength-giving presence which sustains us.

Just today we have a note from a bereaved widow. She says she felt God’s arms holding her up miraculously. Though doctors and nurses offered sedation, she needed none. Her life was narrowed down to moments, in each of which He gave her strength. She marvelled at it. She not only endured the sad time, but now looks back upon it with wonder and gratitude at the memory of His help when it was needed.

One time I sat through long hours when the recovery of my beloved companion was in doubt, so far as we and the doctors knew. This was one experience I had thought I could not accept. It had been a grief to me that I had felt there was any trial I could not accept from God’s loving hand. But as I faced this possibility, with it came a blessed calm. I was not called upon to accept it years, nor days before it came. But when the moment came when I needed help, there it was, the moment-by-moment strength, just like the breath I breathed. It comes one breath at a time, and we would be foolish indeed to fear we would not be able to breathe

all day. We could not use a day's breath, nor an hour's breath all at once. It is another of the moment-by-moment blessings. It just seems to come automatically, without any effort, and thus does all that we need come from His hand.

Just as surely as this breath endures as long as life, breath-by-breath, breath-by-breath — so will all things needful be supplied until there is no longer a need.

Oh to trust Him, knowing that His loving care flows to us, moment by moment just as the breath we breathe. Then would our troubled, anxious hearts be at peace.

"They that wait on Him shall renew their strength . . . they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." They that wait on Him — not running ahead into the future, but just wait on Him for His moment-by-moment grace.

It is the little things to which Jesus called our attention: The lilies, the birds, the mustard seed, the widow's mite, the little stray lamb, and the many little close-to-the-heart-things. By these little things He taught us to walk prayerfully and thankfully, trustingly, as dear little children. He fondly called His followers, Children. Children are small, and we have a loving, protective care for them, and all little things. Little things were precious to our Lord.

Oh, may we be satisfied, and thankful for the precious, little blessed-of-God-things! And as we are like simple, trusting little child-

ren, we are precious in His sight.

(From "Precious Things")
by Mrs. W. J. Berry

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

GOD FORBID

"Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. . . . What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? — GOD FORBID."
Romans 5:20; 6:1.

In the first chapters of Romans the apostle Paul carefully explains (1) man's lost and depraved state, (2) the consequent reign of sin, (3) the purpose of the law, (4) man's just condemnation under that law, (5) redemption and justification by faith, (6) salvation by grace, and (7) the consequent reign of grace.

Man's Fall and depraved State

He shows how that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (3:23); that both Jew and Gentile "are under sin" and "there is none righteous." (3:9, 10.) He shows how the whole human race, from the fall of Adam to the giving of the law, lay corrupted in sin "being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, etc... who knowing the judgment of

God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do them, but have pleasure in them that do them.” (1:29-32).

The Consequent Reign of Sin

Sinners in this dead state are not only unrighteous, but full of unrighteousness; they are “filled” with fornication, wickedness, etc. They are not only full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, etc., “but have pleasure in them that do them.” This was the corrupted and debased condition of humanity not only before the flood, but afterwards, up to this present day, and will continue to “wax worse” unto the end. The presence and reigning power of sin in the world has been well demonstrated from the first fall. The fruits of sin have been grown and produced in every tree of the Adamic root, except the one Man, Christ Jesus. Through the power of the law the sting of it has “reigned unto death,” both natural and spiritual. “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. ...Death reigned... By one man’s offence death reigned. ...Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation... By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” (Rom. 5:12, 14, 17, 18-21). *“For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* (See Rom. 3:10-18, 23).

The Purpose of the Law

While man was guilty of sin and

all these fruits of reigning sin, and he knew the judgment of God, there was as yet no law against them. Therefore they were not held guilty or charged with them; as Paul states, *“For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed (charged) where there is no law.”* (5:13). We many use the simple illustration of a Stop-sign. Cars may be running through a certain intersection without regard to traffic from the other direction. This condition may exist for some time until several wrecks occur, but no one can be charged before the court of the land as guilty, because no law had been violated (although conscience says to stop). Finally a Stop-sign is placed at that intersection, which indicates there has been a law written against the running of that intersection without coming to a stop, with penalty attached for all violaters. Now the same characters who have been running the intersection uncharged, are found guilty by the law, brought before the court of justice, condemned and punished accordingly.

“Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound.” Putting up the Stop-sign did not prevent drivers from running the intersection, neither did it make them run it; but it manifested and held them as violaters when they did run it. Likewise, the giving of the law did not take away sin (that was not its purpose), neither did it cause men to sin; but its purpose was to manifest sin (for by the law is the knowledge of sin) and hold sinners guilty and justly condemned

before God. *"That sin might appear exceeding sinful."* (Rom. 7:13) *"Because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is there is no transgression."* Rom. 4:15.

Man's Just Condemnation under the Law

"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?" "But be sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." (Rom. 3:5, 6; 2:2; 1:18).

"Wherefore then the law? — It was added because of transgressions." (Gal. 3:19) "For sin is the transgression of the law." 1 Jn. 3:4. "What shall we say then? — Is the law sin? — GOD FORBID. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead ... For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good. 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 exceeding sinful." Rom. 7:7, 8, 11-13.

That is, it was not God's purpose that sin should remain, as it were, under cover, with the creature unaccountable for it; that it should not only be revealed, but made to appear in all its inherent depths, its blackness and enormity, and how infinitely opposed it is to His holiness and Divine nature. What is God's purpose in showing the wicked power of sin? Why to also show the need for the righteous power of grace over it. The creature had no real knowledge either of the "mystery of iniquity" or the "mystery of godliness." The serpent said, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." "The Lord said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5, 22). The law is an eye-opener, makes one to know his state: "by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20).

In the revealing of God's eternal design to conform a people to the image of Christ, we see His wonderful but unfathomable purposes in the fall of Adam; and in this fall or disobedience, sin, death and destruction passed upon the whole human race. What was the purpose of this? God said of Pharaoh, "For this purpose have I raised thee up — that I might shew my power in thee, and that my Name might be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17. Pharaoh laid heavy

burdens on the Israelites grievous to be borne; but God showed His mighty arm of power and grace in their deliverance. By the entrance of sin through the transgression of the law an unbearable weight of condemnation and bondage rested on Adam and his posterity; but God, for Christ's sake, His own name's sake — brought in a more abundant life, even immortality through the grace of the gospel of His Son.

However, we confuse God's order to say that Adam had to sin, or that it was good that he sinned in order that God might show His grace. In Romans 11:11, Paul says, "*I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall?*" Was that the purpose of God, merely that the Jews should fall? "GOD FORBID: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles." So in the fall of Adam; it was not in the decree of God merely that Adam should stumble in order to fall, but that through that fall salvation should come to man, to the praise of the glory of His grace. No God-fearing child of God will say he is thankful he is a sinner, but he is thankful, since he is a sinner, that Christ died for such.

Could He not have shown His power and declared His name another way? Certainly He could; but He is a sovereign and did not choose to do so. We cannot agree with the sentiment that "God could not manifest His power without the devil." That is limiting almighty God, with whom all things are possible. But for

some wise purpose, best known and understood By Him alone, "sin abounded, but thanks be to God, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death — even so might grace reign through RIGHTEOUSNESS unto eternal life BY JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD."

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

But now, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? — GOD FORBID" Because God has purposed that because of sin, salvation should be necessary, and grace might appear and reign; because the truth of God by the effectual working of His grace has more abounded through my life unto His glory; because He has taken up such a polluted wretch to manifest His holiness in; because He has taken my feet out of the mire and clay to set them on a Rock; because He took me as a sinner to reveal His Son and show His mercy and grace in me — shall I therefore continue in sin that this grace may thus abound? — GOD FORBID"!

"How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin." The child of grace who has been delivered out of a state of death and condemnation is now quickened into divine life, and killed to his former life of sin and death under the law. Therefore how can he live again or longer in that to which he is made dead?

"Know ye not that so many of us as

were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life... "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6:4, 6.

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God — Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:3-11

W.J. Berry

"But we see Jesus." — Hebrews ii.9.

Did your eyes ever see him? Do look into conscience — did your eyes ever see Jesus? I do not mean your natural, your bodily eyes; but the eye of faith, the eye of the soul. I will tell you what you have felt, if you ever saw Jesus. Your heart was softened and melted, your affections drawn heavenward, your soul penetrated with thankfulness and praise, your conscience sprinkled with atoning blood, your mind lifted up above all earthly things to dwell and centre in the bosom of the blessed Immanuel. Do you think, then, you have seen Jesus by the eye of faith? Then you have seen the perfection of beauty, the consummation

of pure loveliness; you have seen the image of the invisible God; you have seen all the perfections and glorious character of the Godhead shining forth in him that was nailed to Calvary's tree. I am sure such a sight as that must melt the most obdurate heart, and draw tears from the most flinty eyes; such a sight by faith of the beauty and glory of the only-begotten Son of God must kindle the warmest, holiest stream of tender affection. It might not have lasted long. These feelings are often very transitory. The world, sin, temptation, and unbelief soon work; infidelity soon assails all; the things of time and sense soon draw aside; but whilst it lasted, such, in a greater or less degree, were the sensations produced. Now, if you have ever seen Jesus by the eye of faith, and ever had a tender affection going out toward him, you will see him in glory. But you will never see him in glory, if you have not seen him in grace; you will never see him eye to eye in the open vision of eternal bliss, unless you have seen him now upon earth by the faith of God's elect in your heart.

J.C. Philpot

Dear Brethren:—I have a request from a brother in Texas to write on Genesis vi. 5, 6: "*And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and grieved him at his heart.*" The Bible says (Numbers xxiii. 19), "*God is not man,*

that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." In Malachi iii. 6, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." This does not apply to God the Father, but to God the Son. He could and did mourn and beg and repent. In John xii. 27, Jesus said, "Father, save me from this hour." He had just said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."

