

# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Ps. 23:1.*

*"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19.*

### A PRAYER FOR MY NEED

O FATHER IN HEAVEN,

*Have mercy, by thy abiding love, to me a sinner;*

*Give me, daily, a measure of genuine living faith to believe in the resurrection and in the power of the redeeming blood of Jesus;*

*Grant me wisdom to understand the mysteries of thy Word and knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus;*

*Give me strength to endure every tribulation and each trial of faith;*

*Guide and direct my steps to that narrow path that leads to the straight gate and eternal life;*

*Set an angelic watchman before my tongue that it abstain from all deceit, falsehoods and blasphemy;*

*Give me a contrite spirit reconciled to thy will and a pure heart that I may judge righteous judgments and forgive them that despitefully use and persecute me;*

*Deliver me from temptation, from all appearances of evil, from pride, and from despair;*

*Comfort my soul , O Lord , in freedom from the condemnation of the law and with joyful experiences of the earnest of the Spirit and with foretastes of thy Glory ;*

*Grant me power to obtain that spiritual and material wealth that will enable me to assemble with thy witnesses to worship and praise thy holy name that thy covenant of love and grace be established ;*

*Comfort thy scattered children , O Lord , unify their spirits to the mind of Christ , make them to dwell in one accord in thy kingdom on earth and to be watchful of each other for good ; and make me , O Lord , to be mindful and generous in view of their welfare and need ;*

*Shelter me beneath the cloak of righteousness of thy beloved son , Jesus , that I may have effectual access to thee in prayer ;*

IN THY NAME AND FOR JESUS SAKE ,  
AMEN .

Eugene F. Osborne , Sr.  
11/18/89

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EDITORIAL



Elder Kenneth R. Key

**W**ith this issue we begin the one hundredth and fifty eighth year of continuous publication of the Signs of the Times . Surely God has been in the

matter to bless it to prosper for these many years . God has given it many wonderful gifts that have been blessed to write to the comfort & edification of his people .

Many of the old heads have now been called home and we see the stirring up of the pure minds of others that have been added to the staff of the Signs .

Licentiate C.C. Wilbanks who has written many articles in the past has agreed to serve as an associate editor . Brother Wilbanks lives in Monroe , Louisiana . We had the pleasure of having Brother Wilbanks visit in our home fourth week end in November along with sister Wilbanks . He spoke at our service at Dan River Church on Sat . night & Sunday following . We pray God to continue to bless him both in the ministry and as a writer for the Signs of the Times .

We have also the consent of Elder C.B. Davis of Roxboro , N.C. to serve as an associate Editor and we look forward to his writings . He is no stranger to us here in North Carolina , and also Virginia , Maryland and Delaware . He is esteemed highly among those who know him

and is certainly a workman that need not be ashamed .

In mentioning our new associate editors let us not forget Elder Richard Campbell who has served so faithfully for many years now . We were blessed, my wife and I, Brother Coley Strader and wife, to visit in the home of Elder and Mrs . Campbell two or three years ago . They were both so gracious and went all out to show us a good time . We toured the city of Memphis , viewed the Mississippi , etc . The light of our visit tho was attending Elder Campbell 's home church in Memphis , Tenn . We were met there by the most lovely people . Tho we had never seen them before , they were certainly no strangers . We saw the cords of God 's love manifested in these precious ones . It was there we met Elder Chappel for the first time and his dear mother and they found a place in our hearts . I think about our visit there often and it is sure a bethel spot in my book of remembrance . We found there a little flock that loved each other and really manifested a genuine and sincere love for Elder Campbell , their pastor .

We want to make a few requests now of our subscribers ; when sending in notices of meetings to be published — do so at least 60 days in advance . Any regular meetings for the entire year can be sent in any - time and we will file them in the appropriate month for publication . Write to us and tell us about your experience of Grace and the reason for your hope . Many have expressed how they enjoy reading the experience of others . Christ told Peter

that after he was converted to strengthen the brethren . In sharing your experiences it is strength for each other . As we enter into this another year we pray God might continue to bless us and that the Love of our Elder Brother might continue . Let us strive to walk in the old paths and do nothing in our Churches unless we find a " Thus sayeth the Lord ." Hold fast to the precepts and examples that have been set before us , Love one another and look over each other for good and not evil . Strive for peace in our churches — Hold fast to our articles of faith — Bring in no new ideas — When ordaining Elders and Deacons , adhere to the qualifications given in the scriptures by the inspired word of God . Refrain from those things and places that be offensive to our brethren . Follow no man unless he is following Christ . And most of all may we be kept humble , at the feet of our brethren , esteeming our brethren better than ourselves and " never seek a crown at the expense of someone else being dethroned ."

Your little brother in hope ,  
Elder Kenneth R . Key

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### 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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*CORRESPONDENCE*

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Dear Brother & Sister in Christ :

**S**o glad to get your very precious letter and the beautiful things that you have been reconciled with . I believe that I can witness with you of God's unlimited Grace, in making us to live for each day and causing us to be thankful for each morning , when we arise .

I could not wish my affliction on anyone , yet in all this I have been made aware of God's love and that peace that only comes from him. Our brethren have been so good and helpful as far as they could go— but I as well as you , Sister , know that they can go but so far .

When I was told of my condition , I was terrified for a short while , then I was reminded of our Lord and Saviour in the Garden of Gethsemane , when he prayed that the cup might pass , meanwhile knowing that his mission in this world was to atone for the sins of his people . And he being without sin had to die , and I justly condemned in this flesh . I believe with the thief on the cross that I was made to cry out “ Lord remember me when thou enter in thy kingdom .” When the Doctor in the hospital gave me no hope at all , then that peace that only God gives came to my innermost parts — all fear was removed and I was at ease . I knew that my life was in the Lord's hands and he was made that ever present help in the time of need ; that fear of this natural death has not bothered me since then .

My precious friends , in my feeble physical being , I would not trade what I believe God has shown me for all the world , because flesh cannot teach some of the things that I feel I have been shown .

Our prayer is that God will continue to sustain you with his Grace , and your faith enable you to accept each day as it comes , always looking to Jesus , the author and finisher of our faith . We love both of you very much and hope all your medications are effective .

In bonds of that Sweet Hope ,  
Reeves and Rachel Smith

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Nov . 15 , 1987

Dear Brother Key ,

**A**fter reading the sermon you preached at the Staunton River Association of July 7, 1984 , I had to stop reading and wipe the tears away , it was so much like my experience . When I heard about my twin sister Mattie Underwood uniting with the Church at Republican was when I felt the most of my lost condition , that I just couldn't stand to see her baptized . I suppose I shed as many tears as if she had died a corporal death . Soon these words were spoken to me “ I'll strengthen thee , and help thee and cause thee to stand ,” I soon began to feel better . When she was baptized I felt so good , I felt that I was already in the Church . I ask the Lord if it was His will and my duty or privilege to join to make it plain to me . Just a short while before meeting I dream -

ed of being at Long Branch . When the meeting time arrived it was just like I dreamed . I related some of what I have written and was received . I received an answer of a good conscience towards God and was so happy . I have heard these words spoken to me in a still small voice , “ I had been Redeemed , Sanctified and I was His little Saint .” I could write a book of His goodness and mercy toward me , but will close .

Your little Sister I hope ,  
Hattie H . Radford

I am pleased to write that Brother Amos I. Hash is my pastor and also my first cousin .

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Nov . 30 , 1989

Dear Editors of the Signs :

I thank you all for sending the dear Signs of the Times to me free all this many months . I am sending a check to you to pay for the Signs of the Times for 2 more years and what is over to help with and way you need it . I enjoy reading the sweet SERMONS and wonderfully good writings in the Signs . I have read and re - read the good EXPERIENCE in the December Signs 1989 . It is so much like I hope the blessed Lord has brought me . He has been so tenderly good to me and my dear children . We had 7 to live to be grown . Two daughters passed away not long ago . Esther Clark Byrd passed away in 1985 she was 53 years old . She had been a member

of the dear Primitive Baptist since she was eleven or twelve years old . She dearly loved them and attended the church at River View and Union every meeting she was able to get there . My other daughter passed away in 1988 , the first day of April . My heart was so broken to give them up . I mourned and grieved so hard that my blessed Lord told or made it know to me that it was wrong to grieve for them . He had taken them out of their suffering . He makes no mistakes all his works and ways is most glorious . I have begged him for months and years if it can be thy holy purpose in the ways pleasing to you a Lord to show or tell me if I am one of the Least of Thy Chosen in the blessed covenant of thy grace just for a second . And in a second as it seemed these words was spoken to my heart and soul . “ I have carried you in my arms all the days of your life .” My tears flowed and my Heart was melted in love . I am 85 years old . I was born September 6 , 1904 , I have but a little learning in school . My daddy passed away one month before I was born .

May the Lord Jesus continue to bless you Editors and all that write the sweet writing in the Signs .

Callie Clark

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*PROVERBS 3 : 13 .*

*Happy is the man that findeth wisdom , and the man that getteth understanding .*

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VOICES OF THE PAST  
"he being dead yet speaketh"

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**RIGHTLY DIVIDING  
THE WORD OF TRUTH**

( Continued from December issue . )

*The commandment is, " To study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15 .*

**T**his brings me to the discussion of another subject, the second one in my arrangement, **THE DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE** .

This begins with the inward calling of God . The doctrine is both retrospective and prospective . In the retrospect we see that the calling of God comes from His foreknowledge and predestination . " Whom He predestinated , them He also called ." In the prospect, we see that 'whom He called He also justified , and extends prospectively to the glorification of him that is justified . ' " Whom He justified , them He also glorified . "

We must distinguish the calling of God from the calling of His ministers . Their's is in the letter, in word only , in the commission given to " preach the word ." God's calling is of Himself , often , however , in connection with the preaching of His word . The plainest example which we have of this is in 1 Thessalonians 1:5 . The call in the commission is general, that according to election is special, but we are not as ministers

to limit the general call because the other is special . This would be to assume to ourselves the light of election , which cannot be discovered only as we may see the word of God prevailing effectually on the hearts of hearers . Paul knew the election of the Thessalonians in this manner . For his gospel went forth unto them not in word only , but in power and much assurance of the Holy Spirit . He ever operates according to divine election , and whenever we recognize His gracious power , we may recognize also the election of the Father .

Let us now examine the fruits of these different callings . One says , Paul thou art mad ; another that he taught that men ought to do evil that good might come , another that such was his doctrine, no one resisted the will of God . In the extenuation of others he was a " fellow , " a " babler , " a disturber of the peace , and was not worthy to live . Besides his preaching was to the Greek " foolishness , " to the Jew a " stumbling block ; " it was hid by Satan from others , and was to others a savor of death unto death , a sign of a gospel in word only to carnal hearts . This could not have occurred on account of bad preaching, for it was apostolic preaching . These are bad fruits , and many others of a similar kind might be enumerated both on the part of Paul and the other Apostles .

Enough , however , has been stated to show that the excellency of power was not committed to the hands of the Apostles for its dispensation . Let us now turn to the fruits of the " holy calling of God ." A quickening of the soul that is dead in

trespasses and sin , repentance towards God , faith in the Lord Jesus Christ . This is expressed by other terms : as opening of the heart , a cutting in the heart , opening the eyes of the blind , unstopping the deaf ears , a circumcision of the heart , bringing the blind by ways they had not known , a spiritual demonstration of divine truth in the heart , power and assurance of the Holy Spirit , a begetting of the word of truth , a revealing of the things of Christ , a witness in the soul of the believer , a leading , the work of God . How great and striking is the appearance in these fruits .

We may safely deduce the doctrine of these callings from the text which I will now quote , and as it runs through all apostolic preaching , we feel assured it has run through all ministerial preaching since .” But we preach Christ crucified , unto the Jew a stumbling block , and unto the Greek foolishness ; but unto them which are called , both Jews and Greeks , Christ the power of God , and the wisdom of God .” 1 Corinthians 1:23 & 24 .

Some I fear suppose that the great doctrine of sovereign grace , predestination , election and the like , abate in the commission to preach the Gospel to every creature , and assign more power to ministers preaching under it than the text just quoted will admit of . This doctrine about preaching fully justifies God in calling such as He does to preach . According to it may He not call the “ weak ” the “ foolish ,” the “ unlearned ,” and the “ base ,” in carnal estimation with but few “ wise ,” “ mighty ,” “ noble .” Otherwise all

preachers would require the endorsements which “ itching ears ” demand . As I have written on this subject for another part of this book I will pass on to the further consideration of the doctrine of Christian experience .

In our experience we have the calling of the minister and that of God . We know that the former did not prevail until we experienced the latter — that was effectual and turned our hearts in the way of repentance and faith ; and but for this we would not have heeded the calling of the preacher . Thus is this divine doctrine established in the heart . Let us now distinguish between what the sinner does , and what the Lord does . Under the power of God ’s calling the sinner lives , why ? because God gives him life ; he repents because God gives him repentance in that life ; believes , because God gives him faith ; he perseveres because God keeps him by His power through faith unto salvation . Now I ask if the doctrine of sovereign grace is at all affected by any of these acts performed by the sinner ? He receives those gifts , is willing in the day of God ’s power to receive them , and these gifts are said by the apostle to be by grace , to be entirely predicated on grace . Romans 5:15 .

The sinner lives through Christ , according to the gift of life , he repents through Christ , as his Saviour exalted to give him repentance , he believes in the demonstration of the Holy Spirit . Christ becomes the object of his faith , through whom the sinner experiences a sense of the Father ’s

forgiveness of all sins , and a sense of His reconciliation to him . Thus may Father , Son and Holy Spirit be recognized in the great affair of Christian experience , in a perfect ONENESS in salvation , for salvation is of God . The sinners ' living does not save him , it only shows that Christ has given him life , his repenting does not save him , it only shows that he is alive to God under a sense of his sins and sinful state ; his believing does not save him , it only shows that Christ the hope of glory is found in his soul as the ground of his salvation . Thus is all boasting excluded , and Christ becomes all and in all to the helpless sinner . These are the unadulterated fruits of grace . We behold the man living , repenting , believing , and persevering , which are great works . But in the light of the doctrine just set forth , we may readily discern the source of all these works , and ascribe them all , as did the prophet to the Lord , saying most truthfully that " the Lord has wrought all our works ." Isaiah 26:12 .

But says one , why insist so much on doctrine , for a knowledge of doctrine in the abstract cannot save us ; but observe , we must have a knowledge of doctrine before we can feel and acknowledge its power on our hearts . And it is our duty to search the Scriptures , and learn all their doctrinal truths , and strive to obtain a correct understanding of them , hence the importance of giving a full and faithful exegesis of them , that the honest inquirer after divine truth may in that manner be aided in his pious remarks . All do not rightly divide the word of truth , all do

not have a spiritual perception of it - all do not love and cherish - all men have not faith .

I will now relate some of the great truths which the believer must experience ; he must have an experimental knowledge of them .

- 1 . That he was a lost sinner .
- 2 . That he was condemned by the Lord .
- 3 . That his condemnation was just .
- 4 . That he could not help himself .
- 5 . That he could not of himself believe when he greatly desired to do so .
- 6 . That faith is the gift of God .
- 7 . That he perseveres through the power of God .
- 8 . That grace and not justice reigned in his case .
- 9 . That the effectual calling or turning was of God .
- 10 . That it was not by works of righteousness which he had performed , but that it was of God according to His mercy .