"Wickedness of man was great in the earth." So very great as Paul sets it forth. He says, "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes." And it is written, There is not a man that liveth and sinneth not, and there is not a man that sinneth not. There is a great difference of opinion as to how man got to be so wicked. Elder Gilbert Beebe and the Signs never taught that man was sinful like we are now, when God created him. Elder Beebe wrote, "If God could not keep sin our of this world, how do we know he can keep it out of the

next world?" There is no worse heresy than to teach God created man a sinner, and caused him to sin. The devil will attend to causing man to sin, and will not let an opportunity slip or escape him where he can cause man to sin.

Paul says the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. Again, Peter says, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."* In Ephesians ii. 2, Paul says, *"The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."* James says, "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." If any man was wicked and filthy when he came from the hands of the Creator, why would David say in the fifty-third Psalm, *"Everyone of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* If they were filthy at first, how could they become filthy? They were not filthy at first; had they been David was mistaken. It is positively proven that man was not as bad at first as he is now. Genesis vi. 11, 12: *"The earth also was corrupt before God, and*

the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

Man corrupted his way upon the earth. Who did this? Man. The doctrine of predestination of all things is not a new doctrine. Many years ago the Old Baptists taught it in Wales, England and other places. God predestinated the crucifixion of the Savior, the worst crime man has ever committed, but God did not move, cause of influence the men to kill him. Peter says in Acts, *"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."* Yes, *"by wicked hands."* The Bible says, *"They hated him without cause."* And Jesus said, *This is your hour and the power of darkness.* They did what they wanted to do. The devil and their bitter hatred caused them to crucify him, and when they did this wicked deed with wicked hands they were carrying out and fulfilling the purpose of God. The devil entered into Judas and caused him to betray and sell the Savior for the very price the prophet had said he would sell him for. Zechariah zi. 12: *"If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver."* The exact amount Judas sold Jesus for. Judas did what he wanted to do, and at the same time he was fulfilling the prophecy, and carrying out the purpose of God. Everything else comes to pass in the same way. Men

in their wickedness by wicked hands commit crime as they want to, and at the same time are carrying out the purposes of God.

*"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.
Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."*

Isaiah xiv. 24: *"The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."* Hated this blessed one, who only did good, healed all manner of diseases, and never charged for any benefit he ever bestowed upon man. Hear him, you little ones who have nice homes, and plenty, and all you poor, destitute, little suffering ones. What did he say? *"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."*

*"Hail the blest morn, when the great Creator
Down from his throne in the heaven descends;
Shepherds, go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo, for his guard the bright angels attend.
Lo, on his cradle the dew-drops were shining,
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him, in slumbers reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all."*

Let us adore him, brethren, as we have divine power given us from on high, sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb.

The old Confession of Faith says, "Man, by reason of the fall, hath wholly lost all ability to will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation." If this is true, man is different from what he was at first. Man gets

worse all the time. 2 Timothy iii. 13: *"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."* Again, *"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."* The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. To prove man was not at first like he is now, I will refer you to the language of Solomon. He says, *"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."* Then if we go by the Bible, and not our thinksoes, it is a positive, indisputable fact, that man was not a sinner when he was created by the Lord. Paul says, The carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject o the law of God, and neither indeed can be. *"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* *"Cannot do the things that ye would."* You just cannot. Try all you may, determine you will, say, I know I can, Paul says you cannot do the things that you would. For when I would do good, evil is present with me, and the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do. This is Paul's language. Do you believe he spoke the truth? This reads like free will, free moral agency, does it not?

Those the Bible says are taken captive by the devil at his will, are they free also? All of you men listen: *"Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart."* Are you guilty? Could you keep those awful wicked thoughts and desires out of your carnal mind? *"I am carnal, sold under sin."* Sin, evil desires, are a wonderful power. It just takes God's power by his grace to keep you. God's grace teaches *"us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."* — *Titus ii. 12.* We have on consolation in the midst of all our sinfulness and weakness, faults and waywardness: the Bible says, *"As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."* I feel that there is not a more unworthy sinner on earth than I am. If it were not the comforting language I read in the Bible I would lie down and give up. I go back in my mind over my life and there are so many, many sins charged up to me by my reckoning, and they look so black, so hideous, it seems to me God could not love such a creature, but the Bible says, *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."* He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ; no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved.

*"Was it for crimes that I have done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree."*

Yes, Jesus saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and it repented him that he had made man, and grieved him at his heart. Jesus said when they crucified him, *"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."* Some men know not what they do when they write that God created Adam just as sinful as we are. They injure us. We are sin, and God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It is so dark, I am so cold and lifeless, it seems to me such wonderful blessings cannot be for such a sinful creature as I am, but the people of God Jesus died for he saved. They will be brought off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them. Sometimes David would say, Is his mercy clear gone forever? Will he no more be entreated? Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Then again he would say, *"Let every-thing that hath breath praise the Lord,"* and enumerate and specify and call on a great many animals and objects to praise the Lord. Sun, moon, fire and hail, stormy wind, fulfilling his will. (148th, 149th and 150th Psalms.) Sometimes you are just this way. Soon you will be delivered from the bondage of corruption and will praise your dear Redeemer forever, and go no more out to suffer.

Your poor unworthy brother in
hope of mercy,

Isaac R. Greathouse

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." John 4:34-36.

How much that we do want to mark out and direct the Almighty! How prone we are to bring him into the limits of our narrow vision! How often we do forget our own experience and delivery from sin! The Jews did not deal with the Samaritans, thinking that they were an inferior race. Our Saviour had a conversation with the woman at the well. Not having come into that degree of understanding, they thought he had gotten hungry by his long absence from food, but what a rich and heavenly manna he had to feast on that they, as yet, knew nothing about. *"I have meat to eat that ye know not of."* Some things were not good for them to know, but the time is at hand for them to know. What a Teacher to teach them. Ah, how dark our understanding when the illuminating power of the Spirit is not made manifest. They thought surely some one had fed him. It needs being brought in direct contact with him to learn of and about him. No second hand work will do. The same lack of wisdom in his disciples at that time is

in us now until revealed to us by him as it was to them. Although verily a man yet he had no gluttonous appetite to satisfy. *"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."* Here is what held him up and enabled him to bear up under the terrible things that came his way. And, dear child of God, this is the propelling power that carries you through every sad trial of life. Unless God's dear children were blessed to leave behind and forget parents, companions, lands and riches there would not be any service rendered to him, but if led by his grace, his desire becomes our desire. Things of nature lose all their significance and our meat is to follow him, but we cannot do this until blessed to do so. We cannot see what a blessed state we are in now; we cannot see that God has elect vessels in Samaria until it is given to us to see. We think times will get better after awhile. We see very little evidence of God's riches and that his children are very few. To us in the flesh it is four (in complete vogue) months until harvest, but when we have a refreshing from him he tells us that such is not the case. What a time of communion is this as he tells us this good news. He tells us to lift up our eyes and to look. Ah, how eagerly do the children of God do this. Winter, spring and summer have been so long, but now that welcome harvest is at hand and we knew it not. We could not know it sooner because we were not looking, we could not look any sooner because we did not know to do it. Now let us look a little closer: *"He that reapeth*

receiveth wages." Not he that will reap, nothing like that to these poor disciples that have been deluded so long, but a cheerful, positive statement of truth to a character made ready for it. So long had they been eating perishable meat; so long had they been eating husks, and now the killing of the fatted calf has been made manifest. Too, I would have you notice, Jesus did not say he that reapeth will receive wages, but we have the blessed promise that every one that reapeth receives wages. If you work for a man in nature you must wait until pay day. If you are depending on any conditional God you must wait until he gets ready to pay, but not so in the kingdom of God's grace. You reap because you are commanded to reap, you receive wages because you are blessed to receive them. The harvest, the ability to reap, the wages received all come from the same source. *"And gathereth fruit unto life eternal."* This is a continuation of the same blessing. This gathering of fruit is not for eternal life nor for time blessings, but it is unto eternal life. This is in connection with the Saviour when he said, *"By their fruits ye shall know them."* They have gathered them by his grace or will in them, and have manifested or done them in the same way. This all is that the sower and reaper may rejoice together. In nature husband and wife rejoice together when the harvest is gathered in. Much more in this kingdom of grace. What is lovelier than when he and his people eat, drink and rejoice together,

W.D. Griffin

Circumstances which tend to hopelessness and despair among men should kindle with hope and expectation those who trust in God. Impossibilities with men are not at all difficulties with God. There is nothing too hard for the Lord. (Gen. xviii.; Jer. xxxii 27.) To Abraham one hundred years old, and to Sarah ninety, the fulfillment of God's promise to them seemed impossible. Naturally it was God, the Creator is himself above creation and is himself not bound by the laws established by him to govern nature. He does that which with men is impossible of accomplishment. At the appointed time, Isaac was born. Natural difficulties were overcome. The supernatural became a fact. Vital revealed religion is essentially supernatural, miraculous. Take the miracle element out of the Scriptures, eliminate the supernatural from the lives of the children of God, and the result is hopelessness and despair.