This connects Christian experience with as strong doctrine as any in the Bible ; for says Paul , " Not by works of righteousness which we have done , but according to His mercy He saved us , by the washing of regeneration , and the renewing of the Holy Ghost ." Titus 3:5 .

This gracious work of the Spirit , the washing of regeneration and renewing was not on account of works of righteousness which we had wrought . Whence was it then ? from His mercy . Again , " 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 ." 2 Timothy 1:9 .

If not according to our works ,

how was it done ? According to His grace . When was this grace given ? Before the foundation of the world . How , or in what manner was it given ? It was given to us in Christ before the foundation of the world according to the election and foreknowledge of God . Ephesians 1:34 . Thus may Christian experience be strengthened in the great doctrine of grace . Whom He did predestinate them He also called . Thus the believer's Holy calling of God comes from His predestination , and this predestination partakes of the foreknowledge of God , and the election according to it , secures all the spiritual blessing of the Gospel to him .

When the Lord draws the believer to Himself , he may , in the light of that act get a view of the everlasting love of God . Jeremiah 31:3 .

How safely does this doctrine connect the soul , when experienced with the love of God . I would not have my experience wrested from the strong hold of doctrine for all the world .

What is the doctrine of Christian experience in regard to the will and running of the believer ? It is not of him that willeth , nor of him that runneth , but of God that sheweth mercy . The soul is said to be born not of the will of man , not of the will of the flesh , not of blood , but of God . John 1:13 . In the light of this spiritual birth we may clearly discern the true doctrine of free will and free agency . They come in for no share of the glory of the new birth . A will , which is the product of God's power is the only one which accords with it . Psalms 110:3 . This is certainly the day or time of God's power over the

soul , when a new will is begotten . In like manner , I might show how Christian experience is connected with other doctrinal texts , but I have , I think , fully established the proposition that the great doctrine of grace does not abate in the holy calling of God .

I will now pass on to the consideration of THE DOCTRINE OF PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY , wherein we may perceive that the same doctrine still maintains itself .

What is the doctrine of good works ? " Make the tree good and the fruit will be good ." How plain , and yet many stumble at it .

Inward Christianity must have its outward demonstrations . These are made in those outward works , which were ordained for the people of God to walk in , and for them only .

I repeat for them only , because it would be sinful for the unbeliever to be baptised . Matthew 3:8 . Sinful for him to partake of the Lord's supper ; sinful for him to join a church ; sinful to lead in religious exercises ; and it would be even sinful to pray without faith . " Whatsoever is not of faith is sin ." Romans 14:23 . " Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure ." Titus 1:15 . Hebrew 11:6 . Gospel duties were ordained for them who are created in Christ Jesus unto them , and without this creation in Christ Jesus , it is impossible to perform them in a manner acceptable to God . Ephesians 2:10 .

Another very necessary division of the word of truth is to distinguish between the many sayings and commandments of the Lord which have been addressed to believers from those , to unbelievers . We

should not try to make those of the former apply to the latter, for this has been a great source of error . Matthew 7:6 ; 15:26 . Philippians 3:2 . Peter says , “ Make your calling and election sure ;” but unto whom , not as some erroneously suppose to all persons , but to believers only , that they might enjoy the comfort of it , seeing that all things are therein given to them . He calls them brethren in the address . II Peter 1:10 . “ Hereby we know that we are of the truth , and shall assure our hearts before Him .” 1 John 3:19 . Believers are elected unto obedience , and if they do not maintain good works , the sign of election is wanting . Just as if the Thessalonians had not received the Gospel , the sign of their election would have been wanting in the judgement of Paul . But he saw evidences of it , and knew their election . Another text is often misapplied : “ Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling ,” says the preacher , without indicating the persons to whom it was addressed . Paul calls them “ Beloved ,” the beloved saints of the Lord , and further said for their support and comfort , “ For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure .” Philippians 2:12 & 13 . These with other kindred texts are often misapplied , and in that manner there is no little perversion of the word of truth .

The invitations and promises of the Gospel must also be contradistinguished , or we shall confound them as many do . For instance when the Saviour says “ Come unto me , and I will give you rest ,” unto whom does He speak ? unto those that

labor and are heavy laden , and not unto those who are not seeking rest of soul . The invitations of the Gospel are general , and should be preached in that manner , but the promises are special and are with the Lord . They apply to particular characters all the while . All are invited to take heed to the promises , but they pertain to those only who mourn , who hunger and thirst , are poor in spirit , and of a contrite heart . All are invited to buy wine and milk without money and without price ; the invitation is to all , but the promises is only to the thirsty . The general invitation is to look to Christ and be saved , but the promise is to those who have eyes to see , for many seeing do not perceive . These characters differ widely from each other on account of a work of grace having been begun on the hearts of those who mourn , hunger and thirst ; so that this difference is not of themselves , but of God . 1 Corinthians 4:7 . Hence , grace must have all the praises from the beginning to the end of our salvation . Hebrews 12:2 . The believer is the recipient only of these blessing ; things which he receives , but did not procure . He had nothing but what he received of the Lord . As a vessel of mercy he is filled , if I may so speak , with the good things of the Gospel . He is just as much the recipient of quickening , repentance and faith as he is of any other blessings .

But says the man of Arminian tendencies , does not the Lord command men to turn from their sinful course , repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ ? Assuredly He does . But who turns them ? Who grants them repentance ? Who gives

them faith? Are we not bound to answer each question alike? the Lord. He has secured to all his elect the means, by which they perform these duties. This was done in the gift of the Holy Spirit. He gives life, leads in the way of repentance, and gives faith, and bears witness to the truths of the Gospel. All these blessings were pronounced through Christ; but unto whom were they made sure? Let Paul answer: "therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed," which signifies God's own elect. Now, had the promise been made conditionally to all, to every one, to the whole world, how could the text have been written? Nor could there have been in that sense, any divine certainty in the promises of the gospel, but they would have been entirely dependent on Arminian contingencies? Had the promises been made sure alike to all, then all, every one would be saved. The Gospel addresses, in the commission, all men, and the whole world. But the doctrine of the difference between the general outward call, and the holy inward calling of God must be taken into consideration as has been already stated.

The word world in the holy scriptures must always be regarded according to the context; for it sometimes signifies all, and at other times only a part. The words world and gentiles are employed by Paul as convertibly terms, for he says: "If the fall of them — the Jews — be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the gentiles, how much more their full-

ness?" Romans 11:12. Says a good writer, "There are several places relating to our redemption by Christ when the word 'world' is to be understood of the elect, or believers only: as God sent His Son into the world, that through Him believers might be saved, but only believers are saved through Christ; believers are therefore that world which Christ was sent to save: "Christ gives life to the world," but Christ gives life only to believers and therefore believers only are that world, to which Christ gives life. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them;" but the world to whom God does not impute their trespasses are only believers, therefore only believers are meant by that world which God was in Christ reconciling to Himself." Again, "We are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." "The whole world signifies here, the worse and wicked part of the world;" and when it is said: "He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, why may not the words denote the better part of the world the elect?" "The word world signifies some of all men, and sometimes all men. Christ says: "I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given me out of the world; they are not of world, as I am not of the world." If there is a world which Christ does not pray for, and yet a member is given Him out of that world, cannot mean all men, both those that He did pray for, and those whom He did not pray for. Christ declared that He would give His flesh for the life of the world, and that He gives life to the world, seeing that He

does not give life to all men , the world to which He giveth life , does not mean all men . The words “ who-soever believeth on Him should not perish , but have everlasting life , ” explain and limit God ’s love and intention in the text . ”

The word all must also be often taken in a restricted sense : it is to be used five hundred times in a limited sense , hence we should be careful to determine its signification by the context : “ The elect may be said in one sense to mean all men . Where it is said , Christ tasted death for all men , the word men is not in the Greek text ; then it signifies the many sons to be brought to glory , of whose salvation Christ was the Captain . Hebrews 2 : 9 & 10 .

I will in the conclusion of the present subject quote a passage from Prosper , which is strongly in point , if we study his exposition as it deserves : “ The elect and fore-known , and from all generality severed , a certain special universality is supposed ; so as the whole world is freed out of the whole world , and all men seem to be redeemed from among all men . ”

It is well said by one , “ That we may preach practical duties so constantly as to beget a legal spirit in our heads . ” This I believe , especially if along with such preaching the doctrine of good works be omitted . If the truth , that God works in the heart both to will and to do , be taught with many other similar ones , there will be no danger of engendering a legal spirit . But these truths should not hinder us on the other hand from teaching and insisting on a full observance of the commandments

of the Lord . By such neglect we may beget a spirit of indifference to the duties enjoined in the word of God . How very careful ought we to be , to rightly divide the word of truth in this instance .

The man of a legal spirit says , why insist on the duties if they are not connected with our salvation ? I affirm that they are connected with our salvation , but not in any manner as the procuring cause of it , but as fruits of it — the things which accompany salvation .

Even if they be not all the procuring cause of salvation , there are many high considerations and worthy motives for performing them . Love to God manifests itself in the keeping of the commandments of the Lord , and what a blessed unction to the soul to feel that we have the evidence both inwardly and outwardly of loving Him .

To have the answer of a good conscience is a great consideration , and how shall we obtain and maintain it ? only by obedience , the obedience of faith , for no Christian can be happy and enjoy this blessing who neglects Christian duties .

The Christian who is careful to maintain good works , acts from a commendable motive , to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour , for if he loves the doctrine it must be the delight of his heart to adorn it ; does he feel that the Lord has called him to be a saint ? then what satisfaction it must be for him to feel that the calling of God , and his life are in agreement ; does he believe that election makes salvation sure ? then what a pleasing satisfaction it must be to have some assurance that he is

bearing the fruits of that election . What a high motive to strive to send up memorials to heaven. Acts 10:4 . Who does not want his light to shine ? Could there be a higher consideration or a purer motive that to wish to glorify God before others . Matthew 5:16 .

This is to be done by maintaining good works . The doing of good works denotes the presence of the Holy Spirit , and we cannot have communion with Him if we neglect good works .

All Christians must greatly desire the indwelling of the Son and the Father with them , and ought to be careful to maintain the signs of it . What are they ? love God and keep His commandments . John 14:23 .

Other motives and considerations might be adduced , but if these will not move the believer's heart to the way of duty , what will ? We have just cause to fear that grace is absent , when these considerations have no influence . They who receive an abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness , shall reign in life through the Lord Jesus Christ ; this is the doctrine of salvation , but when these are enjoyed as a gift , ought they not to infuse the soul with a sense of its many obligations to the Lord ?

Let us endeavor to discharge our duty faithfully unto the Lord in this short life . Let us constantly entertain the commandments , exhortations and warnings of the Lord . But says one , I have " another self " about me , which is opposed to all these duties . So had Paul , and yet he was an active working Christian . In this you have fellowship with him ,

a fellowship in the Gospel , as well as in yourself . Hear him : " For I know that in me ( that is in my flesh ) dwelleth no good thing ; for to will is present with me ; but how to perform that which is good I find not - when I would do good , evil is present with me ."

Omissions of duties , and commission of sins come in through the flesh , to such an alarming extent sometimes that the believer feels wretched under a painful sense of them , and asks , as did Paul , " Who shall deliver me from this body of this death ? " And it is well that faith can say : " I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord ." Romans 7:25 . The holy scriptures give a blessed assurance of this declaration . They say that Christ ever lives to make intercession for all such ; that when we were enemies He died for us , and if we were reconciled to God by His death , how much more , being reconciled , we shall be saved by His life ; that if any man sins he has an Advocate with the Father ; that He will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear ; that they are in His Father's hand , and no one can pluck them out ; that He gives eternal life to them , and they shall never perish ; that they are born of an incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever ; that God is for them ; that whom He justified , He also glorified ; that where He begins a good work , He finishes it ; that He keeps them by His power through faith unto salvation . Surely , after all this , if we meet with any texts which allude to the falling away of professors , they

must be applied to different characters from these; such certainly mean that some fall away, or went out because they did not belong inwardly to the household of God. Hence, how needful it is that we should rightly divide the word of God on this subject for the edification, relief, and comfort of many minds. If we apply what is written about the falling away of hypocrites and carnal professors to real Christians we may make them exceedingly unhappy, and thereby rob them of the support and comfort which God designed for them in the blessed assurance which I have just stated.

Let the believer then have the full benefit of the doctrine of never failing perseverance; without it, who of us could feel safe in the flesh? We must at last have the victory which is through Christ; if He be in our perseverance we are safe. We cannot tell who really are Christians, and who are not. But if carnal professors fall away we know that the foundation notwithstanding standeth sure, the Lord knoweth them that are His. Knows them how? As those who will not fall away.

“I will heal their backsliding,” what gracious words, though it be done under the rod, yet it will yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to all who may be exercised in that manner. The doctrine of the final perseverance of saints is not as some suppose, calculated to make us presumptuous, for without holy living we cannot enjoy the comfort of it, nor its blessed assurance. The true Christian is not as fond of sinning as the hypocrite or unre-

generate may suppose. The latter know how they would act, and suppose that the former would act in like manner. The believer knows that he commits sin enough to ruin him did God not continue to regard him according to His promises through the Lord Jesus Christ; and that his communion with Christ and his truth is always impaired by sinning; he wants to enjoy the benefit of the sustaining communion and consequently dreads sin as his worst enemy. He does not want to live in it, but wants to rise above it; and he knows from experience that he can only get the victory over it through Christ. Besides, he knows full well in heart, if God mark iniquity against him, he cannot stand, and rejoices to know that there is forgiveness with Him that He may be feared. The fear of the Lord has a restraining influence; His love also constrains; and His chastisements fall on those who sin, sometimes heavily and grievously. The believer who sins must smart under the rod; it is then a token of his sonship; and yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness; so that sinning is not an agreeable thing to the Christian. The hypocrite may sin, and feel that he prospers in it, but the real Christian always suffers loss.

Elder John M. Watson

Sent to us by  
Nancy and Roy Pullig

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PSALM 25 : 1

*Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.*

May 15, 1914

### A FEW THOUGHTS .

*“ And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him: and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.” 1 Sam. 22:2 .*

**A**s I cannot go in the discharge of what I felt was enjoined upon me, I will, by your permission, write a few thoughts on the above subject of the household of faith, hoping some one may be comforted and built up thereby. The captain that is mentioned above is David. He had been employed by Saul ( the king ) to make music before him, when he was possessed of an evil spirit from the Lord, that it might cheer him up. But Saul perceived that David was to be king instead of his son, therefore he sought to pin him to the wall with his javelin. This being the case, David had to flee for his life, though he had married the king's daughter, and had a right to a seat at the king's table.

And he fled to the cave Adullam, and there his brethren, father and mother, and those that were distressed, in debt and discontented, came to him. Now, it seems to me that David is a type of Jesus, in this case, and Saul a type of the government that Jesus was under when He lived here as a man. We notice that David had no certain abiding place, but went from one place to another, keeping out of the way of Saul. Saul could not take him. So Jesus, while here on earth, went from one city to another, and the Jews could not lay

hands on him till “ their hour.” Here are two kingdoms set forth — the kingdom of Saul, which answers to Jerusalem, and the kingdom of David, which answers to Jesus.