Elijah on Mt. Carmel in the presence of all Israel, proved the reality of his faith in God to whom nothing is impossible, and so confounded the idol worship of the prophets of Baal. Twelve barrels of water were poured upon Elijah's altar, upon his sacrifices and upon his wood. All was water-soaked and the trench about it filled with water. It would have been miracle enough for the fire to fall from heaven to consume the offering; but God does his work in such a way that credit cannot go to man. The wood was saturated so that there could be

no possibility of men having anything to do with it. Wherever there are conditions of impossibilities and it is evident that man is powerless, we may watch to see God's power. He reveals himself at, and unto, the "ends of the earth." The one primary purpose and end of all prophecy is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the "seed of the woman" foretold in early Genesis. No man fathered him. He is not the "seed of man." Yet a woman mothered him. The Lord has done "a new thing in the earth. A woman shall compass a man." — Jer. xxxi. 22. The virgin conceived and bore a son and his name was called Immanuel, "God with us." Man had no part in bringing this to pass. The Holy Ghost accomplished it. That which was contrary to all known natural law, and which was impossible with men, God did. Jesus told his disciples that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Luke xviii. 24.) In their astonishment, they ask, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus answered, "The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." Salvation of sinners is impossible with men. (Psalms xlix. 7-9.) It is wholly the work of God. "For this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived." — Rom. xiv. 9. The whole plan whereby sinners are saved was thought out and purposed in the Divine Mind. The mind of man could never have conceived such a Way. Higher than the heavens above the earth are the thoughts of God beyond

the processes of man's thinking. All the searching of human intellects, all the working of human reason, all of what is commonly called "common sense" can never arrive at the truth of him to whom nothing is impossible. To Peter in prison, awaiting execution, escape was humanly impossible. He was absolutely helpless, so were his friends except for the intercessory power of prayer. His jailers did all possible to make his confinement secure. Four soldiers guarded him during each of the four night watches. Between two of them he lay sleeping, bound to them with chains. Two others kept watch. All these precautions were of no avail. God's angel was sent to deliver His servant Peter. The chains fell off him, the iron gate opened of his own accord. Peter passed out into the city free. (Acts xii. 1-10.) Likewise at a former time had another guard kept watch over the sepulchre where lay the body of the Savior, lest his disciples come and steal him away. Powerless were they to hinder the great actual fact of the resurrection. Puny man can do nothing against God. At the time appointed of the Father, Christ arose. The stone, rolled from the sepulchre by an angel, served to prove that the tomb was empty save for certain grave clothes which still lay there.

The great heart-searching truth in all these instances for us is that we should not be daunted by difficulties. Remember that God delights to do the impossible. That which is dark in

the path lying before us can be made light in the Lord by his leading. The same cloud which was dark to Egypt so that Pharaoh could not see Israel whom he was pursuing, was light to God's people as they stood waiting for the salvation of the Lord. The same water which was condemnation to the antediluvians, was deliverance from destruction to those sheltered in the ark. Let us remember that Noah could not have seen the rainbow of God's promise, had there not been the cloud there for God to paint the rainbow upon. God, who forms light, creates darkness too. Difficulties test faith. Hardships enliven prayer.

*"Trials bring me to His feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."*

How wonderful are those words of Jesus to his disciples in Luke xxi. 25-28. Jesus told them that before the Son of Man should come again, certain things must be accomplished. "Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." Note he did not tell them to be frightened when they should see these things come to pass. Quite otherwise, he told them, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Not when these things come to pass, but when they "begin" to come to pass. The beginnings of sorrows which are to ensnare the world, are occasions

for encouragement to the children of God. We should not be discomfited by that which alarms the people of the world. Their calamity, when their fear cometh, is proof that He who rides in the heavens shall laugh and have them in derision.

*"Look to the Lord, his word, his throne;
Look to his strength, and not thy own;
There wait, and look, and look again;
Thou shalt not wait, nor look in vain."*

Worry does no good. Undue anxiety is forbidden by Him who commanded that we take no thought for tomorrow. Our Father knoweth of what we stand in need. Just to the extent that we worry, either about the present or the future, to that degree are we failing to trust him. He will unfailingly supply our needs; but he, not we, is the Judge of what our needs consist.

What a wise provision of God it was that he did not allow but one window in the ark, and that at the top; so Noah could not behold the calamity and woe occurring all around him, but must look up to Him who so graciously had saved him in the vessel ordered and designed by the Author and Finisher of His people's salvation. What would have been Noah's feelings could he have looked about him and have seen his fellow-men going to their doom? Such he was kept from doing by the fact that the window's position was in the top, not in the sides, of the ark. Let us learn from this not to look too much upon the circumstances and conditions

that environ our lives. We have nothing to do with circumstances. God orders and controls them all. To them of faith, mountains are removed and cast into the sea. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. Oh, for a living faith to cast all our care upon him! He has told us he cares for us. Blessed it is for us to wholly trust him, to be wholly yielded unto him, to lean not to our own understanding, but to acknowledge him in all our ways. He will direct our paths.

The children of God are first strangers, then pilgrims, on the earth. (Heb. xi. 13.) Distinguishing grace makes the believer a stranger to human-kind. Because a stranger, he is a pilgrim. He is on a journey. He has not arrived. His destiny is not here, but yonder where glory is. All trials, discouragements and difficulties are reminders that this world is not our home, that here we have no abiding place. We are passing onward to that which God has in reserve for his people in the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwell righteousness and peace for ever,

*Lift up your heads, rejoice,
Redemption draweth nigh;
Oh note the varying signs
Of earth and air and sky;
The God of glory comes
In gentleness and might,
To comfort and alarm,
To succor and to smite.*

*He comes, the wide world's King,
He comes, the true heart's friend,
New gladness to begin,
And ancient wrong to end;*

*He comes, to fill with light
The weary, waiting eye:
Lift up your heads, rejoice,
Redemption draweth nigh.*

Pray for us, brethren, that we may be enabled of the Lord to minister both through the Signs and from the pulpit to the comfort and encouragement of those who are seeking a "better country." As the year 1934 opens, our hope is in God. What lies before us, he knows. We trust him. His grace is the sufficiency of both writers and readers. Let us look up and not down, out and not in, forward and not back, and be helpers of one another's joy in the Lord. The Scriptures declare that in the last days perilous times shall come. They are upon us. The ways of Zion do mourn, the love of many waxes cold and iniquity abounds. We are not destroyed, even though cast down. The Lord God omnipotent reigns. Things declared from ancient times are becoming current history. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah."

Elder H.H. Lefferts

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure your of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

The Editors

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Dan River Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed Sunday, September 22, 1991 at 2:00 p.m. at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Rt. 2, Ruffin, NC, for the purpose of examination of these gift, brothers Curtis Cobb and Allen Carroll and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacons.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder H.W. Wray. Elder Kenneth Key was elected as moderator and Elder J.R. Williams to serve as clerk. Brothers Bob Collie and Coley Strader acting as spokesmen for the church delivered brothers Carroll and Cobb to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures 1st Tim. 3rd chapter by Elder Leonard Brammer. Examinations followed by Elders Brammer, Williams and Carter. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of these

candidates proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Lane Carter. The charge was delivered to brother Carroll and brother Cobb by Elder Lane Carter. They were then delivered back to the church as ordained deacons.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. A copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brothers Allen Carroll and Curtis Cobb along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by prayer by Elder Leonard Brammer.

Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Elder J.R. Williams, Clerk

Deacons in Attendance

D.H. Sartin	W.L. Neal
W.W. Ashire	S.H. Wood
D.S. Horsley	T.L. Batts
Jamie Cooper	Wilson King
G.R. Slate	Bob Collie
Coley Strader	

William Vick, TN	5.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC	10.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Smith, NC	6.00
Mrs. Mary Stratton, VA	2.00
Shelby R. Stratton, VA	10.00
Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA	2.00
Mrs. Maria Adams, VA	10.00

OBITUARIES

IDA MCCOLLUM BAYNES

Sister Ida McCollum Baynes 93 died Nov. 17, 1990 at Annie Penn Hospital, Reidsville, NC after declining health for several years. Her funeral was at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, conducted by her pastor Elder Haywood Wray and preacher Ralph Campbell. Burial was in the church cemetery. She is survived by daughter Novelia Draper, Madison, NC, sister Ela Cartwright and brother Dennis McCollum, of Madison, two grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Sister Baynes joined Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church in mid 60's and was baptised by her pastor. She was blessed with grace to bear her afflictions without complaint and loved her church and was a faithful member to attend as long as she was able. She always so glad to see us and other visitors. She spoke of wanting to go home and be with her Lord, we believe she has entered in to that Eternal Rest with our Lord Jesus. May the Lord comfort the dear family who attended unto her needs and welfare so well.

Elder H.W. Wray, Pastor
Sister Rachel Wray, Ch. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1991

Mrs. Mamie Bisher, NC	10.00
Howard Peters, VA	2.00
Mrs. N. Hunt, VA	2.00
H.P. Conner, VA	2.00
Mrs. W.L. Simmons, VA	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. B.W. Wade, WV	2.00
Mrs. R.E. Moore, NC	2.00
Mrs. Donnie Strickland, AL	2.00
Mrs. Mary H. Stratton, VA	2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	10.00
Mrs. Leola D. Meador, NC	2.00
Herman Webb, IL	2.00
William L. Midkiff, VA	7.00

ELDER DENVER LEE SIMPSON

The dear Lord gave life to Elder Denver Lee Simpson on March 6, 1910 and took it from him on June 14, 1991. Hoping it is the will of the kind heavenly Father that Brother Simpson so often spoke of and in submission to the request of the family, I attempt to write his obituary.

He was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia to Ira West Simpson and Jesse Lee Simpson. He was married to Sister Eunice D. Simpson and to this union were born three sons: Grady Ray Simpson, Carl Edwin Simpson of Gretna and Coy Wayne Simpson of Richmond and one daughter, Carolyn S. Gay of Buena Vista. He also leaves eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Elder Simpson spoke to me on two occasions about writing his obituary and the last time he said, whether it be a long or short writing it would be all right. So in this, like all matters I heard him discuss in life, his attitude was of love and peace. It was a great joy to him to have brethren and friends visit in his home and to go visit brethren and churches over many states.