There are three classes that came to David that I want to consider, and they might be considered as one. The “ distressed,” those in “ debt,” and those that were “ discontented.” These are types of those that are under conviction, and they are made to go to Jesus who becomes the “ Captain of their salvation.” We notice in the days of Jesus, the blind, lame and halt, the sick, those that felt that they were possessed of devils ( great distress) — those that felt they were ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay ( discontent ) and those like the wild Gaderene, all came to Jesus for the cleansing power and He becomes their Captain. These men that came to David did not forsake him but went wherever he went and helped to fight the Philistines. They never did forsake, though Saul would seek him with three thousand chosen men. Look how many against a few. Just so in the days of Jesus. His followers were few, while a great number came out to arrest Him in the garden of Gethsemana. Another point I want to notice is that Saul was called king by his subjects, when he was anointed Captain over Israel by the command of the Lord. 1 Sam. 9:16 & 10:1 .

David was anointed king over Israel, yet his subjects made him Captain.

Saul was anointed out of a vial ( invention of men ) while David was

anointed out of a horn ( something beyond human agency .) The first is easy broken and we can see through it , while it is just the reverse of the latter . Now and then David would show Saul that he had the power to slay him if he chose , by cutting off his skirt , or by taking his spear , but he would not touch the Lord 's anointed . Jesus would show his power to the world now and then , by driving the money changers out of the Temple and by healing the high priest 's servant 's ear , etc . but He never dethroned the king .

One more thought on the vial and horn . They answer to the two covenants . The vial , to the law of Moses , which must be or was broken , and the horn , which is grace ; and it never will be broken . It will stand till time is no more . Then to come home to our experience , the heart of stone must be taken away , and a heart of flesh given . One that has life has feeling . There is no mercy in the first — in Saul — but in David , there is . There is a few more points I want to consider . Saul and David were kings , so to speak , at the same time . I want to bring this to our own experience , for that does not reach my experience , does me no good . Saul represents the flesh , which is first , and David the spirit , which is last . David does not come to the throne and rule as a king till Saul dies . Then the people flow to him from different sections . The spiritual man — the new man — sets up his kingdom in us after the old flesh becomes dead to the love of sin — comes to the end of the law . Then there is sweet peace . David had just a few subjects , while Saul lived , just so in the days of Jesus

when on earth , but in His death , He broke down the middle wall of partition , and the Gentiles are brought in and there are people from every nation , kindred and tongue under heaven , that flow to this King , who is their great Captain .

While my mind has been carried away on these types and shadows , I have failed to say much about those that were in debt , distress and discontented that a sin - sick soul ? Who is in more distress than one who feels he has sinned away his days of grace , and hell must be his portion ? Who can feel any worse than one who owes ten thousand talents and not a farthing to pay ? These are such characters that fought under David 's banner . And these are the characters that are fighting under the banner of our spiritual David today . That distressed condition has been removed , the debt forgiven , and discontentment taken away by Jesus stepping into our shoes — dying the just for the unjust . When I was in this distressed condition , I wrote to one of my brothers , telling him that I felt like I did not have a friend on earth nor in heaven . He said it was the " bluest " letter he had ever received . That was the way I felt about it . I felt justly condemned before God . I was so " discontented , " I could not study my lessons . I would leave the school room and go to some secluded place , and there ask God to be " merciful to me a sinner . " I wanted Jesus to be my Captain — to rule over me — to fight my battles for me — let Him take my case . And sometimes I feel like He has heard my cry , and that my sins are pardoned . I don 't feel that dis -

tress of mind — that discontentment — that indebtedness that I used to feel, yet today, “ I fear I will fall by the hand of Saul .”

May the God of heaven guide and keep me in the right way , and that I may never offend one of God ’s little ones , is my prayer for Christ ’s sake .

Brother Gold , I have not written as I thought when I commenced . It seems scattering to me , and I do not know whether to send it or not . Do with it as you please . I would love to see you and talk to you on the scriptures .

May the Lord bless you many years to come .

Your Brother in hope ,  
T . A . Stanfield  
Melder , N . C .

Sent in by Mrs . H . Curtis Hanks  
4180 Westover Dr .  
Danville , Va . 24541

### WHERE ARE WE GOING ?

**T**his heading was written some months ago , and laid aside , but the thought has continued to linger with me . Yes , where are we going ? — as a nation , as the church ( the pillar of truth ) , as individuals . I believe that I am established in this one thing , that all things , large and small , all matter — animate and inanimate , are surely and unchangeably pursuing their course and will arrive on time to its respective destiny . I believe this whole - heartedly ; but still I am disturbed as I see things coming that are of the

spirit of Antichrist , to take our religious freedom from us , to join closer and closer , church ( so - called ) and state . The hand of this monster is in high places , and is covered in deceit , weaving a cloak of respectability , and is loud in all its words that it is for your good . But look at our schools , our seats of government — can you refrain from thinking , Where are we going ?

It is needless for us to hide our heads in the sand as the ostrich , and think this will pass by . It appears to me that the wrath of God is still being poured out on us ; and as for me I would lift up one feeble voice against these things . There is no use of trying to single out one of them ; take your choice between Catholicism or Protestantism , greed and power in high places , and your choice is just another stripe of the same kind . Yes what will be the heritage of our children and their children ? Seeing and feeling these things , should it not draw us closer and closer together as a people ; — Where are we going ?

Do you see and hear of anything among us that should not be ? I do . Yes , and this what causes unrest in my very being . What can we expect to reap from jealousy ? I am talking to preachers now ; I am not thinking of you personally ; — I love all of you for the truth ’s sake , but am I mistaken ? is there no jealousy among us ? Oh for this : “ take heed to thyself .” Where are we going ? Brethren , I would to God that all of this backbiting cease , are we leaving the old way ? is it not better to talk to one another of your differences , than to talk about them to others ? Brethren , I am not trying to reform you ; — I am

disturbed, and want to know, Where are we going ?

Perhaps some may say, " I cannot stop all of this." One has said the best way to stop a quarrel is to stop your mouth. Understand, my brethren, I love you, and esteem you; you are the called of God ; but I would have you look at what rests in your hands . You can not bite and bicker with one another and not affect the church . Yes , Where are we going ? Today the flock of God are following preachers , even calling the church So-in-so 's church , and the deacons coming under the hand of elders , and many have entered into this office who are unmindful of their duty , seeking worldly gain , not attending their conference meetings and then others have become dictators to the church, — do these things exist among us ?

What can we expect of the lay members ? They have eyes and ears ; they suffer in all this . Some of them are not without blame ; I say this with shame ; some have not attended their church in years, some can tell you all about current events, all of the prices on farm products, all about the strife between labor and capital, all about politics ; but don't know what is going on in their own church , but are sure to be there if there is a quarrel, to settle it. What is the matter ; where are we going ?

But after all has been said and done , do not think for one moment that you are not my people ; I am not ashamed to be with you . My stay with you has been long ; you have been so kind to me ; I want to stay with you ; so don 't become my enemy because I tell you the truth .

For the thought in my mind and the intent of my heart is for each of us to examine self ; — are we in the faith ? If we find any guilt in self after this examination ( which is of grace ), then I am sure that the very breathings of our very soul will be , Lord , help me ; and then will surely come a satisfaction ; yes , peace of mind , and everyone that receives it knows that it is all of grace .

Brethren, this is written poorly, I know , but with your good in my mind , for we are surely drifting away from the good old way , not in doctrine so much , nor in order altogether ; but we have lost something , in preaching, singing, praying, there is so much formality , or it could be called style , that the services have lost something. But I still believe that our faith is living and vital , and does move the creature yet . But you have gathered from this scribble what my thought and question is , Where are we going ? I know , or all of you know , that heaven is the destination of every one of His children , but does the church look to you the same today as yesterday ?

In conclusion , do not undertake to put your brother or sister in the way , examine yourself . I fail from fault ; have charity to cover me , and pray for Zion in this day of hardness and turmoil .

J. P. Helms  
June 7 , 1946

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PSALM 119 : 105 .

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path .*

## THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

New Vernon, N.Y., Nov. 1, 1846

**B**ROTHER BEEBE: There are three or four designing men in Middle Tennessee, who have created considerable excitement on the subject of a non-resurrection. They have charged the Richland Association with denying the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

I have been a member of this association for the last eighteen years, and I know that it believes the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and of a general judgment. It denies the resurrection of flesh and blood, and contends for the resurrection of Jesus Christ and all his saints, spiritual, in his likeness, as John says. John iii. 2. I send you a copy of faith in all the leading principles of the gospel, as they present an abstract of our principles."

George R. Hoge

It has been and still is our desire, so far as possible, to avoid unprofitable agitation of subjects which in our judgment have a stronger tendency to excite discussion than to edify, comfort and instruct the people of God. And although we consider the resurrection of the dead inferior in importance to no part of the gospel of God our Savior, we have feared that the manner in which some brethren have seemed disposed to discuss it, is calculated to gender strife and discord, rather than to result in the peace of Zion and the glory of God.

The letter of Elder Hoge which will be found above, states that the Richland Association of Tennessee

has been misrepresented on the subject, and asks the privilege of explaining the real sentiments of that association. He has also sent us a copy of the minutes of the association, containing an "abstract" of their doctrinal sentiments, in which they say, item 10: "We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and general judgment." This expression undefined, we presume would be satisfactory; but as brother Hoge adds, "She denies the resurrection of flesh and blood," we conclude that the most of our readers will consider such denial as equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether, and a justification of those who have so charged that association. We will not attempt to define what is intended by their profession of faith in the resurrection, nor their repudiation of its application to flesh and blood; or what our brethren of Richland believe will be raised up at the last day; whether soul, body or spirit. If they only intend to say that all the relationship between the saints and Adam, or human nature, ceases with the death of these mortal bodies, and that the resurrection shall bring them forth as a production of the quickening Spirit of God, in the same manner that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, we see no cause for controversy; for such we presume to be the general view held by Old School Baptists on the subject. But if such be their intention, we think they have not been sufficiently clear in defining their position.

By the reference made to 1 John iii. 2. we are inclined to believe our brethren hold with us that the resur-

rection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ is an exemplification of the manner and nature of the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints . In his resurrection he became the first fruits of them that slept , consequently the certain pledge that all his people shall in like manner be raised up in that hour in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God , and come forth ; they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal , and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation .

Many idle and vain speculations have been resorted to by multitudes at sundry times , in attempting a philosophical solution of the resurrection of the dead , but all philosophy must forever fail when applied to the things of the Spirit of God ; as we Old School Baptists hold the things of the Spirit to be known only by revelation , not by science ; rules therefore which will apply to natural things cannot apply to spiritual things . To us it seems quite inexpedient to say that flesh and blood will not arise , as many would be led from that expression to suppose that the identity or the bodies of the saints in the resurrection was denied ; which must be equivalent to a denial of the resurrection altogether . For if the bodies of the saints are raised from the dead at all , there must necessarily be a preservation of identity ; and if the bodies of the saints are not to be raised up , what is to be raised ? Not the soul , or spiritual man , for that cannot die , cannot be committed to the grave ; and in the resurrection , all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God , and

shall come forth to the resurrection of life eternal , or of damnation . There can be no two ways of understanding Romans vii . 11 . But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you , he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you . The term mortal cannot apply to our spiritual life , as that is in no sense mortal , nor can it apply to any other part of us than that which came under the sentence , “ Dust thou art , and unto dust shalt thou return . ”

Some have said that flesh and blood shall not arise , but flesh and bones shall arise ; and this view they have attempted to sustain , first , because it is written that “ flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption . ” 1 Corinthians xv . 50 ; and second , because that Jesus had shed all his blood when he was crucified , and it is supposed that his risen body contained no blood . These two , we presume , are the strongest arguments used by the advocates of the theory . But let us examine them . Does Paul say that flesh and blood shall not be raised up ? or that they shall not after the resurrection inherit the kingdom of God ? By no means . Let it be remembered Paul speaks in the present tense , cannot ; and for the same reason that corruption cannot inherit corruption . The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom , and our flesh and blood in their present state and relation to Adam , and to the law , are corrupt , depraved , diseased , mortal and natural . But in the text our brother has referred to ( 1 John iii , 2 . )

we are assured that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like him. &; and Paul in the text quoted, ( Rom. vii. 11, ) has told us how : “ He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies .” If then we can know how Christ’s body in which he suffered death , was raised up , we shall also know our mortal bodies shall arise . And of his resurrection we can trace a few very important particulars . And first , we observe , though he was put to death in the flesh , he was quickened in the spirit . When put to death in the , flesh , we understand that his relation to the law , which he assumed by being made of a woman , was finished . He died as the Son of man ; as the Son of David ; as the issue of Judah ; being put to death in the flesh ; but he was quickened by the Spirit , or begotten from the dead , so that in his resurrection his body arose from the dead as the immediate production of the Spirit , and was thus declared to be the Son of God with power . “ Thou art my Son ; this day have I begotten thee .” is applied to the resurrection of his body from the dead , and not to his birth of the Virgin Mary . So to be like him , the same quickening Spirit that now dwells in the saints , by which they were regenerated , and which raised from the dead the crucified body of Jesus , shall also , that is , in like manner , quicken our mortal bodies . In which quickening the saints shall arise , so far as relates to the bodies , in a new relationship . As in the resurrection of Christ his risen body stood no longer related to the fleshly stock of Abraham , Judah or David , so in the resurrection , the

saints shall be released from all relationship to those who are now their kindred after the flesh ; not to be known in the resurrection as Gentiles or Jews , as male or female , as married or as given in marriage , as parents or as children , but simply as the sons of God . The notion of some that parents are waiting now in heaven to embrace their children , husbands ; wives , &c. , is altogether unwarranted by the faith and testimony of the gospel . The immediate relationship which we stand in to each other here belongs only to our time state ; but all that relationship must be dissolved . We shall be begotten from the dead immediately by the Spirit , as independently of our present carnal relationship as though we had never sustained such relation to Adam . In the resurrection of Christ the identity of the body was preserved . “ I am he that was dead , and am alive ” , &c. That Jesus whom John saw in his risen and glorified body was the same that had been dead . The identity must have been preserved to fulfill the scriptures . His flesh should not see corruption ; and what he had given as a sign of his Messiahship . Destroy this temple , and in three days I will raise it up ; the sign also of the prophet Jonah must have failed if the same body which suffered on the cross had not arisen from the dead . His Godhead did not die , nor could his soul cease to exist . His Mediatorial Headship of his church could not expire . But it was that wherein he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death , &c. , and that which died arose from the dead . So when the saints are called hence their spiritual

life which they received in regeneration does not die ; their quickened souls do not die ; but their bodies , even their mortal bodies , die ; and those same bodies shall arise in like manner as the identical body of our Lord Jesus Christ which had been crucified did arise , bearing the prints of the nails and the place of the spear . A further definition of the identity to us seems superfluous. To talk of the particles of the flesh , the composition of the bones , to philosophize upon the subject , is as extravagant as to attempt to harmonize natural philosophy with any other part of divine revelation . We admit that all the blood was drained from the veins of the body of Jesus ; but that is no evidence that his risen body contained no blood ; for the fact is quite as apparent that all the life of Jesus was taken from his body , and who will argue that his risen body contained no life . Such vain speculations serve only to gender strife and contention , and to divert the mind from a spiritual to a carnal train of thinking .