Elder Simpson was baptized into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church in June of 1942 and I heard him often speak of sitting under a certain tree when he first heard the gospel preached. His baptism was important and very dear to him. He was ordained a deacon in 1953 and his

love for Springfield, the brethren and friends of the church were his life. He was ordained a minister on January 8, 1972 and that same year was called to serve Richmond Primitive Baptist Church and served until the distance and his health made the trip a burden. Elder Simpson was Assistant Pastor at Springfield and served Cane Creek, Sandy Level and Camp Branch Primitive Baptist Churches. I was blessed to visit all of his churches and felt the love of brethren to each other.

Funeral services were held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by Elders C.B. Davis, Jr., Larry Hollandsworth and Marvin Brumfield; followed by interment in Gretna Burial Park. Many brethren and friends were present.

We shall miss this dear Brother and Elder and immediately with this thought is the belief that he is in a much better place than we, and we lift our eyes to Heaven and pray that we may soon be called Home.

Reidy Pickral

ELDER O.K. TENCH

Springfield Primitive Baptist Church is sad with the passing of her beloved pastor, Elder O.K. Tench. We had him as a true servant for many years. He served us in the love he had for us. The way may not have always been the easiest yet

Elder Tench put aside other desires and came to us. I believe my memory picture of him will be of a smile and an outstretched hand. Elder Tench did not come among us with a long face or in an uncertain manner. Humble, yes, in his gift. How wonderful!

I remember Elder Tench from the time I was a young girl. Elder Stegall used to bring him to Springfield and I remember him coming to our house when I was still in school. I used to think that preachers had no questions about anything but over the years, and I hope by the grace of God, I believe they too are but men, yet these men, called of God to feed His sheep, are vessels and servants and they are to us gifts. Elder Tench was a beautiful gift. He preached the Word with power. We think of expressions Elder Tench used, such as "an inheritance" and I loved to hear him read Isaiah 40 and speak as God gave him utterance. To hear him pray was to be comforted.

Brother Tench was a pastor who encouraged trembling souls to tell brethren of the burden on their hearts. I thank the dear Lord that Elder Tench encouraged me. He baptized many dear ones and held many funerals, many of the funerals being for those who had not attended his churches.

In his later years he spoke of being repetitious. I never thought of him as repeating himself too much. The many scriptures that give us comfort are often used by our Elders and the

application of the Spirit to our hearts is new each time we are blessed to hear.

Elder Tench served four churches and the members of each visited among his churches. We shall all miss him, yet, because we believe God Himself gave him to us as His gift we also believe God Himself has taken him away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. The dear Saviour taught us saying, "*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.*" We believe that death is not the uncertain dark fear we once thought it to be, but it is the way prepared of the Lord for us to leave this world of sin and sorrow and pain; it is but a small part of the journey of life. We have a very big hope that God hath loved us, we have a very small hope that we love Him. Small or large our hope may be we would not exchange it for all of this world. This hope shall be with us all of our days, it is the gift of God. The gifts of God! So now, brethren, in our hearts and minds the gift, Elder Tench, shall be with us.

May the dear Lord bless us and keep us.

Written with love I hope the dear Lord Himself has given me.

Reidy Pickral

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THE MAN OF GALILEE

*A babe was born one starry night
He came for His people a leading light
Laid in a manger for wise men to see
Fulfilling God's promise — this child of Galilee*

*His life was sought by wicked men
But He must be spared — the law to end
Carried to Egypt where He would be free
Yet still is called the wonder of Galilee*

*About His fathers business while just a lad
Teaching in the temple and condemning the bad
Telling of Grace to set man free
This amazing boy of Galilee*

*Teaching and preaching He was the way of life
How in Him we overcome trials and strife
Saying to know Him would truly set free
This humble yet Bold One of Galilee*

*Speaking in parables to those He knew
Choosing His Disciples — just a few
Performing miracles of healing for all to see
This great Physician of Galilee*

*He came a price for sin to be paid
For on Him all our guilt was laid
Born unto this time — His death He could see
A perfect sacrifice this Lamb of Galilee*

*He hanged in shame upon the cross
Sure His purpose would know no loss
Saying "This day be in Paradise with me"
The preserves of life from Galilee*

*He gave us a hope of eternal life
In a home of no tears or strife
Seated in Heaven for us to see
He who is reigning as Lord from Galilee*

*May we share in His victory o'er the grave
Praise Him who died our souls to save
And share His Glory for an eternity
Our glorious Savior of Galilee.*

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr

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EDITORIAL

THE AUTHOR OF SIN



Elder R. H. Campbell

T here has been much written and much discussion on the subject of who is the author of sin and how sin fits into the scheme of things in the mind and purpose of God. What is the purpose of sin? Who is responsible for it and how did it become involved in the plan of God for his creation? There are those who say that the doctrine of the predestination of all things would make God the

Author of sin, and therefore tarnish the glory of the creator of all things because he was involved in the evil affairs of man. Their contention, as I understand it, is that God would not be just if he punishes man for things of which he is the cause and for which man is not able to resist or prevent. There is nothing that could be further from the truth, as taught in the scriptures, because they teach that God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. I understand this to mean that God is not in any way involved in the sin of man, neither does he cause man to be involved in sin. This is not to say that God is not aware of sin, for he knows all things that comes to pass in time and uses all things to accomplish his will and purposes by permitting them to happen or over ruling them so that his sovereign will is done in all things man becomes involved in sin when he is tempted and is drawn into sin by his own lust and enticed. He lusts and is enticed because of the vanity that he possesses, was created subject to, and which causes him to desire all things that his eyes behold, for himself.

In the economy of God there is a balance of the forces at work in the world, and in the kingdom of heaven. There is light and darkness, good and evil, strength and weakness, love and hate, peace and war, harmony and discord, humility and pride and many more. Each of these forces serve a purpose and are used in God's plan and in his dealing with

his creation and especially in dealing with his children in their journey here in this time world. They are all good before God because they are used to accomplish his will and purpose and since they do this they are good. As Ecclesiastes states. *"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven:"* he then lists twenty six things, some things we call good and some things we would call bad, but then he says, he (God) hath made everything beautiful in his time. They are all, alike, beautiful, because they accomplish his will, and he has set a season and time for them to be accomplished. Many of the truths contained in the scriptures must be read with the understanding that they are all good before God because they are working together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. It takes them all working together, directed by God to bring about the desired end which is the salvation of the elect.

God is love and all things that were determined in that council which was before time began was because of this love for those who he created by and for himself, and was to make manifest this love for them. This was the plan of salvation of all those who were chosen in Christ and who are, written of, as the children of promise. Paul said, *"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."* This is declaring the

doctrine of election which is surely taught throughout the scripture, and it is the work of a sovereign God. For there to be an elect seed, they must be a portion of the whole of his creation, and not all of them; and there must be a plan which will distinguish the elect from the non-elect so that the difference would be known. The realization and experiencing of this difference causes the elect to love God and to render praise and honor unto his holy name for this marvelous display of grace and mercy to them. The distinction between these two groups of people is made many times in the scriptures, as the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans VIII, vs 22, *"What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-suffering 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 hath afore prepared unto glory, even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"* No reason for the difference between the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy in their standing before God except that it was pleasing, to him, for it to be so and therefore, he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth.

As stated above, for there to be an elect, there must be a non-elect: even so for there to be good there must be evil. This must be so for there to be a distinction of the difference to make manifest which is each. God is good and God is love and to be able to

recognize this love and this goodness there must be the opposites to compare the one with the other. Of necessity, it follows there must be evil and there must be a non-elect or else there is nothing to deliver the elect from and there is no reason for the elect to love and worship God for this special mercy and grace that he has blessed them with. Just as the elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, redeemed from the curse of the law and made sure of the salvation of God promised to them in the covenant; the non-elect were fitted to destruction, were of their father the devil and their eternal destiny was just as sure and certain as that of the elect. The way and manner in which these two destinies were to be accomplished in their lives here in time required good and evil, that they were both subjected to, to demonstrate the mercy of God in redeeming the elect from the evil and the wrath of God in judging the others according to their evil deeds.

Jesus Christ came into the world, according to the covenant plan, to take upon himself the sin of the elect so that they stood, before God, without a spot or blemish of sin: He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. Jesus was the captain of their salvation, the author and finisher of their faith; he was the one who by his own blood entered in once into the

holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for all of the elect; for by one offering he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified; the author and finisher of their faith by finishing the work that his father gave him to do. He endured the cross despising the shame and secured the eternal salvation of all of the heirs of grace.

As stated in the beginning of this article, in the economy of God there are many forces at work to produce the evil results as planned by God from before the beginning of time, and many things working together or against each other to accomplish the determined end. There was light, goodness, strength, love, peace, harmony and all of the godly characteristics which were taught and demonstrated in the life and work of Jesus during his ministry while here on earth. These are the positive forces of good and Jesus referred to these in his life in John XVII vs. 4. *"I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."* All of these are the godly characteristics which were manifested by Jesus in his life and these plus his death, burial and resurrection are the works his father gave him to do and was the reason he was called the Author of their faith and Captain and Author of their salvation. These were all with the complete awareness of God and part of his plan of salvation for the saints but Jesus (not God) is indicated as the Author of their faith and their salvation. There was also other forces at work at the same time

which were darkness, evil, weakness, hatred, war and confusion and none of these are mentioned as part of the ministry of Jesus or as characteristics of God. Where did they come from and what purpose did they serve? Who was the Author of these, how did they originate and how did they function in the whole scheme of events.