While thus we contend that the identity of the bodies of the saints shall be preserved , even as we have proved that the identity of Christ 's body was preserved , we also hold , and firmly believe , that the change which the apostle speaks of in ( 1 Cor. xv . ) shall also be gloriously realized by all the saints . The body in its present state is mortal ; or subject to disease and death , but it shall be perfectly freed in the resurrection from mortality ; this will be a glorious change , but this is not all ; the body in its time state is weak , it is sown in weakness , but it shall be

raised in power . Now it is corrupt , but it shall be raised in an incorruptible state , and death shall be swallowed up in victory . It is now in a state of dishonor , but it shall be robed in immortal honor ; it is now a natural , earthy , Adamic body ; but in the resurrection it shall be a spiritual , heavenly body , standing in the same relation to Christ as it now stands to the old Adam . That law which remands our bodies to the dust has dominion over our mortal bodies so long as they remain this side of the resurrection of the dead , but when they shall be raised up from their graves they shall be free from the power and dominion of that law . For the sting of death is sin , and the strength of sin is the law ; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ .

Elder Beebe

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### PSALM 128

*Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord ; that walketh in his ways .*

*For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands : happy shalt thou be , and it shall be well with thee .*

*Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house : thy children like olive plants round about thy table .*

*Behold , that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord .*

*The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion : and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life .*

*Yea , thou shalt see thy children 's children , and peace upon Israel .*

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July, 1943

### SALUTATORY

Dear Signs Readers :

**O**ur Editor, Elder Dodson, has asked me to come in as an Associate Editor. With hesitancy I am complying with his request, knowing at the same time that my writing like all other work as a servant of God must have the seal of approval of the Holy Spirit. I fully realize by experience that I am not able to take that approval by schedule but that it is a gift, as all other things of the Spirit, to be applied by and at the proper time alone through the Spirit. I feel a desire to ask each of you to watch my writings, and you that have contact with me my conduct. I hope that you do not set too high an estimation on me for I know I am not qualified to write and preach and conduct myself as a minister but by God's grace. If you love the cause of the Old School Baptists you will watch over me as a very small child and see that I am not a reproach to them. Do not expect me to be a "yes" writer and write only things that some one else has already affirmed. We cannot be agreed about everything. All the "ifs", and "ands" and "buts" that are hurled at the church, or individual, or editor, or preacher, or paper does not change nor alter the fact that no two of us are agreed upon all that the Bible teaches. If at any time in my misguided zeal I undertake to conform you to myself in practice or doctrine I think it is your duty to reprimand me or any other servant of

the church. I do not want to reform the church. Above all things brethren, sisters and dear children of God do not ever allow me to become a standard while I am officially connected with the paper. I want to reprove, rebuke and exhort, and I want to (not be the standard), but to set up the standard. I want us to study the Scriptures and let them (but not some man's interpretation of them) be our last resort for anything we practice or believe. I do not think in this, my salutatory, that it is necessary for me to rehearse my doctrinal beliefs. As far as I am able to understand I am in accord with the prospectus of the Signs of the Times. On some of those points I have written volumes and do not care to retract anything that has gone forth except to say that some of it has been for strife instead of edification, and I regret that. In regard to that prospectus allow me to say, especially in regard to predestination, salvation in Christ and the future resurrection of the dead, that I believe them and until I am convinced otherwise I expect to continue advocating them in writing and from the pulpit as I may be blessed with power to do so. At the same time I want to say that in no sense of the word do I mean to say that all who are nominally in line with that prospectus are faithful servants of God. On the other hand many have lived and died among us who were faithful that did not conform to it. I am led to believe that it is the purpose of the Signs to edify and comfort God's dear scattered children. As long as it continues in that way I think it is worthy of our support. May God give

each of us , editor , associates , contributors , supporters and critics grace that we may make an examination of ourselves . An inquiry into our own bosom will often reveal that we have eye trouble .

In love and fellowship ,  
W . D . Griffin

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### OBITUARIES

#### SISTER THELMA HAMLETT WILLOUGHBY HARRIS

**S**ister Thelma Hamlett Wil - loughby Harris , widow of William Willoughby and Ray Harris , died at her home in Richmond , Va . on Sunday , September , 10 , 1989 .

She was preceded in death by her parents , Harry H . Hamlett and Mabel Taylor Hamlett , both of Charlotte County .

She is survived by two brothers , Allen Hamlett and Edward Hamlett , of Appomattox County , and one sister , Belle H . Roberts , of Richmond .

She was born on August 30 , 1926 , and joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church in Gretna in 1943 .

Sister Harris was laid to rest beside her first husband , William Willoughby at the Hamlett Family Cemetery near Phenix , Va . on September 12 , 1989 with the assistant pastor from Springfield Primitive Baptist Church , Elder Denver Simpson , and the pastor of Pamplin Presbyterian Church , Richard Hawkes , officiating at the service .

Written by request by Sister Ruby Adkins . Elder O . K . Tench , Mod . Oscar D . Pickral , Clerk

# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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## POEM

*There is a land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign,  
Infinite day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain.*

*There everlasting spring abides,  
And never - withering flowers:  
Death, like a narrow sea, divides  
This heavenly land from ours.*

*Sweet fields, beyond the swelling  
flood,  
Stand dressed in living green;  
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,  
While Jordan rolled between.*

*But timorous mortals start and shrink  
To cross this narrow sea,  
And linger, shivering, on the brink,  
And fear to launch away.*

*O! could we make our doubts remove,  
Those gloomy doubts that rise,  
And see the Canaan that we love,  
With unobscured eyes:*

*Could we but climb where Moses  
stood,  
And view the landscape o'er;  
Not Jordan's stream nor death's cold  
flood  
Should fright us from the shore.*

Watts.

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 EDITORIAL
 

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*" I will plant in the wilderness the cedar , the shittah tree , and the myrtle , and the oil tree ; I will set in the desert the fir tree , and the pine , and the box tree together . " Isaiah 41:19 .*

*" The Glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee , the fir tree , the pine tree , and the box tree together , to beautify the place of my sanctuary ; and I will make the place of my feet glorious . " Isaiah 60:13 .*



Elder C. B. Davis, Jr.

I have been asked by some of His children to write something about the trees of the Bible . I now attempt to comply though with fear and a feeling of weakness . I trust that all who read will excuse the mistakes and the evidence of my weakness .

The trees of the Bible are named for a reason and names have a special meaning or rather the types of trees do . The trees begin in the garden of Eden — Gen . 1:29 and especially are the Tree of Life and also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil . The fig tree also is there for Adam and Eve made for themselves coverings of fig leaves , Gen. 2:17 . The tree of Life of course is symbolic , indeed is Christ and the fig tree is symbolic of the law for man tries to hide behind the law when confronted with his evil deeds . The scribes and Pharisees always boasted to Jesus that they knew and kept the law ( were protected by ) .

We remember that Phillip when called by Nathanael and went to see Jesus asked Jesus when He knew him , John 1:49 and Jesus answered and said He saw him under the fig tree as thus He sees us under the law and the consequences thereof . Christ also condemned the fig tree that bore no fruit , Mark 11:13 , 14 and 20 and 21 and it withered and died even unto the roots . He thus brought an end to the law in fulfilling it to a jot and tittle for it bore no fruit of comfort for His people .

We see in the building of Solomon's temple many trees coming together to beautify His sanctuary . We know there is order in all things and thus it is in the construction of the temple . The foundation was of stone , denoting Christ for He is the corner stone of all our hopes , yea even our salvation . The foundation must support and withstand all that comes its way , so Christ has and does today withstand all the cunning devices of man and stands secure no

matter how great the trials .

We find the floors of the temple were of the fir tree . The wood of the fir is white thus those who entered were reminded of the whiteness ( purity ) of the Word . The walls were of Cedar and the color of cedar ( red ) reminded Israel that it took the shedding of blood for the cleansing of sins . Pine was used in the ceilings and the resin that ran out reminded Israel of the pitch ( Grace ) used in the Ark of Noah and also the Ark of Moses .

The oil tree denotes the olive tree and it was noted for its durability . The doors of the entrance were of olive wood thus we see Christ as the eternal door for none can enter the Kingdom except by Him . The box tree was used in the making of furniture used in the tabernacles and temples under the old dispensation . The tree did not grow tall and majestic as did the cedars and others but made beautiful furniture and utensils .

The myrtle tree grew in most of the area around the location of the temple of Solomon . The blooms were of very sweet odor and the sap thereof was used in the same way as incense . We see in it the sweet savor that rose toward Heaven during the worship service and the sacrifices on the altars .

The book of 1 Kings 6 chapter gives the measurements of the temple and these numbers are typical of the travels of the Lords people . There is the measure of five cubits denoting the five books of law for we must go beyond the law to worship in Spirit and truth . The number twenty reminds us of the price paid for

Joseph , the number thirty for the prices of silver paid Judas and the number forty for the wanderings of Israel and also the tempting of Christ by Satan . The number ten of course denoted the ten laws and the number six the years that Israel was judged . The seven years that the construction of the temple required reminds us of the seven angels and the seven churches .

We have touched upon the trees and types in the temple and see the fullness of all of God's promises . Yet there is still something that has not come forth — the shittah tree . This tree is of the acacia family and grew thorns so strong and durable that they were used as nails in some construction . The wood when cut and polished made the most beautiful furniture known at the time . I wondered about it being absent in the temple for all the others that were mentioned have found their place .

Now when the temple was finished Solomon called the elders together and directed them to bring the Ark of the Covenant and place it in the temple . This ark was made of the shittah tree thus we hold the truth all now has come together . We must agree that all things pertaining to salvation , to worship and to eternal life hath come together in Christ . He is the true Ark , His is the temple of sacrifices and His is the sanctuary of Salvation . May His name be praised forever and may we be blessed to enter into His glory when time is no more .

Humbly submitted for your consideration . Elder C . B . Davis

## CORRESPONDENCE

716 Hill Ave .  
Salem , Va . 24153  
Dec . 27, 1989

Dear Editor  
& The Precious Household of Faith ,

**T**he January issue of The Signs of the Times is superb reading . “ Where Are We Going ” by J.P. Helms is just as true today as it was when he wrote it . World events are unfolding by the will of God .

Yes , a few of us see the unfolding of events of political and economic trends in our times , such as revolutions all over the world . Yet , in spite of all this we hold truth as the basis of our faith and trust in God and His Word .

Elder Beebe on “ The Resurrection of the Dead ” Nov. 1846 was one of the most instructive on all aspects of the Resurrection of the Dead .

This letter was dictated because I've been confined to bed for over 30 days .

The Signs of the Times is a periodical containing both doctrine and practical food for digestion to hungry souls thirsting for knowledge . May the Lord bless His people and keep them in the bonds of His love everywhere in the world .

Horace E . Walker

VOICES OF THE PAST  
“ he being dead yet speaketh ”

JOHN X . 2 , 3 .

( *New Vernon , N.Y. , July 1 , 1843 .* )

**A**greeably to the request of brother Robbins , on another page , we will offer some remarks upon that part of our Lord 's parable embraced in the passage proposed for consideration , viz : “ But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep ; to him the porter openeth , and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out . ” In perfect harmony with predictions going before , Jesus “ Opened his mouth in parables , and uttered dark sayings : ” and while unto his disciples it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom , unto them that are without , all these things were uttered in parables , for without a parable he spake not — to them . This course was well adapted to the execution of the design of God whose pleasure it is to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes . The wisdom and prudence of men would rather dictate the opposite course , and instead of purposely concealing the things of the Spirit from the understanding of the great and learned , the wise and the noble , it would seek by moral suasion , lucid argument , conclusive demonstration , &c . , to persuade men of influence and talent to embrace the gospel . Had our blessed Redeemer intended to court the favor or

applause of those who move in the higher circles of human society, he might have used human policy, and adapted his discourse to their taste and capacity, as the worldly taught preachers of our age do; but then their faith would stand in the wisdom of this world, and not in the power of God. 1 Cor. ii. 5.

God's peculiar people are in various parts of the scriptures called sheep, and this figurative appellation is given them as the children of God, in distinction from the rest of mankind, who are designated goats. "All we like sheep have gone astray," says the prophet, Isa. l. iii. 6, "and the Lord has laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." Of these strayed sheep the same prophet has said, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom." Isa. xi. 2. And the inspired psalmist says, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." — Psalm xxiii. 1. And in connection with the parable under consideration, Christ announces himself the good Shepherd, that layeth down his life for the sheep. Hence we have the testimony of Christ himself that the redeemed, or those for whom he died, are his sheep; that they were not only sheep, but they were his sheep, before they went astray, and that they were the objects for whom alone he laid down his life. Much might be said on the appropriateness of the figure, but to trace its analogy would swell our article to too great an extent. In the course of this chapter Christ speaks of two distinct sheep-folds: the one is that into

which he as the Shepherd of Israel has entered by the door for the purpose of bringing out his own sheep: and the other, that into which he will fold all his redeemed when there shall be but one fold and one shepherd. The carnal tribes of the family of Abraham, under their legal covenant, where a fold in which many of the sheep which he came to redeem were held in bondage. "For this Agar is Mt. Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Gal. iv. 25, 26. The son differeth nothing from the servant until the time appointed of the Father. And this was evidently the case with those "lost sheep of the house of Israel," which Christ the Shepherd came to seek and to save. He for this purpose entered into the fold where they were confined, by the door, for the purpose of effecting their emancipation; and as the anti-type of Cyrus, of whom it was written, "Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof; that saith to the

deep, Be dry, and I will dry up all thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut: I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron," &c. Isa. xlv. 24, 28, and xlv. 1, 2.

As in the execution of the word of the Lord, Cyrus acted as the Lord's chosen shepherd in delivering his captive people from their bondage, and in leading them out of Babylon, and in the re-establishment of Jerusalem, and in the building of the second temple, which was more glorious than the first, he was evidently so far a type of Christ: even so God has proclaimed his Son as his Shepherd, and the man that is his fellow. Zech. xiii. 7. As God went before Cyrus to break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron, and to open before him the two-leaved gates which were closed upon captive Israel, so the right hand of Christ in the deliverance of his people from the wrath and condemnation of the law, was upheld by the omnipotence of his eternal power and Godhead. Cyrus entered Babylon by the gates, and the palace of Belshazzar by the door; for God had said unto the deep, Be dry, and the proud waters

had retreated from their accustomed channel, and the army of Cyrus entered the city under the walls, and the guard or porter opened the gates of the city to him; and according to the word of the Lord these gates could not be again closed against God's redeemed people. "But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep." Christ in entering the fold, or place of his children's captivity, may be considered as having entered by the door, in reference to the prophecies going before. He came as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of God. "A body," said he, "hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins thou hast had no pleasure." "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second." Heb. x. 5, 6. Secondly, he came in by the door to the place where his sheep were folded, when he was made of a woman, made under the law; for it was a carnal or fleshly covenant that his sheep of that fold were under; "The children being 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 him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved 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." Heb. ii. 14 - 17. The captivity and bondage of God's people was in the relation in which they stood to Adam. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation," &c. Rom. v. 18. And the Jewish covenant embraced a carnal or fleshly people related to Abraham by being born in his house or bought with his money, and their covenant contained also carnal ordinance and a worldly sanctuary. Heb. ix. 1. To effect their deliverance from that bondage, to emancipate them from that fold and from that government, he must need be made flesh and dwell among them, he must be made like them in all points and yet be without sin; and although like them in point of humanity, yet holy, harmless and separate from sinners

*"For he who could for sin atone  
Must have no blemish of his own."*

Although he had no sin, he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him.

He entered by the door, agreeable to his explanation of the door of his sheep-fold. "I am the door." he says, and by himself he has fulfilled the law, cancelled its demands, borne its penalty, suffered the vials of almighty wrath, poured out his soul unto death, descended into the grave, encountered the king of terrors on his own dominions, despoiled him of his sting, and the grave of victory. "Not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal

redemption for us." Heb. ix. 12. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, so that by himself he was able to enter. This was a new way, a living way of entrance, and the Shepherd who entered by the door is himself the way, and no man can come unto God but by him.

To him the porter openeth. If, by the law, his captive sheep were held in the prison-house of death, Divine Justice was the porter who kept the door. No bribe could tempt him, no pity move him; he was inexorable. But to Jesus even this inflexible porter opened, and without expense, for Jesus met his full demands, and Justice asked no more. The brazen gates of death were unsealed; the massy bars of death were cut in sunder.

To him the porter has not only opened the door of death, and the grave, but he has opened to him the portals of immortal glory. Not only have the gates of death been opened to receive him as the ransom of his people, but they have been opened to deliver him up, for it was impossible that he should be holden of death. Having done and suffered all that law could demand, or justice could inflict, he has now entered into the inner court of the temple by his own blood. He has commanded, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in! Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle." Psalm xxiv. 8, 9.

But again: In the testimony of the Son of God, (1 John v. 6) we are informed that Christ came by water

and blood ; not by water only , but by water and blood ; and it is the Spirit that beareth witness , because the Spirit is truth .

We have shown in the foregoing remarks , that Jesus by his own blood has entered in once into the holy place , having obtained eternal redemption for us , and by reference to Matt . iii . and last clause of the fifteenth verse , where the porter opened the door to Christ in regard to this witness . When Jesus came into the sheep - fold , or palace , the Spirit in bodily shape like a dove , designated him as the Son of God . And lo , a voice from heaven was heard , saying , “ This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased . ” This Baptist porter opened the watery door to the Shepherd of the sheep , because “ Thus it became them to fulfill all righteousness . ”

And the sheep hear his voice . As he had promised by the mouth of the prophet , “ I will cause my glorious voice to be heard , and will shew the letting down of my arm , ” &c . He has verified the promise not only in causing his voice to be uttered , but he causeth it to be heard , by giving ears to the deaf , and life to the dead . “ The hour is coming and now is , when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live . ” John v . 22 . Although dead in trespasses and sins , he gives unto them eternal life and they shall never perish , neither shall any pluck them out of his hand . But by the sheep hearing his voice we are to understand something more than to hear what he says ; they give the same evidence that they hear his voice , that sheep do when they are

called by their shepherd , they follow him . The voice of Jesus as the Shepherd and Bishop of souls is sounded in the gospel , and all the sheep recognize the gospel as the well - known voice of Jesus ; but others believe not , because they are not his sheep , as he said unto them .

And he calleth his own sheep by name . He has their names all written in his book of life from the foundation of the world , and the foundation of God standeth sure , having this seal , The Lord knoweth them that are his . He is therefore at no loss in calling them . He knew among the Jews who were the lost sheep of the house of Israel , and he knows equally well all his sheep among the Gentiles , which were not of the Jewish fold . He is not liable to the mistakes which the arminians charge on him , of calling some that are not his own and endeavoring to make them his own ; and of frequently failing in the enterprise . He says , “ I know my sheep and am known of mine ; ” and he also knows who are not of his sheep : “ For Whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate to be conformed to his image , that he might be the First - Born among many brethren . Moreover , whom he did predestinate them he also called , ” ( he calleth them by name , and he makes them hear and understand and obey him ) ” and whom he called them he also justified ; and whom he justified them he also glorified . ” He calls them with an holy calling , not according to their works , but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began .

2 Tim. i. 9. If he should call them ineffectually, that would not be a holy calling; for a calling that is holy cannot be defective — must secure the design of him who calls. His calls are not general, as arminians assert, but special and particular, addressed to his own sheep, and these he calls by name, that there may be nothing indefinite in the vocation.

And leadeth them out. Christ was not only anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, but also to bring his prisoners out of their prison houses. The porter having opened the door to him as the Shepherd and Leader of his people, he leadeth them out. In order to lead them out it was necessary that he should go into the prison house where they were: this he did when he was made under the law, and when he descended into the chambers of death. But his was an errand of mercy, and by death he destroyed him that had the power of death, which is the devil; and wrought deliverance for them who were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He leads in the fulfillment of all righteousness, in a perfect obedience to all the requisitions of the law of God. None had ever preceded him in this work. But going before he leads his people after him, in bringing them up to the utmost demands of the law, for he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He leads them out from the guilt and consequence of sin: being made sin for them, and

having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, he has brought life and immortality to light, and leads them out of their state of sin and death, into life and immortality. This is fully demonstrated in his triumphant resurrection from the dead. He became the First Fruits of them that slept, and now holds in his hands the keys of hell and death. He giveth unto his sheep eternal life, and the assurance that they shall never perish. He leads them out from condemnation and into a state of justification taking the lead in this also, for bearing the sins of his people he was numbered with the transgressors, and condemned by the law; but having satisfied that law, he that was manifested in the flesh, and put to death in the flesh, was quickened and justified in the Spirit, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.

We have observed that Christ in coming into the Jewish fold, where he was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, was made flesh, made under the law, of the stock of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the lineage of David; was circumcised, and became a debtor to do the whole law, and in this body which was made of a woman he was put to death. The law could pursue him no farther. When, therefore, he arose from the dead, instead of returning to that same relation to the legal covenant, to the carnal family of Abraham, tribe of Judah, &c., he was in his resurrection manifested as the Son of God with power. And although he had been known, in these respects, after the flesh, yet

we shall know him no more after the flesh .

*“ No more the cruel spear ,  
The cross and nails no more ;  
For death itself shakes at his name ,  
And all the heavens adore .”*

As the Forerunner of his people he has passed into the most holy place : “ For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands , which are the figures of the true , but into heaven itself , now to appear in the presence of God for us .” Heb . ix . 24 . In all this transition from death to life , from legal bondage to liberty , Christ is the Leader of his people and must be followed by them . Having removed the old tabernacle which was made with hands , and set up the true tabernacle which God has pitched and not man , and having abolished death , and nailed the handwriting of ordinances which were against us to his cross , abolished the enmity , even the law of commandments , he has taken his seat upon the throne of his glory , and led the way for all his redeemed to follow him , and they shall all return and come with singing unto Zion , and sorrowing and sighing shall flee away .

“ 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 vail , 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 . Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering , for he is faithful that promised ; and let us consider one another , to provoke unto love and to good works .” Heb . x . 19-24 .

Elder Gilbert Beebe

### A PRAYER OF DAVID

Preached on Tuesday Evening , Oct . 13 , 1840  
At Gower Street Chapel

*“ Create in me a clean heart , O God ; and renew a right spirit within me . Cast me not away from thy presence ; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me . Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation ; and uphold me with thy free Spirit .” ( Psalm 51:10 thru 12 ) .*

**B**y the aid of God we shall attempt to make a few remarks from the words of the text I have just laid before you .

We have no ground whatever to doubt but that David was a man of God ; a man born of God , highly favoured of God , and possessing a rich experience of the goodness and the greatness , the mercy and power , the faithfulness and majesty of God . Sometimes he takes up a whole Psalm in extolling and exalting the glory and mercy , the goodness and power of his God . At other times we find him sunk down into the greatest depths of despondency , insomuch as to lead him to exclaim , “ Is the mercy of God clean gone for ever , and will he be favourable no more ? ” At some times he tells us that his “ mountain stands strong and shall never be moved .” And again , “ Thou hidest thy face , and behold I am very sad .” In the Psalm

before us , he nearly takes up the whole of it in prayer and supplication unto God ; and , my dear friends , what encouragement it is to our poor souls , when the Lord brings us into great and extreme trial , to remember that our case is not the only solitary example , but that we can take comfort and guidance from the trials and troubles of God 's saints who have suffered in a similar manner .

*“ Create in me a clean heart , O God , and renew a right Spirit within me . ”*

Now it is very evident and very clear , that David , a man after God 's own heart , knew to his sorrow , his grief , and his great distress , that he had an unclean heart ; and that this unclean heart was a source of excessive grief to his soul ; and therefore he cries out to God , from a keen sense and feeling of the plague and misery of sin , Create in me a clean heart , O God , and renew a right spirit within me . And it is evident , my brethren , from this supplication , that the psalmist David loved “ a clean heart ; ” that it was his great and supreme delight , on which all his affections were reposed . He knew that this alone could enable him to approach worthily unto God ; and that enjoying this blessed access unto him , he would be able to rejoice in his presence , and his “ meditation upon him would be sweet unto his soul . ” This he knew might be his honor and his privilege ; and therefore he begs of God to create in him “ a clean heart . ” So that you see it was no encouragement to David to have an unclean heart ; it was no source of pleasure to

him to feel this , but rather a source of misery and pain .

It is clear in this petition , that the psalmist was convinced , feelingly convinced , that nothing but God could give him this clean heart ; that it was not in the power of his reading , of his studying , of his hearing , of his walking in God 's path , but that it was only the gift of God , his own gift and none other 's . Therefore he cries , “ Create in me a clean heart , O God . ” His soul was turned from every other source but God to grant him this blessed gift ; and as a poor beggar , a poor pensioner upon his mercy , he begs that God will hear his cry , and grant him his request , so that he might be delivered from this devilish and unclean heart , so that he might be freed from it and put his foot upon it , that he might commune with his God and feel the blessing of his goodness and his power .

Now , my friends , is this the case with you and with me ? It is a very easy thing for people to come to chapel , and take their seats , and become regular members and attendants , to suppose the truth preached , and even strive with all their might to prop up and support the cause of the Lord ; but the point is , are your souls led to understand and seek after the things that God has taught his children of old , that are left in the blessed records of his truth , and penned out in sacred characters in his word ? If you have not the bright side , if you have not the black side , if you have not the two sides brought up to meet together , upon what ground can you look calmly into eternity ? God Almighty search your hearts , my friends . I

have no pleasing of men in view ; yea, rather nothing but the affronting of men in view , but may God bless you , and search our hearts , and discover unto us upon what ground we stand . “ All scripture is given by inspiration of God , and is profitable for doctrine , for reproof , for correction , and instruction in righteousness , that the man of God may be perfect , thoroughly furnished to every good work . ” Have you ever felt the plague of an unclean heart ? Have you ever proved the truth of what Christ says , “ Out of the heart proceed murders , adulteries , fornications , and all uncleanness ? ” Is that your plague , is that your evil ? Have you known what it is to cry with Paul , “ O wretched man that I am ? ” Do you know what it is to feel the plague and vexation of your soul ? If you have not felt this , you have never had the foundations of the great

deep opened in your souls . There may be some of you , who may be thinking that your hearts are better than others , and that you do your duty when you meet here in the presence of God . Perhaps there may be some one come here this evening out of curiosity — some one who has heard what a country fool there is preaching at Gower Street Chapel , and is induced thus to come and hear what sort of a fool he is . I tell you , if you have never seen your own depravity , if you have never felt its burden , and groaned in spirit to get rid of it , if thou hast never sighed for deliverance from its curse , thou knowest nothing of a “ clean heart . ”

But then , say you , you are not going ( to be sure ) to put the uncleanness of a man ’s heart to be

evidence that he is a Christian ? God forbid that we should . What ! put the devil ’s work as an evidence of God ’s handiwork ! No ; but I am talking about the plague of an unclean heart ; I am talking about the soul that wants to be right ; I am talking about the feelings of the poor child of God , that is now suffering under it , and wants to be delivered from it , and to go up into the presence of his God and commune with him . Now if you know nothing about all this , what is all your religion , what is all your profession , what is all your knowledge , what is all your usefulness , and what are all your prayers ? Why , when you come to the winding up — when death comes to break the pitcher at the fountain head — when eternity opens up its door and you must enter into an unknown world — if you have not had Christ , if you have not felt God in your soul , and the kingdom of God in your heart , you plunge into hell where there are devils and damned souls for ever and ever .

“ *Renew* ” ( he says )

“ *within me a right spirit .* ”

Why , then , David was plagued with a wrong spirit , a bad spirit . Poor soul ! though he was King of Israel , and had been brought through so many troubles , and had seen the heights , and depths , and lengths , and breadths , as far as ever mortal eye beheld of the power and goodness of God , yet , poor soul , he knew to his sorrow what it was to have a bad spirit , to be plagued with a bad spirit , to be tormented with a devilish spirit . And where is there a poor child of God in the world , but what is

tormented at times , and plagued with it — and I believe some more so than others ? We cannot however measure the heights and the depths of these things . This can be done only by God ; and we must wait willingly and patiently until he shall reveal it unto us . I believe there is not a poor soul , but what is plagued with a bad spirit .

What do you mean by a bad spirit ? An ill - tempered spirit ? Yes , an ill - tempered spirit , a discontented spirit , a murmuring spirit , an unbelieving spirit , a proud spirit , a devilish spirit , that comes from beneath , and from a place that is opposed to God , and to the consolation of the soul . Where is the man in the Bible , but was plagued at times with this bad spirit ? Moses felt it . I am sure Abraham had a bad spirit , a stubborn unbelief , a slavish fear , which is not God 's Spirit , for it seems to dispute God 's word . It is a spirit that comes from beneath . God says to Abraham , “ Fear not , Abraham , for I am thy shield , and thy exceeding great reward .” But poor Abraham was fearing , eternally fear fearing , whether after all he should not be left of God and plunged after all into despair , and perhaps afraid that God would never appear to him again . The very promise carries it with it , or else there is no sense in the words — “ Fear not , Abraham , for I am thy shield , and thy exceeding great reward ;” and I believe God blessed it to his soul , and favoured him with a good spirit . He “ renewed a good spirit ” in his heart . I am sure ,

Job had not a very good spirit , when he cried out unto God , and cursed the day that he was born . I am sure he had not a very good spirit , or a very right spirit , when he says , “ Let me alone , that I may take comfort a little , before I go whence I shall not return .” And again , “ Let loose thy hand , and cut me off .” And again he says , “ My soul chooseth strangling , and death rather than life .” I am sure , poor Jonah had not a very good or a very right spirit , when God says to him , “ Dost thou well to be angry ? — asking him only a quiet question , simply whether it was right or whether it was wrong that he was angry — “ Yea ( says he ) even unto death .”