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not: neither was their place found anymore in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and sea! for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. So, enters the man of sin, the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God — so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God. This is the dragon that stood before the woman that was to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. He has ever been opposed to all that is good and all that is godly: he is a liar and a deceiver of the whole world. His purpose is to make manifest those negative powers of darkness, evil, weakness, hatred, war, confusion, pride, envy, jealousy and anything else that is ungodly in

the world. When cast out of heaven he continued to persecute the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, those which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. This he has always done and will as long as he exists because this is his purpose.

In the garden of Eden the serpent appeared to Eve and talked with her regarding the Commandment of God forbidding their eating of the trees of the garden. With his subtilty and deceit he appealed to her vanity, which she was created subject to, and convinced her of the desirability of partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and told her that she would not die. This resulted in the first sin of man and this conflict has been going on constantly since that time. The serpent (devil or satan) has been using his cunning evil nature, and the vain nature of the flesh to deceive and lead the man, in nature, into all of the works of sin that so appeal to the flesh, which are, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like; all of which are contrary to the law of God and directly opposite to the teachings of Jesus. The whole warfare is against God and Jesus Christ because of his hatred for them and he is trying to get at them through the seed of promise, the elect, in hurting and deceiving them.

God uses satan and all of his evil schemes in working all things together for good to them that love God. As previously stated, you must have evil to manifest goodness. You must have sin to manifest righteousness. You must have evil and sin for the children of God to worship and praise him for their deliverance from them: also to show them their weakness and dependence upon him for all things that they stand in need of. Job, was a man who was perfect and that feared God and eschewed evil: he also offered sacrifices for his sons and daughters per chance they had sinned, yet, on one occasion when satan came among the sons of men to present themselves to God, the Lord said unto satan, hast thou considered my servant Job? Satan, using a subtle challenge, said doth Job fear God for nought? You've kept him and blessed him exceedingly, take these things away and he will curse thee to thy face. God said, Behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thine hand. You see how God used satan and all of his evil characteristics to accomplish his purpose which was to teach Job a lesson; now satan used all of his wiles and cunning on Job, in the nature of the three Comforters, to try to entice him to curse God but in the end Job realized the power and wisdom of God in a way that he had not know before. When satan came before God on this occasion he told him he had come from going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down

in it. This is his constant effort in the pursuit of the seed of the woman; to tempt, entice and ensnare them with his wiles if possible. Peter, admonished his brethren, Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. He never succeeds in devouring any of the saints of God but he does, as in the case of Eve and Job, lead them into temptations and causes them much affliction and trials in this life, but, God delivers them out of them all.

1 Chronicles XXI vs. 1 "*And satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.*" This caused David great trouble because this displeased God and therefore he smote Israel. David realized and acknowledged his sin and prayed that he did not fall into the hands of man for his just punishment, but let him fall into the hands of the Lord who is merciful. Jesus was tempted of satan, in the wilderness for forty days and satan used all of the cunning and wiles at his disposal to tempt Jesus and try to cause him to sin and worship him. This is the purpose of satan's being included in the scheme of things and he has done well on all counts: he does not succeed in destroying one of the elect of God, or cause them to fall from the grace of God but he does cause them misery in the flesh; manifests the opposite of Godliness to prove the case, and cause the saints to worship and praise God for his delivering them from the bondage of sin. It causes

them, sorrow for their sins, and Paul wrote: Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. Sin causes the child of God to repent unto salvation because of the evil of his sin before God: it only causes sorrow to the non-elect if they are found out and caused to suffer. This is a completely different sorrow than that of the saints, it results in their utter condemnation because they did not repent. This is the reason and purpose of sin in the world, to make manifest the heart by its reaction to the sin in their life.

In this arrangement of things, satan with all of his power and cunning, ability to deceive, power of persuasion, appearing as an angel of light and offering unto man those things that are attractive to the man of flesh; and man who was created subject to vanity which causes him to desire all that his eyes behold, the lust of the flesh for the things of nature, it is inevitable that sin will occur when all these factors come together. The author of sin is the one who is evil from the beginning, has no goodness in him and who utilizes all of his power to try to separate the elect from God by beguiling them with the beauties of the world, to get them to obey him and disobey God. Satan is the originator of sin, the one who continually brought sin and confusion

into the lives of everyone he came in contact with and caused them to suffer the effects of sin. This is his constant effort and purpose; he is the only being that is sufficiently evil to perform this work and sufficiently cunning to accomplish his work without man even being aware of the deception. Whenever sin is committed the devil is present and reigning.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.* Jesus spoke these words in his sermon on the mount, and they seem especially applicable in the subject under discussion. God is light (goodness) and in him is no darkness (evil, sin) at all. Whatever he does is good, because he does it and it cannot be evil. I Kings XXII vs. 20. *"And the Lord said who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth gilead? And one said on this manner, and another on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? and he said I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said Thou shalt persuade him and prevail also: go forth and do so."* A lie was needful to fulfill God's will and God cannot lie but a spirit came forth and the deed was done with God's blessing but God did not lie. As we stated above sin is necessary for God's children to be delivered from the power of it but God did not cause the sin: the evil spirit,

satan, devil, dragon or whatever title he operates under is the author of it because he is the head of that domain. He is a corrupt tree that cannot bring forth good fruit just as God is the good tree that cannot bring forth corrupt fruit.

Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God? how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. We cannot know fully the judgments and ways of the Lord, but from what I have been made to believe about God and his ways, I see them, all as being good. I see and experience sin and I do not believe that it comes from the same source as the love and mercy I also have felt. Surely, sin with all of its afflictions and suffering is not from the same fountain that is opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. Just as Jesus, not God, is declared to be the author of the faith and the salvation of all of God's elect, because of his works, surely the devil, not God, is the author of all the sin and corruption in the world because of his works: yet both do fulfil the purpose of God in his plan of salvation for every heir of promise and both do keep that balance of the forces in using the good to overcome the sin of the saints and the evil to justly condemn those fitted to destruction.

This is not written for controversy, as I am no authority, but, are some thoughts I have had on the subject, and what I trust I have been taught

by the way and manner in which I have been led into an understanding of the truth. All scriptures, and the understanding of them, are given by inspiration and are profitable to the church when they are rightly divided and given and received by the brethren in Christian Charity. None knows all, but all know some, because the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man (of God) to profit withal.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

To the household of faith:

It is with awareness of my weakness and self helplessness and unworthiness, I begin this writing; while on the other hand, I do have a deep desire to write down some of what is upon my mind and in my feelings, in the hope (if in accord with His will) The Lord God would lead, guide and direct my mind and pen, in such truths as be to His praise, honor and glorifying of His great and Holy name; that is my only hope and desire, I feel at this time. For I feel so sure it is Holy truth, I shall say — I know that His name is the only name what could ever possibly be worthy of any and all praise, honor and glory, both now and forevermore.

I do not believe there is one iota

of uncertainty with the Three in One God. I believe with all my heart, soul and being, that the almighty God made and created ALL things, and did it all to absolute perfection, in His way and manner; such manner or way (His way and manner) as all comings and events and goings and beings and beginnings and endings, would and shall be to exactness as were in both His mind and purpose in and for so having created and made it all for and to be and do and accomplish in the first place (His place). And that the only uncertainty to exist in all time for this world to stand, exists only in the mind of man, and even that is a certainty with God. It seems to me that, in order for me to in Holy truth believe in and trust in and have a hope in, the One True and living three in one God, with all His attributes; then of an absolute necessity, that belief must also embrace the certain fact that, He did then know all things, fixed and firmly established all things, and all their comings and goings and doings and beginnings and continuations and endings; that it all from beginning unto its ending, was all clear as a crystal before His all seeing eyes, and that the certainty of it all coming in that exact and perfect order, is no less sure, than that He is surely God; for with this "One God" I have reference to, there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, for He is the unchanging God. In fact and in truth, all misunderstandings and or confusion is, with us the created, but

assuredly not with the Creator of us all. It is well whenever we are reminded, that God is the Potter, and we are the clay in His hands, with each of us formed in exact accordance with His pleasure to so form us each and all; thusly eliminating any and all possibility of us ever having any rightful room for boasting of ourselves for anything.

Now if it so be (in accord with my hope) that I am a child of God, and that what I write upon these pages be the truth as it is in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, then from the depth of my heart and soul, I declare unto all who read this, this poor sinner did in no way shape or form aid in it so being, it all came about wholly and Holy thru and by the grace of a most merciful God. All salvation, both in this time world and for heaven and immortal glory, is of the Lord. If, as I feel and hope, I were taught of the Lord, my first experience did show me clearly that I nor any other member of the human race in our fleshly self, are self endowed with any attribute which accords us such reliability, as we might unquestionably place our trust in; even in natural things, much less in spiritual matter; therefore I feel I must place all my trust in the "Lord my God" that one and only One who is infallibly trustworthy, He who cannot lie, He who cannot make a mistake or miscalculation, He who is the very Holy truth in word, in practice, in life and light, and in the perfect fulfillment of His every promise. He who holds and

controls all power in both heaven and earth. He who verily spake all that exists outside Himself into existence by the word of His power. He who by His own volition chose a certain number of vessels out from His creations, as vessels of His mercy, and gave these vessels to His Son. He who holds the keys to both heaven and hell. He and only He who determines who He shall carry to heaven, and who He shall cast into hell; and all this being His perfect and Holy right to do as He pleased to do. Now work mongers and or blasphemers will and do say that He has no right to do those things, and were He to do them, He would be an unjust God. But when they speak in such manner, the god they have reference to, is not that same "God" I feel and hope I am referring to. For the god they speak and write about, exists only in their human nature's mind; and therefore comes forth speaking lies, in an attempt at deceiving others into giving their money (even poor widows and children) in order that a few deceivers might live high and go out and win more proselytes and more money and fame for themselves. Did not that same serpent tell Eve that "God" had lied, when He said — ye shall surely die. Well that same thing has not ceased up to this present time by Satan and all his cohorts, deceiving and being deceived. Though all that being true and not a lie; no part of it has ever come as any surprise whatsoever to God, and He is still at the helm, in total

and complete control of its entirety. And so my precious brethren, if God's will, may He, from time to time, bring to our memory this very fact of Holy truth, all that does be, is no more and no less, than the coming to pass of what God saw and purposed and predestinated shall be, from before the foundation of the world, yes even the ragings of the devil and all his cohorts, and still it all shall work together for the good of His chosen children, them who are the called according to His purpose. You see, the creation of this world and the fullness thereof, was and is God's business, He needed no help then, nor does He need any help now. So let man and devils rage and lie as they do, it will not, it cannot and it shall not change, even one iota, that direct coming to pass of each and every event, in the fulfillment of every instant of time for this world to stand, in perfect order as was in the mind and purpose of God, in and for His creation of all things.