Ah ! my friends what sort of spirits have you ? How often do we find a poor child of God , as peevish , as rebellious , as discontented , and as stubborn as a very yew ! Yea , and sometimes trying to harden his heart , and determined to plunge into further damnation . Ah ! my friends , what does this bring to our hearts ? guilt , dismay , sinking , sorrowing . I believe in my own heart , that God will bring this people to see this bad spirit , to feel this bad spirit , to guard over this bad spirit , to cry to God to renew a right spirit , and to lead them up to him in faith , in love , in hope , in gratitude , in contentedness , and in resignation . My friends the poor dear child of God has no peace of heart , no real , right , godly peace in the heart , but as God reconciles it , renews a right spirit within it , and causes it to tell us of our wants . Oh ! what a blessed spirit is that , when the soul feels content with its condition , content with all its

troubles, content with all its trials; when it finds itself renewed in spirit, and can say, "The will of the Lord be done!" My friends, this is religion; this is the religion that does good to the soul; this is the religion that brings glory to God; this is the religion that brings peace to the mind. Come, come, then, poor soul that feels a bad spirit, that feels an unclean heart, God help thee to come to Him. It is of no use to go to thy fellow-mortals with it; it is of no use to go to the parsons with it; it is of no use to go to any human arm with it; but go to thy God; where David went — to God, with his burden, his simple cry, "O; God, create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." God heard him in his own time, and the Lord blessed him in his own time; and God said, I will not despise the sighing of the needy, I will grant their prayer. God help thee to come with thy burden, and plead it for Christ's sake before his blessed majesty. May he give thee a clean heart, faith, love, patience, zeal, light, life, liberty. It is all his gift, all at his disposal, and he has promised to give it to them that ask.

But again; the next thing in David's petition, or rather in our text is — "Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

How! is there such a thing possible as going away from God's presence? It is utterly impossible to get away from God's omnipresence. But David did not mean this. God's presence he well knew was every where. So that David does not mean that he could ever be cast out of

God's omnipresence. For he tells us again in another place, "Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth even there shalt thy hand find me and thy right hand uphold me." So that he could not mean, Cast me not away from thy omnipresence; for let him be in heaven, or earth, or hell, there would God be and his presence would be with him. But in is evident from the whole tenor of the Psalm that when he says "Cast me not away from thy presence," he means that he might not be cast out of his Fatherly presence as his Father and as his God, as his friend and as his brother, as his Daysman, as his blessed portion, and his all in all. For David well knew that it was the presence of his blessed God and Father, that was his light and his life his portion and his victory and his glory. The thought of being cast out of his heavenly Father's presence — what is there could be more grievous to a poor child of God. This, it appears to me, is what David means when he prays that he may not be cast out of God's presence, but shall continue to enjoy his loving kindness. This is the very thing that Moses so earnestly begged of God when he came into the wilderness, in going through the desert, in his way to Canan. "O Lord, the people know thou art with us, and thy presence goeth with them."

Now here, then, we must understand him as asking for his Fatherly presence, his blessed presence, as

his God and his deliverer ; his presence to uphold , instruct , defend , and guide him , stand by him in every storm , that he might not be left without the presence of his covenant God , that he might not be left alone to cursed unbelief , and carnal reason . This is why David cries out , “ Cast me not away from thy presence .” Now have you ever prayed for this ? There are thousands and tens of thousands of professors of religion who never think of it . All the presence of God they ever think of , is to be privileged with the means , to attend upon the means ; to read the word of God , and take his promise to themselves . This is the utmost extent of their knowledge ; and with this they rest satisfied and at ease . But they know nothing about it , until they cry with David for their very soul , “ Cast me not away from thy presence , and take not thy Holy Spirit from me .” They know nothing about it . Do you know anything ? My brethren , I speak it with simplicity and humility — I do know something about it — I know a little about it as far as God has blessed me ; for without the presence of God my Father , I am nothing at all . If I come to chapel without his presence , the devil tells me he will never come again . If I go sometimes to the Bible without his presence , it is a book that I cannot know . If I come sometimes to enter into Christian conversation without his presence , and to act as a little child in his presence , I am as carnal and as worldly and as unprofitable as though I have never known it . So , my brethren , it is my cry that God ’s presence would be with me in all that I do — in my preaching and reading , in all my toils in temporal things , in

my prayers and in my pulpit , and when I come to cross over Jordan ’s stream . My soul has begged with prayers , that God will never leave me to die without his blessed presence ; for when you come to grapple with death and to meet an angry Father ’s frown — when you come to have the devil rise and point at death and to eternity , — what a sinking it is to a poor soul ! How the tabernacle trembles , how the spirit faints ! “ Ah ,” says Satan , “ you are coming to die and to grapple with death , and how will it be with you ? Where is your wedding garment ? where is the oil for your lamp ? It is gone out , it is gone out , poor dear soul ; and thou can’st not go to any body .” Thou must go to the Lord , and to none else . And it is poor trying , searching work enough for the soul , when it wants the presence of the Lord .

Come , then , poor soul , and take this heartfelt expression of David . If thou hast within thee the feeling of David , if thou art treading in the steps of David , and if David ’s God is thine , he will bring thee to the heights of Zion , and thou shalt dwell in the city of song for ever and ever . “ Cast me not away from thy presence .” Oh ! my friends , what is all without the presence of God .

But could not David look back to the hill Mizar , and see how the Lord took him first from following after this father ’s sheep in the wilderness ? Would he not remember Goliath of Gath ; how he brought him to slay him with a sling and a stone , and to cut off his head , and caused him to sing for his deliverance , and shielded him ever since ? Would he

pray about taking the Holy Spirit from him? Had God ever hinted such a thing? Is it possible that God could ever falsify himself? Has he not said he takes possession of the hearts of his people; that it is his dwelling place, and his house? and has he not said, "Here will I abide for ever?" God has promised every blessing to his own dear children, as free gifts, and sovereign gifts, and they are all deposited in his beloved Son, and secured in him for us. They are free and sovereign gifts, and the devil can never hinder us from having them. Satan can never hinder us from having them. God has told us that all his blessings are in Christ Jesus; that every blessing is treasured up in him — all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. But he at the same time tells us he will "be inquired of." "I will be inquired of by the house of Israel" to do these things. God has promised that they shall be done; but God has determined that his people shall pray. If a man never prayed for them with his heart, where is the token that he is a righteous man? The righteous crieth unto the Lord, and the Lord heareth him, and answereth his request. "They shall come," he says, "with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them; and I will bring them through the fire, and purify them as silver is purified and as gold is tried; and they shall call upon my name."

So that, you see, God will have his people pray to him. How can a man expect these blessings if he has never prayed, or been brought to see the necessity of praying unto God? David prays that God would not take the Holy Spirit from him; for

if that were taken away, he could never pray. He knew that all the blessings of revelation, the opening up of truth, and the blessed application of those truths to his heart was the work of the Holy Ghost. Ah! my dear friends, may you all be taught as I have been taught. I know that he alone is the comforter; I never had any comfort but what was brought to me by Him. I know that he is the sole and blessed truth; that he is witness of my sonship of God. It is he who reveals Christ Jesus to our hearts. It is he who opens up to our understanding all the truths of God's holy word, with his blessed and enlightening beams. When his light and his revelation are withdrawn, then nothing is left us but carnal mindedness and darkness; what a lump of ignorance, what a lump of death, what a lump of worldliness and carnality we are! The soul had neither light, nor life, nor power, nor peace, not a single spiritual desire, when the Spirit of God has withdrawn his blessed influence. Have you ever prayed that you may not be left without this Spirit — this Spirit to teach you and guide you? In my study for the pulpit, I do believe that nine hours in the year out of ten are in prayer. My cry to God, and the Holy Trinity, is to guide me, and stand by me. I have sometimes been so confused and so stuck fast, that really I have been brought to doubt whether God did hear me, or whether I prayed consistently with the words of his truth. I have prayed that God would lead my understanding into the truths of Scripture; that he would open to me the prophecies; that he would come to types and to

shadows and to different offices and characters, and explain them to me, so that perhaps once in a month I might be able to give a good experimental sermon. But I did not experience it, and this has made me fear that the Holy Spirit was taken from me. But when I have felt his blessed and enlightening Spirit, and God has made the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are strong — then I have felt quite another man. My soul has then felt the blessing of God; it has felt in a state of liberty and peace; it has triumphed in God and felt the power of his salvation. My soul has then been content to be as nothing, and to come up in the way that the Lord should lead me. Therefore it is, that we should love to pray that the Spirit of God may not be taken from us.

Again, he says, “Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.”

Now it is plain and evident here, that David rejoices that salvation was to be found in God. He cries that the blessings of salvation may be manifested in his heart; that they may be with him in his bonds, and afflictions, and carnal reasonings, that so his soul might be brought up to God and “rejoice in his salvation.” When David desires the salvation of God he is prompted to exclaim, “He is my rock and my defence, the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” God has promised to those who seek after him, that they shall “draw waters out of the wells of salvation.” It is the blessings of the salvation of Christ made known to the heart by the Spirit of God, that

comforts us in all our afflictions, and griefs, and sorrows. And like David, your souls will cry again and again, until the blessed request is granted, Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. The souls of God’s people shall travel with David; their hearts shall go unto him, and the God that was David’s shall give encouragement to them. Uphold me with thy free Spirit, and then I shall indeed be free. I shall walk in liberty I shall walk in light. I shall be free in body, free in mind. Uphold me with thy free Spirit, and I shall then be free — free from falling into bonds — from falling into unbelief — from falling into pride — from falling into rebellion — from falling into anything dishonouring to God. Uphold me with thy free Spirit. I shall then walk in freedom, live in freedom, fight in freedom, and go to death in freedom. I shall walk before thee my God and Father in the liberty with which thou hast made me free. I shall enjoy freedom in thy presence and thou shalt put a crown upon my head — a crown of light and of glory. May God grant his blessing through Christ Jesus. Amen.

J. Warburton

J. C. Philpot was baptized by John Warburton.

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### MOVED OR MOVING ?

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Editors

DOCTRINES  
OF  
GOD'S EVERLASTING LOVE  
TO HIS ELECT, AND THEIR  
ETERNAL UNION WITH CHRIST  
TOGETHER WITH SOME OTHER TRUTHS,  
STATED AND DEFENDED,  
In a LETTER to Dr. ABRAHAM TAYLOR.

**T**o consider another evangelic truth, which, indeed, is the sum and substance of the gospel, and with the proof of which the scripture abounds, though you are pleased to condemn it is a fancy, and that is, that "God sees no sin" in his people." I know this doctrine has been most odiously traduced, and most vilely misrepresented; but, I hope, when some few things are observed, it will plainly appear not to be a fancy, or a freak of some distempered minds, but a most glorious and comfortable doctrine of the gospel, and without which the gospel must cease to be good news and glad tidings to the sons of men.

1st, When it is asserted that God sees no sin in his people, the meaning is not, that there is no sin in believers, nor any committed by them, or that their sins are no sins, or that their sanctification is perfect in this life.

1. Sin is in the best of saints; to say otherwise is contrary to scripture, and to all the experience of God's people; If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The ingenuous confession of the saints, their groans and complaints, and that continual war between flesh and spirit they feel in themselves, are so many proofs of sin's being in them; nay, it is not only in them, but it lives in them. It is true, indeed, they do

not live in sin, for then there would be no difference between them and unregenerate persons; to live in sin, is not only unbecoming, but contrary to the grace of God: but still sin lives in believers; though there is an inward principle of grace, and a mortification of the outward actions of sin, and a putting off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; yet this old man is not changed, nor removed, much less destroyed. Moreover, sin is not merely in believers now and then, by fits and starts, as we say, but it dwells in them. Hence the apostle calls it, Sin that dwelleth in me; where it is not idle, but active and busy; it hinders all the good, and does all the mischief it can; it makes war against the soul, and sometimes brings it into captivity.

2. Sin is not only in the best of saints, but is also committed by them: There is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not; nor is there any sin, but what has been, or may be committed by believers, excepting the sin against the Holy Ghost: their daily slips and falls, their frequent prayers for the discoveries of pardoning grace, and the application of Christ's blood, which cleanseth from all sin, confirm the truth of this. It is true, the apostle John says, that whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God, that is, as born of God, he neither does, nor can commit sin. What is that which is born of God? The new creature; the other I, distinguished from sin that dwelleth in him: this never did, nor can commit

sin ; there are an old man and a new man in regenerate persons ; the new man never sins , the old man does nothing else but sin ; there are flesh and spirit in the saints ; all sinful works are the works of the flesh , as all good works are the fruits of the Spirit . The work of grace , though imperfect , is not impure ; nothing impure springs from it , nor is any thing impure to be attributed to it .

3 . The sins of believers are sins , as well as the sins of others ; they are of the same kind , and are equally transgressions of the law , as others are : murder and adultery , committed by David , were sins in him , as well as they are as committed by others ; yea , oftentimes the sins of believers are attended with more aggravating circumstances than the sins of other men , being acted against light and knowledge , love and grace and mercy . Though believers are justified from all sin by Christ's righteousness , and have all their sins pardoned through Christ's blood , yet their sins do not hereby cease to be sins . Justification from sin by Christ's righteousness , and pardon of sin through Christ's blood , free them from obligation to punishment due to sin , but do not destroy the nature of sin .

4 . The work of sanctification is imperfect in this life : it is a good work begun , but not finished ; there is something lacking in the faith of the greatest believer ; love is not come to its full growth : and as for knowledge , it is but in part . There is a twofold sanctification ; the one in Christ , this is compleat and perfect ; the other is derived from Christ , and wrought in the soul by the Spirit of Christ ; this at present is imperfect . There is indeed a perfection of

parts , but not of degrees ; that is to say , the new creature has all its parts , but these are not grown up to the perfection they will arrive unto . The best of saints need fresh supplies of grace , which they would not , were they perfect : they disclaim perfection in themselves , though they wish for it both in themselves and others ; when therefore it is said that " God sees no sin in his people , " neither of these things are designed by it .

2ndly , God's seeing no sin in his people , does not impeach his omniscience : nor is it to be considered as referring to the article of providence , but to the article of justification , as I shall shew presently . God is omniscient , he knows and sees all persons and things ; nothing is or can be hid from his all-seeing eye : His eyes are upon the ways of man , and he seeth all his goings ; there is no darkness nor shadow of death , where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves . All the actions of men , whether good or bad , are known to him , with their secret springs and principles from whence they flow ; he sees the sins of his own people , as well as the sins of others , both in their first motions , and in their open productions ; The Lord's throne is in heaven , his eyes behold , his eye-lids try the children of men ! the Lord trieth the righteous . About this there is no debate ; they must be stupid indeed , if there be any ; for my part , I never heard of any who deny that the omniscience of God extends to the sins of his people ; it never was thought of , or designed , by this assertion , to limit or deny the omniscience of God ; nor is it limited or

denied by it. Though the phrases of seeing and knowing, are used as synonymous in the article of providence, yet never in the article of justification; there they are always distinguished: knowledge and sight are two things; the one belongs to the attribute of God's omniscience, the other to the attribute of his justice: when therefore it is said, that God sees no sin in his people, the meaning is not, that he does not with his omniscient eye, see and know sin to be in them; but he does not see any iniquity in them with his eye of justice, or so as to punish them for their sins, or require satisfaction at their hands for them.