Now it is said — this is a hard doctrine, and if that means it is hard to believe; I will go so far as to say — except one is taught it of the Lord, it is an impossible doctrine to believe.

For to the unbeliever, the lie is truth, and the truth is a lie. There is but one school what can and does teach one a pure knowledge whereby they can separate the lie from the Holy truth, and or properly divide the word of truth, and that is the school of grace. In this school, there are no volunteers enrolled, neither by

child or parent; neither do they go to this school, for instead, this school is brought to them, and all without any payment for tuition or books. The Teacher in this school, is in no wise dependent upon any earthly form of government or individual, for advice or support; for He has all knowledge, and by right of having created all things, He already owns the whole world and the fullness thereof.

If what is written here be supported by the Holy Scripture, then accept it as the truth; otherwise discard it as filthy rags. If the former, praise only God for it; if the latter, lay it at my door.

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Dear Elder Williams;

I am enclosing in addition to my check, also my mom's, Lucill Youngs renewal. I noticed that her subscription ran out this year and we were indeed occupied with her illness and broken hip.

God's sweet providence was such that Mom was made to say that "She thanked God for her broken hip." How marvelous to behold God's compassionate dealings with us!

I am also enclosing a change of address card with Mom's new address. She is doing great; in fact

she is the "Good news person" of Fox Acre's Assisted Lining Complex.

I feel sure many of your readers who have read some of Mom's articles in the past Signs would love to know that she is well and still contending for the Faith that only God can and does give.

She still is blessed to use her "gift of singing" to the praise, honor and glory of the God who instilled in her mind, heart, and soul a "new song" and whose Love has kept that "song" alive in her heart and causes her to reflect the beauty that is Christ.

In Sweet Hope of Eternal Life,
Carrie Jo Williams

Dear Elder Key,

As the time draws closer for me to graduate from the university, I have repeatedly felt a need to write a few words of my experience here. I hope that God will bless them to be an encouragement to some who may feel that the young have left the church.

In December, I will finish here in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. When I began school here in 1988 there were some who said I'd come away confused and not knowing anymore what I believed. But I had faith that God would hold my course. He shielded me from their philosophies and falsehoods. I did begin, however, to

think very hard about why I believed the way I did. I sat down often and thought about the details of my beliefs. Oh, I knew God had put them there, but I dug even deeper. Someone once said that if you do not examine what you believe, then it is not worth believing. I agree with that. None of us should be content to be idle in our faith. We should ask ourselves questions, pray to God for fuller knowledge, and read His Word often. How else can we speak authoritatively about our beliefs?

My point is this: through all my soul-searching, and faced with the false teachings and blasphemies of the faculty at this university, I came out greatly strengthened in faith and love for God. I marvel at his awesome plans, manifested in the seas, the sky, the mountains. I have been sharply tried here, and my beliefs have been dragged in the dust by many. They would not be satisfied until they had left me speechless, but God lifted me out of their pitfalls and deceptions. He taught me that I do not need to argue with the agents of the enemy. I found strength in II Colossians 2:8, *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."* Some of you would stand in shock to hear what things they teach here. Some of my own classmates say that religion is for the foolish who cannot cope with real life. Some say that God is a fairy tale. Yet even the Christian students here offered me

no comfort, for they treated me strangely when they discovered how I believe. Fellowship with them left me dry and hungry. God Himself stood with me here and He fortified my beliefs. I hope He has set my feet upon the rock.

I will be leaving North Carolina when I graduate. This means that some of the old faces I see back home I will not see again, for nature will run its course. I am still young, but my ageless soul soars when I think of God's predestination and abounding grace. I hope He has seen fit to pour some of it on me and include me in His promise. I feel this has been a poor effort, but if God has been exalted, then I did not write in vain. I ask remembrance in your prayers as I begin life in the real world. My prayer is that He will bless and sustain you until that great day when we shall see Him as He is.

In love and blessed hope,
Scott Collie

1 CORINTHIANS 15 : 55-58.

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 stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

**THE LETTER FROM
ELDER GRIFFIN**

Covin, Alabama

Mr. and Mrs. Bunyan McGregor,
St. Charles, Kentucky

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

It has been some time since we have anything your way, but it has not been because you were not in our thoughts. The pleasant scenes of yesteryear are not easily forgotten. If they pertained only to this life, we would soon forget them in the press of the daily toil and strife, but they are memories of a little prelude of what is to come. Well, the casual observer might want to know, What is to come? And before I could answer that I would want to know, What has already come?

What has already come? Has something come to pass that is outstanding? Has something come to pass that is different to what has come to pass with many? When we look back in retrospection, look at those with whom we are surrounded, we are well aware that something has come to pass with us that has not come to pass with them. If that, that has come to pass with us is of the Lord, then the world has come to an end

for us, but is still standing with them. When the world came to an end it held no more attraction for us. Its glittering joys and objects of time lost all of their luster; the things that we had been doing seemed to matter no more; the things we had been eating and drinking ceased to alleviate our hunger and thirst; the ambitions that pertained to this world were lost in our efforts of survival; our hopes for after life went thru such an abrupt change that we knew that we would never make it by works of righteousness which we had done.

What a vast change all this brought about. To have the world come to an end and yet it be existing as it always had, is a mystery to those that it has not yet ended for. That is the reason Old Baptist doctrine is held in disdain by so many. It is because their world is still standing and ours has fallen. And what vexation of spirit it is to us (as we humbly hope) to yet be in this fallen perishing world. Our affections are set on things above; we are looking (not to this world, but) to that world of immortal bloom, where joys unspeakable and full of glory await all of the redeemed of the Lord.

But, while the change has been wonderful, it has not been as complete as we yearn for. Oh, so much of the time we feel to be at home in the body, and just as often as we feel to be at home in the body, we groan because we are absent from the Lord. How great the change, only those thus exercised know. No

need to talk to those that have not had the change wrought in them, for the only thing they know, or can know, is being at home in the body, and how satisfied they feel to dwell there. How restful that is; how free of vexation and toil; how clear of troubles and sorrow; how precious the goods of that vast dwelling place, and how great the hoard of unused riches; how spacious is the room to move around in, and how delightful to have freedom of will to go whithersoever they would therein, and to even boast of ability to leave that dwelling to live with Christ; how high and broad the doors and windows of the dwelling and what streams of light they give.

But when it is shown to the occupant how unstable the dwelling is, and that he that made it is erasing it, taking away all that we had of armour and light and will, and spoiling all of our goods but leaving them and their stink for our now delicate sense of smell, closing every door and window of escape, how sick we became of our bed. We had rested there a long time, but now could not rest there. We had been strong and healthy there, and had held in disdain those that talked of lack of strength, and that could not enjoy the vain and frivolous things of time. What a spell of sickness that was. It will never be forgotten. Sick unto death, and no quickening spirit, no balm for our sores, no wine to cheer our droopiness, no pure water to wash away our filthiness, no bread, no

water of life. No physician came our way. We tried all that we heard of and we got worse. We spent what we had, or what we thought we had, and our troubles grew and mounted up as dark clouds of gloom. We watched our supplies dwindle; we watched them used up; we came to the end, our world ended.

Everything ended. We died to it all. But our dying to it was the height of our beginning. Jesus died but he lives, and he, being our Life, we lived again. Alive unto God, alive unto righteousness. He came to us while helpless on our sick bed. He said something. He spoke with power and authority. *"Take up thy bed and walk"*. This has never been said to anybody except God's people. It was a curiosity to the Jews of that day and this day. That excited them in literal things and it is exciting in religious things now to be carrying this dead world (body) around. Oh, day longed for by the trembling saints of God. That day when the change will be so complete, and we shall see our Lord as he is and be like him forever and forever. How sickening it is to be at home in this body or world. How we long for deliverance from the body of this death. How we do long to ground our arms and go to our long sought home of rest.

God has provided us one pleasant boon while here. It is not any small moment to think of what the Lord has done for us here. Oh, my weary, questioning soul, dry all thy tears,

calm all thy fears. He that did not own a home; he that had no place to rest that dear tired body; he that often was alone, and misunderstood by those close to him; he that was forsaken by his Father and died the cruel death of the cross alone, he it was that gave us a home before he left here. Gave us a place to turn aside from the stench and noise and burdens of a dead world to rest. He gave us that resting place and brings us to see the beauty and joy therein. To insure our final home over the way, the Man Christ Jesus the Lord went into glory there to appear for us, but he sent One, even the Holy Ghost to dwell in this home with us. He, the Man Christ Jesus appears today in heaven for us; the Teacher, which is the Comforter or Holy Ghost, appears to us here and leads us to our home in this world.

I will never forget the restfulness of that home when I got there. I thought I would never make it. I had longed for it, I had hoped that some day I might be one with them, but I did not see any way for a sinner like me to enjoy the pleasures of that pleasant land. Something happened to me again. Everything, wife, darling babies, all, all, left me, and someone brought me nearer ever nearer the church of Jesus Christ. One went away, the other came nearer and ever nearer, until I could think of nothing except to be baptized. I believed that I would die if I did not go and ask them for a home.

In the fulness of time I did go.

You cannot know how surprising it was to find them waiting as eagerly and anxiously for me to come as I was to go. It was the sweetest experience I've ever had in my life. Something did come to pass, and so it has been coming to pass in the life of the people of God all the way down the steps of time. That, that has come to pass, is the prelude of what is to come yet. We have had the world to end, yes, but we have not been taken out of the world. We have been kept from the evil here, but we have not been delivered from the presence of evil. We have had it made known unto us that the body is dead because of sin that dwells in it, but we have not been delivered from the body of death. The change is not yet full as our desires. But thank his precious name something has come to pass. That which has come to pass is so wonderful that it assures us that something else will come to pass. We have known and felt the image of the earthly, having felt all of its plagues and galling effects, but are assured that we shall also bear the image of the heavenly; we know what it is to be in dishonor and weakness and corruption and dull mortality. Yes, something has come to pass, and it having come to pass, we are looking for a city whose maker and builder is God. We know that we do not have one here. Something has indeed come to pass that is wonderful. We have been taught that we have no continuing city here, and that, that has come to pass is now

causing us to seek one to come. It is a good thing that has come to pass. The world has ended for us. We have lost everything here. But we have been given something else that is much better. We have been made to seek one to come.

Another thing has come to pass. While seeking a city to come, we have a company of kindred spirits on the journey home. I have not, in thirty-five years of writing, enjoyed any more than to send this little epistle to you. God gave you to me. I needed somebody to talk to this morning, and I do hope that you will need these lines when they arrive, and that they will be as crumbs to travel on and on in the heavenly way.

Something else will take place tomorrow. We will be gone. Others, and on my part, I hope more faithful ones, will have taken our place. But our going will not bring sorrow to those of the household of faith, for it is better to die than to live, for living here is not any longer our joy and anticipation, but going yonder to meet our loved ones is the most desirable thing of all. And as I close my enraptured soul feels that, if I do not see you anymore here, that I will meet you over home. To that end I wait.

We love you for Jesus' sake.

Your little brother and sister,
W.D. and Lois Griffin

"In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." — Ephesians i. 13, 14.

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Holy are its inhabitants, holy its employments, holy its enjoyments. Therefore unless we know something of the teaching, the work, and witness of the Holy Spirit here, and are made partakers of a new, holy, spiritual, and heavenly nature we have no pledge or earnest of our interest in the inheritance of the saints in bliss. A carnal, unsanctified, unholy, unrenewed heart is utterly incapable of understanding, entering into, longing after, and loving an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But every holy desire, heavenly affection, gracious longing, spiritual enjoyment, and believing, hoping, loving, looking unto and cleaving to the Lord of life and glory by the power of the Holy Spirit, are all so many pledges and earnest of an interest in the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. The love, the joy, the peace, the calm tranquillity, and holy acquiescence in the will of God; the ravishing views of the glory of Christ which change the soul into the same image, from glory to glory; the delight felt in him, and the whole surrender of the heart and affections to the blessed Lord as the chiefest of ten thousand and the altogether lovely, are all so many earnest of the inheritance above, as being heaven begun below.

J.C. Philpot

 MEETINGS

**THE LORD ADDS TO THE
CHURCH DAILY
SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED**

Many years ago, I tried to beg for my dear husband. These words were given to me. "It is good to wait upon the Lord". And then these words came to me. "If He has begun a good work in one, He will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ". As I waited through the years, 26 to be exact, I tried to be patient for I knew without a doubt that He had begun a good work. I felt assured that there was a day for my dear husband to be baptised. I never dreamed that God would give me such a blessed day as He has. I want to try to put some of it on paper if my Heavenly Father will bless me to do so.

We have five precious daughters. I believe each one has a love for the church. One night at the beginning of July 1991, God sent one of my daughters and her family to visit with us. We soon began to talk of God, His goodness, and His Church. Our son-in-law spoke of how he felt that he had to come to the church. After our sweet talk, they left for home rather late. I felt so caught up with joy for them that I slept very little that night.

As I laid upon my bed, it came to me so plain that we would have a

baptising at 9:00 a.m. on our Communion Day which is the 2nd Sunday in August. On 2nd Sunday in July, our son-in-law Wayne Sutphin attended church with his little son Riley. Cindy, Wayne's wife, had left for the weekend with their daughter on a camping trip. Wayne said that he had no intention of joining the church that day. He wanted Cindy to be there; however, God had the day set! At the close of our meeting, Wayne came forth and ask for a home at Salem Church. I was so happy for him because I knew this had been troubling him for several years. The baptism was set for 2nd Sunday in August at 9:00 a.m.

The month was passing, bringing us closer to our Communion Day and the baptism. My mind took me back to the days when our precious Minister, Elder Roy Agee, was with us at Salem. Shortly before his death, he sat talking with my husband and me. He told us he felt that we were going to have a revival at Salem Church. I counted the years since his death and it numbered "seven". I then remembered that God gave us three new members the following month after Brother Roy's death. Roy's dear brother Andrew, Andrew's wife Gladys, and his sister Ruby were blessed to come at that time. As I reminisced on the revival, I began to think of all the lovely friends we had that were waiting to be brought into the church. My heart filled to the brim and I begged, "Oh, Lord, if it could be thy will, give us that revival

Brother Roy spoke of”.

Saturday morning came for our conference meeting. At the close of the meeting, our daughter Cindy came forth. Oh, what joy we felt that she was blessed to come with her husband to the church. After we dismissed, another one gave in to the church. My Aunt Sylvia Conner had desired a home for many years. She ask that her baptism be 2nd Sunday in September. Her family was away and she felt they would like to be there at the baptism. Oh, what joy it is to see them come manifesting their unworthiness, yet desiring to follow our Lord and Savior in baptism.

My heart was so full I didn't think there was room for anymore; but God had more in store. We had two sisters of the church to spend the night with us. As we sat talking, Sister Elva ask my husband if he thought he could go into the water with our children the next day. He answered that he would like to, but felt so unworthy. I then quoted the words that were given to me long ago. "It is good to wait upon the Lord." I told the sisters that I felt sure there was a day appointed for my dear husband. Little did I know that the next beautiful sunrise was to be the day.

Down by the river that beautiful morning, it seemed that The Holy Ghost surrounded us all as we stood on the banks. Hymns were sung and Elder Cox offered up the prayer. An open door was published for anyone else who wanted a home with the

church. Sister Ora King came forth immediately, followed by my husband, Wade Poff. Oh, what joy filled my heart! As I turned, my eyes fell upon another precious one coming in Sister Hilda Ferris. And yet another followed Sister Livie Thompson, who I have loved since high school days. Low and behold, I looked and two more were coming Sister Evoleen Rutrough and husband, Brother Julian, who had given so much help to our church. This, I thought, is the revival which Brother Roy had spoken of. I looked up and yet another was coming Brother Alfred Ratliff, who also had been so faithful to help us at Salem, was asking for a home. We had a total of ten candidates for baptism with each asking for a home at Salem Church. Brother Julian and Sister Evoleen requested for baptism with Sister Sylvia in September. We were left with "seven" to baptise on that day.

Words cannot express the joy that filled my heart. There before me was one of the most beautiful scenes anyone could witness! The seven joined together with Elders, Hale Terry and Willard Cox, and walked into the rippling waters on a beautiful sunny morning. I believe that it was a little taste of Heaven here below on earth. Hearts filled with love and joy and was manifested there by the river.

Our dear pastor, Elder Hale Terry, had felt within his heart that we would have "seven" for baptism that morning after talking with me on Saturday.

I felt some concern for Elder Terry as he baptised each of the seven. He had some serious back problems; but he told me later that he didn't even know he had a back for he was rejoicing so much.

As they all came from the water this hymn was sung. "Oh how happy are they, Who their Savior obey, And whose treasures are laid up above! Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace, Of a soul in it's earliest love"!

What a blessed day! As long as God will grant me a memory, I shall never forget. May He forever be praised! A sinner with a hope that Jesus is mine.

Today, September 18, 1991, if God will grant me the privilege, I would like to write about our revival continuing at Salem Church. The second Sunday in September we had nine candidates for baptism. Three joined at the August baptism: Sisters Sylvia Conner and Eveleen Rutrough, and Brother Julian Rutrough. Three more were blessed to come at the close of the Smith River Association, requesting baptism with the above three, but placing their membership at other churches. Brother Wilton L. Sutphin placed his membership at Paynes Creek, Brother Joseph Holly with membership at Town Creek, and Brother William Earl Mitchell placed his at Little Hope.

With these six candidates, we gathered at the banks of Little River again. Hymns of praise were sung, and prayer was offered. An open

door was published for reception of members. Again three came forward: my dear sister in the flesh, Mae Conner Vest, Mae's daughter, Donna West Minnix, and a special friend, Sister Mary Walton Janney, (making the ninth). We rejoiced greatly over the loved ones that God had brought in. The total for Salem Church was thirteen. Sister Eveleen Rutrough had dreamed of being baptised with a total of "thirteen". Thanks be unto His Holy Name.