3rdly, Nor is the meaning of this proposition, that God "sees no sin in his people," that he takes no notice of them, nor resents them, nor chastises them, in a fatherly way, on the account of them. God does not, indeed, punish his people for their sins in a way of vindictive wrath and justice; for this is contrary to his justice, and must overthrow the satisfaction of Christ; for either Christ has perfectly satisfied for the sins of his people, or he has not; if he has not, they must satisfy for them themselves; if he has, it is contrary to the justice of God to punish for sin twice, or to require satisfaction, both of the surety and the sinner: but though God does not punish his people for their sins, yet he chastises them in a fatherly way; he takes notice of their sins, lays his hand upon them, in order to bring them to a sense and acknowledgment of them; If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

4thly, Though God sees sin in his people, as being but in part sanctified, yet he sees no sin in them, as they are perfectly justified; though he sees sin in them, with his eye of omniscience, yet not with his eye of revenging justice; though he sees them, in respect of his providence, which reaches all things, yet not in respect of justification; though he takes notice of his people's sins so as to chastise them in a fatherly way, for their good; yet he does not see them, take notice of them, and observe them in a judicial way, so as to impute them, or require satisfaction for them: God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; No, he has imputed them to Christ, he has beheld them in him, he has charged them to him, and Christ has made full satisfaction for them; and therefore who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died. God will not require satisfaction at the hands of his people for their sins; he will not punish them on the account of them; they shall never enter into condemnation; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Was God to see sin in his people in this sense, and proceed against them in a forensic way, he must act contrary to his justice and set aside the satisfaction

of his Son . A few things will make it plainly appear that God sees no sin in his justified ones , as such :

First , This will be evident , if we consider what Christ has done with respect to the sins of his people . These have been removed from them to him ; they have been placed to his account , imputed to him , and laid upon him . All we , like sheep , have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way , and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all ; which he has bore in his own body , on the tree ; yea , he is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world ; he has removed the iniquity of his people in one day : As he was wounded for their transgressions , and bruised for their sins , so he has washed them from their sins in that blood of his which cleanseth from all sin ; by his righteousness he justifies them from all things , from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses ; and by the sacrifice of himself , he has put away sin for ever ; yea , he has finished transgression , made an end of sin , has made reconciliation for iniquity , and has brought in everlasting righteousness . This is the language both of the Old and New Testament , and if this be the case , as it certainly is , God does not , and cannot see iniquity in his people , since all their iniquity has been transferred on Christ , and it is all done away by him .

Secondly , This will be yet more evident , if we consider what God the Father has done on the account of the blood , righteousness , sacrifice , and satisfaction of his Son . He has freely forgiven all the sins of his people for Christ 's sake ; he has covered them with a covering of

mercy , so as they are not visible ; he has blotted them out of his sight , so as they are not legible to the eye of justice ; yea , he has cast them all behind his back , and into the depths of the sea ; insomuch that the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for , and there shall be none ; and the sins of Judah , and they shall not be found : such strong expressions as these from the mouth of the Lord of hosts , will sufficiently bear us out in asserting , that " God sees no sin in his " people . "

Thirdly , Add to this , the view in which the people of God are to be considered , and are considered by Father , Son , and Spirit , being clothed with the righteousness of Christ , and washed in his blood ; they are compleat in Christ ; they are without fault before the throne , without spot or wrinkle , or any such thing : Christ says to them , Thou art all fair , my love ; and there is no spot in thee . The church is a perfection of beauty in his esteem ; all the saints are perfectly comely through the comeliness he has put on them ; yea , they are , in the sight of God , in the eye of justice , unblameable and unproveable ; and if so , then surely God sees no iniquity in them . One must transcribe a considerable part of the Old and New Testament to give the full proof of this doctrine .

If this is a fancy , it is the glory of the Bible , and the marrow of the Gospel ; what most displays the riches of God 's grace , the efficacy of Christ 's blood , the compleatness of his righteousness , and the fullness of his satisfaction ; it is the foundation of all solid hopes of future happiness , what supports the life of

faith, and is the ground of a believer's triumph. One would have thought, Sir, you might have forbore so severe a reflection on this truth, of God's seeing no sin in his people, since it is the *το ρητον*, the express words of the sacred oracles: He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.

John Gill

opens the door when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him; and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20).

J. C. Philpot

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### MARCH 5.

*"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."* — Revelation ii. 29.

**T**hese words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to every one to whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us. If we have a spiritually circumcised ear, if we are willing to listen to the voice of the Lord, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace. It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and

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### CONTRIBUTIONS

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 2 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

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OBITUARIES

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**SISTER FRANCIS HUDSON**

**W**e the members of Sandy Level Church of the Pigg River Association are deeply saddened to report the death of a precious saint who has gone from our midst, Sister Francis Hudson.

Sister Hudson was born Dec. 12, 1907, entered into rest Sept 11, 1989. Preceded in death by her husband. Survived by 2 sons, 1 sister, 4 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren.

United with Sandy Level Church, Sept. 18, 1988. Being in bad health, Sister Hudson attended church as often and as long as she was able. She loved and trusted in her God and her Church. Sister Hudson prayed for the day to come to be with her Lord and Savior.

*Dearest Sister, thou hast left us,  
Here, thy loss we deeply feel,  
But tis God that hath benefit us,  
He can all our sorrows heal.*

Gone, but not forgotten by the ones  
who knew and loved her.

Written in love and fellowship,

Elder Denver Simpson, Mod.  
Elder Clarence Stone, Ass. Mod.  
Odessa D. Brown, Clerk

**CLAUDE WHARTON MCKINNEY**

**C**laude Wharton McKinney was born March 2, 1911 the son of the late George T. and Mary Durham. Brother McKinney passed from this life, on July 13, 1989 at Duke Hospital in Durham, N.C. Brother McKinney was married to the late Ellen Stanley McKinney, on March 13, 1936, who preceded him in death, about 6 months, on January 7, 1989. There were no children born to this union. Brother McKinney is survived by three brothers, Jessie McKinney of Eden, North Carolina, Lewis and Fred McKinney of Pelham, North Carolina. Brother McKinney was a retired farmer and factory worker. He lived around the Pelham Community most of his life.

Brother Claude joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on June 6, 1976 along with sister Ellen. They were baptized by their Pastor Elder David Spangler. He was a faithful member of Dan River Church and loved to have members and friend in their home, where there was always a good meal and long talks about the scriptures with everyone present. Brother Claude loved to sing, in church, at work, or wherever he was. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have worked with him would always know when he came to work. He was usually singing when he came in the door, the old hymns he loved so well. In later years he did not hear too well and sometimes sang loud, but it was always from the heart.

His funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 15, 1989, by Elder Kenneth Key, and

Elder Haywood Wray. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery by his beloved wife, to await the resurrection morn, when the dead in Christ shall rise first to meet the Lord in the air to ever be with him.

Written by Sister Betty Southard  
and Sister Lillian Wood

### GATTIE MAE T. PROCTOR

**S**ister Gattie Mae Tolson Proctor, born Dec. 11, 1912 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina was called home on Sept. 18, 1989 at the age of 76.

Sister Proctor united with the church at Lower Town Creek and was baptized by the late Elder Leslie Coker. She moved her membership from Lower Town Creek to Pleasant Hill on February 27, 1982, where she remained a devoted member until her death. She was in poor health long before departing this life, but was faithful to attend her church meetings until the last several months she lived, which time she experienced almost constant pain that hindered her from going to meetings. She never lost her concern for the brethren and wanted to know about everyone. It always seemed to be her pleasure to have the brethren visit her even though there were times she was in so much pain she did not seem herself.

Salvation by the Grace of God was her theme — she talked that doctrine — she loved that doctrine and never failed to voice her hope of

an eternal home with God, even though she confessed to be a sinner and if saved she knew it must be by the Grace of God. She loved and often called the hymn

*" I am a stranger here below,  
And what I am tis hard to know;  
I am so vile, so prone to sin,  
I fear that I 'm not born again."*  
etc.

and would often remark that this complete hymn expressed her feelings about herself.

Sister Proctor's funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, N.C. by her pastor Elder Henry Jones and Elder Lester Eason after which her body was laid to rest in Upper Town Creek Church Cemetery in Wilson County.

She leaves a devoted family, a daughter Edna P. Braswell with whom she made her home and who made many sacrifices to take care of her mother; one son, John Luther Proctor of Knightdale; two sisters, Mrs. Daisy Williams of Sharpsburg and Mrs. Lucy Grey Sessoms of Pinetops; two brothers, Amos Tolson of Nashville and William "Bill" Tolson of Pinetops; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren.

The brethren of Pleasant Hill extend sympathy to her family. We shall miss her among our congregation, but feel she has come in possession of a rest she had long awaited and do not wish her back.

Written by order of Pleasant Hill Church, in conference Sept. 23, 1989.

J. Carroll Williams

# 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

## 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 draws 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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Elder Joshua "Tom" Turner	

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 EDITORIAL
 

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Clifford Wilbanks

**D**early beloved brethren, I have been writing unto you through the 'Signs' for several years. I have never thought myself adequate to write any thing that would be praising, honouring or glorifying unto God, neither comforting or edifying to his beloved children. However, this is the purpose of my efforts as he gives me grace. From the beginning I was encouraged by the brethren to write, and it has been my desire from the first — when I first asked for a home with the church — to serve God and his church in any capacity that I can: therefore I have written when I felt that I was given an unction to do

so from above. Whatever the results I know not, but I do know that they are in the hands of the Lord, and he will dispose of them as it pleases him. Praise his holy name!

Writing unto you has never been a burden unto me, but a blessing of great joy. I pray that it will continue to be so. Should it ever become a burden and not joyous I think I would cease to write, for I would feel that God is no longer in the matter. I do not say that I know he is in it now, but I am given hope through the encouragement of the brethren; for it is they who must judge.

Recently I was asked to join the 'Signs' as one of the associate editors. Although I felt unworthy, unfit, and unqualified, as I told them, I consented to their request. The 'Signs' has meant so much to me over the years — because it advocates the doctrine that I believe — and if the Lord should bless me to contribute any thing worthwhile to it I hope I shall be very thankful to him.

It is my understanding of the Scriptures that Jesus gives each of his children one or more talents according to their ability, which is also a gift of God: for without him we can do nothing, but we can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. It is my fervent desire to use such talent as I may have to the glory of my Lord and Saviour, and not to bury it in the earth.

Brethren, I ascribe to the prospectus of the 'Signs' because it sets forth the doctrine which I believe, love, and contend for. Which is: The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and

eternal perfections of the great Jehovah — the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. “ These three are one. John 1:8 .

The absolute predestination of all things .

Eternal , unconditional election .

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man .

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

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

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

The resurrection of the dead , and eternal judgment .

That the church is composed exclusively of baptized believers — that to her are given able ministers of the new testament ; that the Scriptures are the only authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God .

That there is no connection between church and state .

May God give us grace to ever contend for these truths is my prayer .

Brethren , I have met each of the editors of the ‘ Signs ’ and have known some of them for a long time . My wife and I recently visited with Elder Key and Elder Williams and some of the other brethren in that area and we had a wonderful time . We were treated very graciously , and that is the way it is wherever we visit among the brethren who believe the doctrine of

sovereign grace .

Beloved brethren , I am sure that in my weakness I will make many errors . If they are such as cannot be prudently overlooked , I would ask you to correct me in brotherly love . If our views differ on any Scripture , let us remember who maketh us to differ and then it will be a lovely difference . Brotherly love covers a multitude of sins . I love you for Christ’s sake if not deceived . When at the throne of grace I ask that you remember this poor sinner . Come visit with us when you can .

Clifford Wilbanks

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### CORRESPONDENCE

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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." (Ps. 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 (1 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" (1 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 every 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 Tim . 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 assem-

ble 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

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P.O. Box 48  
Duarrenburg , N.Y. 12056  
December 18 , 1989

Dear Editors :

**E**nclosed a money order for \$20.00 to cover the subscription for two years and rest for contribution . I have a letter , written by Elder Amosa J. Slauson who then lived at 46 Cedar Street , Kingston , N.Y. He became our pastor after the death of Elder Arnold H. Bellows . He was well toward 90 years old when he wrote this letter .

With hope and trust in God ,  
Woodrow W . Bellinger

Feb . 7 , 1967

Very Dear Brother  
& Deacon Bellinger :

Your very kind , good & welcomed letter recd . this a.m . and as always was glad to hear from you by the way of a letter from your hand and heart . Yes the words of Peter saying to whom shall we go thou hast the words of eternal life sure represents the God given faith that had been given Peter from God the Father . Peter was one who knew that Jesus was the Christ , the Son of the living God , and had said so . We are told to know Jesus is life eternal and Peter knew that Jesus was The Way , The Truth and The Life , and had learned many times that he was law to Gospel and that His words was as Jesus said , that His was Spirit and life . So what a God given blessing to a poor sinner to know where to go to find words that have life in them and spirit in them . Jesus said in another place , take my yoke upon you and learn of me so Jesus was the one that Peter had learned of so many times and knew that there was none other to go to . Jesus has said come unto me you that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest . How wonderful to know of one that has the words of Eternal Life that commands those to come to him . For true rest , for time and eternity . How much we need rest being so weary and heavy laden with sin and weakness so lame & halt with this corrupt body . So weary trying to do good and find evil is present . What a God given blessing to poor sinners that there is one who has the words of Eternal Life , controls the power of

darkness delivers such weary and heavy laden sinners from the power of darkness — translates them into the Glorious Kingdom of the Son of God where they find rest for their weary and heavy laden condition . Where they can rest from their own works as God did from His . Where Christ imputed righteousness . Enables them to say that Christ is my refuge and strength a very present help in trouble . Christ who has the words of Eternal Life and is a light to our path . We are enabled to see what we need and why we need it , and who can give it . Knowing this we cry and pray to the one who has the words of eternal life . For we have learned that it is not of him that willeth or of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy . We are ever and always at the door of mercy ( Jesus ) who opens and none can shut and shuts and none can open constantly coming to him begging for more of His love that we , in return might love him more and serve him better . Being in the world but we pray not of the world . For us to live would be Christ , then to die sure would be gain .

Had a 5 page letter from Sister Becker yesterday yes I just checked its 6 pages she is asking me some quite deep questions about Adam and Eve in request to God 's plan in the matter I feel that God knew what was going to happen or what Adam and Eve would do and what Satan would do and God permitted it all to take place just as it did . I do not understand that God foredained it or predestinated Adam and Eve to transgress in the Garden of Eden the way that they did . For there was

another creature involved in the matter which was Satan and Eve being deceived by him , believes him instead of what God had told them . Eve was deceived but Adam was not for he said the woman gave him and he then become a transgressor , same as she . Satan is yet tempting and working and luring in the minds of men to lead not toward God but always in the downward road away from God but blind unbelief can not see this as their eyes are blinded as in Bible times there are Satans cunning way and work and does not trouble them , only those that Christ lives in or eyes has been made to see or Holy Ghost has taught them and taken up His abode in their hearts so that their love is for God and things which are Heavenly as they are made to sit down or dwell in Heavenly flares with Christ Jesus and have a burning zeal in their hearts to please God and keep His commandments and walk Humbly and Godly before Him because of the love that they have for him . As a son before their natural Father , that loves and respects their natural Father as they should . Maybe you might have some good thoughts about what I have mentioned about Adam and Eve in the Garden if so write me glad to hear them .