The Lord of hosts hath sworn saying, "Surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand". I love the song which says, "The Lord moves in a mysterious way, His Wonders to perform — He plants his footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm". I have been lifted so high that I'm standing in fear of the terrible storm that may lie ahead, but I know without a shadow of a doubt that He holds it all in His Hands. I just beg that He will bless me with His grace to bear whatever is mine.

A sinner in need of His mercy.
Mary Poff

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/91
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

SONG SERVICES

A song service is held each second Sunday night at 7:00 P.M. at Dan River Church. Also each fourth Sunday night at Malmaison Church. All who love to sing or those who love to listen are invited to come to these services.

Editors

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in December 1991, the Lord willing.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Springfield Primitive Baptist Church
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Union Church, a Presbytery met at Union Church on Saturday October 26, 1991 for the examination of Brother Alvis L. Shelton if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgment,

ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Elders Leonard J. Brammer, Kenneth Key, Clarence Stone, Willard Cox, Lane Carter, W.J. Conner, Noel Conner, Larry Hollandsworth.

Deacons present were as follows: Nelson Bryant, Andrew Agee, H.D. Ingram, Donald Agee, Woody Young, Wilson King, Tommy Lovill, Hassell Hale, Oscar Pickral, Guy Holley, G.W. Conner, Woodrow Abshire, Chester Hagood, Grey Ingram, Wilford Larsons, Joe Cahill, Floyd Bryant, Jessie Tyree, Jamie Cooper.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Leonard J. Brammer as moderator; Jamie Cooper as clerk; Elder Kenneth Key was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. H.D. Ingram having been duly appointed by Union Church, delivered Brother Shelton to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Kenneth Key and Noel Conner and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 1st Timothy 3rd Chap. Verse 8. The presbytery being satisfied examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Willard Cox. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Lane Carter using Scriptural reference 1st Timothy.

Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Alvis Shelton and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Union Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder W.J. Conner.

Leonard J. Brammer, Moderator
 Jamie Cooper, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in December, 1991 at 10:00 a.m. Preaching will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Greensboro Church will host this meeting.

All Elders of our faith and order along with all lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Pastor
 Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1991

Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA	2.00
Mrs. Christine G. Shelton, VA ...	2.00
Mrs. Annie Reed, VA	10.00
Frank Hunt, VA	10.00
Aubrey Oakes, VA	2.00
Irvin Holley, VA	2.00
Eld. Marvin Brumfield, VA	2.00
W.L. Adams, VA	4.00
James L. Howell, AL	7.00
Wilford G. Parsons, VA	7.00
Mrs. Sylvia W. Conner, VA	2.00
Memory of Eld. J.R. Hollandsworth	
Mrs. J.R. Hollandsworth, VA.....	5.00
Mrs. S.G. Harralson, KY.....	5.00
Mrs. Mary Stanfield, VA	2.00
Mrs. Frank Searce, VA	2.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD	60.00
A.J. Dowdy, NC	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA	5.00
Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX	5.00
Banks H. Conner, VA	10.00
Mr. & Mrs. Charles P. Hayes, AL...	5.00
Eld. Bud Smith, CA	2.00
C.V. Ferris, VA	2.00
Eld. R.H. Campbell, TN	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. Bell, VA	5.00
Mrs. Willie M. Ratliff, VA	5.00
Eld. Joe Sawyer, NC	2.00
Floyd Oakley, AR	2.00
C.C. Johnson, NC	2.00
Mrs. Bernice Greer, VA	2.00
Mrs. Annie B. Malone, AL.....	12.00
James O. Whaling, OH	2.00
Mrs. Homer Pettis, LA	5.00

Mrs. Nannie Moran, VA2.00
 Ms. Cathy P. Holden, VA 2.00
 T.W. Coats, TX2.00

OBITUARIES

DEACON FLOIS A. CHAPELL

Flois A. Chapell was born July 24, 1901 in Obion County Tennessee to Thomas and Minnie Chapell. He died May 2, 1991.

He was married December 23, 1923 to Ruth Collier and to this union was born two children Wayman and Ramona.

Flois and Ruth both joined the Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, in Obion County near Rives Tennessee on November 12, 1971 and were baptized April 16, 1972. They were baptized by Elder H. R. Prince, their pastor, who was assisted by their son, Elder Wayman G. Chapell.

Brother Chapell was ordained to the office of Deacon in the Cane Creek Church, in which capacity he faithfully served until the time of his death. He lived to see his son and daughter join the Primitive Baptist Church, Elder Wayman G. Chapell joined the Memphis Tennessee Church and Sister Ramona Moon joined with her husband Charles Moon at the Bowes Chapel Church near Fulton, Ky. A grand daughter Ginnie Ruth has also joined the Bowes Chapell recently.

Brother Chapell's home was a very pleasant place to visit over the years, a favorite place at their annual meetings or any other time. All lovers of the truth were always welcome. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him, but we realize his race has been run and that he is in a far better place than we which remain.

Richard H. Campbell

ETHEL E. SKINNER

McConnellsburg, Pa. Ethel Elmira Skinner, 96, of McConnellsburg, Pa. died Sunday, Oct. 13, 1991, in the Long-Term Care Facility at Fulton County Medical Center, where she had lived for four years.

Born Nov. 22, 1894, in Needmore, she was a daughter of the late McCauley and Sara Jane Brewer McEldowney.

She was a member of Sidling Hill Baptist Church, Needmore.

Her husband, Elder John Skinner, died in 1941.

Surviving are four nephews: Blair Truax of Needmore, Kermit McEldowney of Manchester, Loy McEldowney of St. Thomas and John McEldowney of Ocala, Fla.

She was preceded in death by a sister and a brother.

Services were held in Sidling Hill Baptist Church by Elders Bill Dillon, William Payne and Raymond

Pressley. Burial was in the church cemetery.

IN MEMORY OF ELDER O.K. TENCH

The dear Lord willing, I will endeavor to write a few lines in memory of my dear Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench. He was indeed an Old Father of Israel, blessed of God with a wonderful gift to preach the Gospel, which is the Power of God. If he was not blessed to preach, he was always blessed to make a beautiful talk. He preached the things that he believed and believed the things he preached.

Elder Tench was born January 23, 1911, to Isham Ferguson and Sallie Campbell Tench. Survivors are his wife, Helen Bennett Tench, three daughters, Betty Ellis, JoAnn Meeks and Darnell Barnes, a son, Orren Kinsey Tench, Jr., six grandchildren, and a sister, Emma T. McCrickard. Elder Tench loved his wife and family and they all loved him, but his Religion was the most important thing in his life and that came first. Mrs. Tench says she has so many questions now concerning the scriptures that she wished she had asked him.

He was baptized the 3rd Sunday in May 1932 and ordained to the Ministry in August, 1937. Elder Tench was called to serve Weatherford Church as their Pastor in 1938. Raymond and I were 3 years old. We cannot remember Weatherford Church without Elder Tench. I can't

recall many times his not being there. He was a devoted Pastor, always striving for peace. He was like a Father to Raymond and I. When we were burdened to join the church, he came home with us from church and when lunch was served, there were more tears shed than mouthfuls eaten. We united with Weatherford Church the next 4th Sunday, which was July, 1965 and was baptized by Elder Tench the 2nd Sunday in August, 1965, which was the happiest day of our lives. He was so kind and supportive to Raymond when he was burdened to speak and during the time he served with him at Weatherford — all the things he told us, he meant them for our good.

Elder Tench was a spiritual minded person, blessed to talk on the scriptures in our homes, loved to sing the songs of Zion and was a very good song leader. He was compassionate and affectionate, a Pastor we could go to when we had a problem or a question. He was also blessed to preach beautiful funerals, which were many, of church members and non-members. He had many friends, many who are not Primitive Baptists.

During his ministry, he became concerned who would serve his churches when he was gone and the dear Lord blessed him to baptize 5 ministers during his ministry, Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield from Weatherford, Elder Julian Williams from Malmaison, Elder Thomas Solomon from Chapel, and

Elder Melvin Shelton from Springfield, who now serves Banister Springs Church. Elder Denver Simpson was also ordained during his ministry at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church and served with Elder Tench until his death. He baptized most of us who are members at Weatherford at this time. He baptized Raymond's grandfather, his mother, his two sisters, Raymond and I. He also baptized my mother and father.

Elder Tench served Weatherford Church faithfully for 53 years. He suffered a massive stroke the 3rd Saturday in February, 1991, soon after his 80th birthday, when he was preparing to go to Chapel, his home church, and was never able to attend church again. Although everything was done for him that human hands could do, he was not satisfied. He wanted to go to his natural home. Mrs. Tench, a devoted wife, wanted to take him home and was making preparations to do so when the Lord called him home. He wanted to die.

His daughter, Betty, was at his bedside on Thursday and he asked her what day is this, she replied Thursday and he said I am going to die Friday. The dear Lord saw fit to call him home on Friday, May 24, 1991. His funeral was conducted on Sunday, May 26, at Lynch's Funeral Chapel, Rocky Mount, Va., by the 5 ministers he baptized and his body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Franklin Memorial Park to await the Glorious Resurrection. His funeral was

attended by a host of Brethren and Friends.

Elder Tench is greatly missed by his dear wife and family, his Brethren and his friends. May all that mourn his passing be reconciled to God's Holy Will and be blessed with sweet memories of him and be given a thankful heart that the dear Lord saw fit to send us our Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, who served so faithful for these 53 years. We did not worship him as a man, but hope we worshipped the things he set forth.

Written by Phyllis Goad

PSALM 67

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

MOVED OR MOVING ?

To assure your of getting your "Signs" and without missing any copies, be sure to inform us of any change of address.

The Editors