I had a long interesting letter from Brother Albert Vail I have sent it to Sister Sickles to read , maybe I might send it to you to read also . His letter certainly gives one a lot to think about and check on he sure has some lease of mind . Hope you can forgive my poor writing and poor spelling . Just consider the imperfection of the writer and cast the

mantle of Charity over it all . Faith and hope are wonderful but we are told that Charity is the greatest of all . As ever your loving Brother and Pastor by the grace of God if one .

Elder Amosa J. Slauson

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

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**GROWING UP INTO  
CHRIST IN ALL THINGS**

*Preached at Gower Street Chapel, London,  
on Lord's Day Morning, August 3rd, 1856.*

*"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ." Ephesians 4: 14 & 15.*

**I**n the Church of God there is unity, but not uniformity. In nature, especially in the works of creation, we see something similar. In creating the world, the great Creator seems to have prescribed for Himself certain patterns — types as they are called by naturalists — in conformity to which He has moulded the works of His hands. This type or pattern we may compare to the circumference of a circle which bounds (so to speak) God's idea; but within that circle He works in an infinite variety. The human countenance, the trees of the field, the flowers of the garden, the birds that fly in the air, the animals that walk on the ground, the very fish that swim in the sea, are all constructed each according to a certain leading type; but within that bounding circle there is an infinite variety of colour, shape, size and form.

So it is in the dominion of grace.

The Spirit of God works according to a certain outline; for there are certain grand distinguishing features of His divine operation upon the soul; but within that circle He works in various ways. He does not cut all lines the same depth, nor even trace the patterns in exactly the same form. Look at a turner at work; there is his lathe, and there his cutting tool. Every design is cut by the same tool, and the machine worked by the same treadle; yet what infinite variety in the execution of the patterns, and how visible in each the directing mind of the artificer!

So with the work of God upon the soul. It is the same Spirit who teaches all the election of grace, and He works by the same Word of truth, which is the cutting tool, if I may use the expression, to trace the image of Christ on the heart; and yet what a variety of experience is there in the Church of God! Can we find two Christians whose experience in all points agrees? And yet what a unity of feeling, what a oneness of heart, what a mingling of spirit, stamps all who are taught of God as really one! In this astonishing blending of the greatest variety with the greatest unity it is that we discover the hand of God, and thus trace consummate beauty and infinite wisdom.

This unity and yet variety are beautifully traced out in the chapter before us (Eph. 4). "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" is the great thing we are called upon to endeavour to keep. And this "unity of the Spirit" results from this, that "there is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of

our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all." But though there is this blessed oneness of body, spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, and the Father, not an equal measure of grace, and therefore not an equal measure of experience, knowledge, or gifts, is bestowed on all. "But unto every one of us," adds the Apostle, "is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." This leads him to show whence Christ derived these gifts, what is their nature, and for what purpose they are bestowed.

I mention these things, because our text is so closely connected with them that we cannot well understand it unless this connection is seen. Carrying out, then, this connection, we may remark that there are three things that bear upon our text, and viewed spiritually may serve to cast a divine light upon it.

1. We are to view by the eye of faith the Lord Jesus Christ raised up from the dead by the power of the Father, and seated at God's right hand.

2. In seeing Him as seated at God's right hand, we are to view Him as having received from the Father a divine plenitude, and overflowing fulness of gifts; as we read, "When He ascended up on high He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." It is in the Psalm from which the apostle quotes (Psalm 68:18): "received gifts from men." Before He gave He received them, and received that He might give them. A store, an inexhaustible store, of gifts and graces was entrusted to,

and deposited in Him, as the risen Head of the Church. They were laid up by the hand of the Father in Him, as we read (Col. 1:19): "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." The Church is therefore said to be "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ;" and John tells us that "of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." We are then to view Him as sending these gifts down, as was shown in an especial manner on the day of Pentecost. And though we have now no Pentecostal effusion, or the same measure and depth of spiritual gifts and graces as was then manifested, the Holy Ghost has not ceased to work in the Church of God. The Lord Jesus, at the right hand of the Father, still continues to shed His gifts and graces upon the souls of men, still is what He was then, and will be, till He has gathered into His bosom the last vessel of mercy; for "He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."

3. But there is a third feature connected with the text which it is very desirable to notice, that the gifts spoken of are especially ministerial gifts, as we find the Apostle laying down very plainly in the 11th verse: "He gave some apostles;" these were the most eminent servants of Christ, of whom there were but few in number; and these endowed with gifts to plant churches and govern them generally with especial authority from the Lord Himself. "And some prophets;" or preachers, men not invested with the high and peculiar office of an apostle, but endowed with preach-

ing gifts whereby they were not suited for a settled , permanent ministry ; not adapted to preside over a church or people , from an absence of the proper qualifications of wisdom and firmness , or from a want of spiritual flow of matter to season their preaching with a necessary variety ; but still blessed with ministerial gifts , adapting them to go from place to place preaching the simple elements of gospel truth and their ministry blessed to the conviction of sinners and the calling in of the scattered sheep . “ And some pastors ; ” men endowed with sufficient wisdom and ability to hold a permanent , settled situation , fitted to govern as well as feed the church committed to their care ; not only able to preach the gospel with power and unction , but qualified to rule and guide the brethren with all Christian wisdom as well as affection and love . And others “ teachers ” ; not able perhaps to preside over churches as “ pastors , ” nor endowed with sufficient ability to go forth as “ prophets , ” or even as “ evangelists , ” but still able to drop a word of instruction from time to time in a small way and in a limited sphere , and thus be teachers of those who are willing to learn . Thus each man of these several ranks and orders was simply what the Lord made him ; none able to boast , but each filling up that post to which the Church ’ s risen Head had assigned him ; and as long as each kept his place , blessed in his deed .

But the Apostle tells us also why these gifts were given . He says it is “ for the perfecting of the saints , for the work of the ministry , for the

edifying of the body of Christ . ” He thus plainly teaches us that the Lord Jesus at the right hand of the Father sends these gifts down , raises up these men , furnishes them each with his several ability , and plants them at their different posts to bring about three ends ; 1 . “ for the perfecting of the saints ; ” that is , that the saints of God may be matured and established in the truth and in the divine life ; 2 . “ for the work of the ministry ; ” that is , that the ministry of the Word in all its various branches — whether doctrine , or reproof , or correction , or instruction in righteousness , whether to convince or console , throw down or build up — might be fully carried out ; and 3 . “ for the edifying of the body of Christ , ” that the saints of God , forming the mystical body of Jesus , might be built up on their most holy faith , “ till we all come ” — that is , either collectively as a body or individually as members — “ in the unity of the faith ” — there being but “ one faith ” — “ and of the knowledge of the Son of God ” — through an experimental acquaintance with him — “ unto a perfect man ” — that is , grown up and matured — “ unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ ” — such a measure of stature as the fulness of Christ gives to make a man complete in every good word and work .

These preliminary observations may introduce us to the subject before us . “ That we henceforth . ” says this blessed man of God , “ be no more children , tossed to and fro , and carried about with every wind of doctrine , by the sleight of men , and

cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth" (or as it is in the margin, "being sincere") "in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."

In attempting, with God's blessing, to open up these words, I shall direct your attention:

I. To that state of religious childhood, out of which we are by divine grace to be brought: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

II. Secondly, to the means which God employs to bring us out of the childish state, namely, "speaking the truth," or adopting, as I intend to do, the marginal reading, "being sincere in love."

III. And thirdly, to the result of these means: "That we may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."

I. The blessed Spirit has selected the figure of a little child and used it in various ways, but chiefly in two: i. He has selected certain features in a child which we may call favourable qualities as emblems of a certain state of soul spiritually corresponding with them. Again, He has taken certain (what shall we call them?) unfavourable qualities in the child, and used them as figures of instability, weakness and imperfection in the divine life. And yet the foundation of the figure in both aspects is the same; the natural tenderness, immaturity, and want of growth, which is visible in the child. Let me

explain myself a little more clearly and distinctly. 1. First observe the favourable qualities which the Holy Ghost has used as emblems of certain distinctive features of divine teaching. A child is naturally simple. The tenderness of its ideas preserves it from duplicity of speech or conduct. The Holy Spirit takes this quality, and uses it as an emblem of that spiritual simplicity and godly sincerity of which He is the author. We must become simple as little children. Again, the child is inexperienced, ignorant of many things which it has afterwards to learn, and the innate consciousness of this renders it teachable. So the child of God is teachable, willing to learn, to gather spiritual instruction where he can. The child again is humble. It knows little or nothing of worldly distinctions; the child of a peer will play with the child of a peasant as readily as with one of its own class. This external, visible humility is made a figure of that spiritual humility which clothes, or should clothe a child of God. The Lord Himself has used the figure of a little child in this point of view as simple, teachable, and humble, when He declared, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 18:3).

2. But, on the other hand, there are things in a child of nature which are representatives of what is to be avoided in a child of grace. A Child is inexperienced, unacquainted with the world, with business, with any serious or useful occupation, with the art and craft of men, with the way in which the battle of life is fought

and won . So in grace . There is a state and stage in the divine life through which everyone passes , in which he has little experience of himself , of the evils of his heart , of the dreadful nature of sin , of the strength of temptation , of the power and subtlety of his unwearied foe ; and , on the other hand , little experience of the abounding grace of Christ , of the efficacy of His atoning blood , and the manifestations of His dying love .

Again, a child is weak. Mind and body alike are naturally and necessarily feeble from its being a transition state , and neither having yet grown into their intended maturity . We can bear with this in childhood . Their very weaknesses , especially in our own children , are engaging ; their very want of maturity , like a rose - bud , or a lamb at play , has something beautiful about it . But we should not wish our children to be lambs and rose - buds all their lives . We should not like them to be dwarfs lest haply they degenerate into idiots . We expect them , as years pass on , to grow out of this state . Were they always children , we should infer the presence of some disease . We should say there was something fundamentally wrong in their constitution , which stunted and starved their growth .

So in heavenly things . It is pleasing to see the work of grace in its first commencement on the soul . The doubts , the fears , the earnestness , the zeal , the simplicity of those in whom the Spirit of God is first at work is a sight beautiful to witness , and when seen in any near and dear to us unspeakable heart -

gladdening ; but we expect them to grow out of this weakness and feebleness , so as in due time to attain to a ripeness and maturity in the life of God , and not be children all their days .

Another feature of childhood is to be changeable , vacillating , pleased with a toy one day and throwing it aside the next ; not knowing its own mind , but flitting like a butterfly from flower to flower . This fickle , unstable , changeable mood of a child the blessed Spirit uses as an emblem of a similar state of mind too often visible in the professing Church of Christ .

Reproving and condemning this childish instability , he bids us “ henceforth be no more children .” It was well enough to be children once , for in grace as in nature none are born men , and during spiritual as during natural childhood childish ways are borne with ; but we are not to be children all our days , ever vacillating , unstable , undecided , carried away by every impulse , and moved by every breath , ignorant and inexperienced , knowing little of ourselves , and less of the Lord ’s mercy and love . There is a growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ . We are , therefore , by divine teaching , to grow out of childhood into manhood , to forget those things which are behind and reach forth into those things which are before , and thus attain to some ripeness in the life of God .

ii . But the Apostle shews not merely the weakness of a state of childhood , but the dangers to which this state is exposed : “ tossed to and fro , and carried about with every

wind of doctrine .” He rather changes the figure here ; for his heart was so full of the things of God, that like a workman with a number of tools before him , who drops the one in his hand and catches up another more suitable for a particular part of his work , he drops one figure to take up another more adapted to convey his meaning . He does not carry out the figure of childhood , but at once adopts another — that of a ship in a storm . How unstable is a ship at sea , how tossed up and down by every wave , had driven to and fro by every wind , especially if there be not much ballast in the hold ! Whilst then we are in a childish , immature state in the divine life , we are like a ship at sea with little ballast , tossed to and fro by every wind that blows . Now that is a very dangerous position , because if the ship have not a good amount of ballast in the hold , it is liable to be capsized , founder , and go down in the deep waters . Not that the child of God can or will go down in the deep waters ; his soul , his immortal soul cannot be lost . The ship itself may not founder , yet much of the cargo may be lost , the passengers get wetted , and their clothes and goods spoiled . So we , from instability and inexperience , like a lightly ballasted ship in a stormy sea , may , without losing our souls , lose much of our comfort and peace ; and if we escape drowning , may not escape a thorough good wetting .

But there is something striking in the expression , “ tossed to and fro .” Here , on the side , is an iron - bound coast , full of rocks ; and on the other , the raging sea . Now the ship may be sometimes tossed “ to ” —

approach the iron - bound coast , and be in imminent danger of being dashed to pieces — and then a contrary wind may suddenly carry it away “ from ” the rocks , and drive it out half a wreck into the wild , stormy ocean . So in divine matters . Here on one side are rocks — deadly heresies , dangerous speculations , fundamental errors upon grand cardinal point : the Trinity , the Sonship of Christ , the personality and work of the Holy Ghost . Errors of this sort are as sunken rocks lying abreast of the homeward track . Suddenly a wind comes from some preacher or author that catches the sails of an unstable ship , and drives it headlong to these sunken rocks , for errors and heresies thickly line the spiritual coast . But just as the vessel is coming upon the rocks , a land breeze springs up , a gust of despair or some sudden fear and terror , and away it goes right into the boundless sea . Many even of the saints of God , when not established in the truth , are thus “ tossed to and fro ” ; driven sometimes almost upon the rocks of destructive error , and thence hurled back into a stormy sea , where terror stands on the deck , and despair rides upon the wave . How many , who one would hope fear God , are thus tossed to and fro ! They wander from chapel to chapel , from minister to minister , from book to book , and can scarcely tell who are right and who are wrong , who are the servants of God and who the servants of pride and self ; sometimes taken with this man and then with that man ; lifted up and carried about with every new scheme and every fresh doctrine

that wears an air of plausibility ; hurled sometimes well nigh on the shoals of error, and then driven away to sea without compass or pilot . How many are thus “ carried about ” all round the compass , “ with every wind of doctrine ” ! No minister can long please them ; no people long satisfy them ; no doctrine long hold them . They change their place of worship as worldly people their watering place , and love new faces and new voices as much as seaside visitors love new sight and new seas .

iii . But the Apostle adds a remarkable expression : “ By the sleight of men , and cunning craftiness , whereby they lie in wait to deceive . ” He opens a wonderful depth here . It strikes me sometime with astonishment when I read the Epistles , to see that in those early days , when the power of Christ was so manifest , and men had to carry their lives in their hands , there were such errors and heresies in the Church . Yet I see the wisdom of God in permitting it . There were then men of God , such as the apostles , who could point them out and write down the truth , the living truth of God , under the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost , and thus set up a certain standard , and fix unerring landmarks for the Church of Christ for all time .

This tossing to and fro results , the Apostle says , from “ the sleight of men . ” The original here is exceedingly expressive , or I would not mention it . The word translated “ sleight ” means literally , cheating at dice ; the allusion being to the practice of gamblers loading the

dice to obtain a favourable throw . I never saw it done myself , but I speak from what I have read . The dice are rightly marked and rightly thrown , but being loaded on one side , they always come up in favour of the cheat who throws them . So errors and heresies resemble loaded dice . They look all right , properly marked with texts and passages , and the minister or writer seems to throw them fully and fairly down before the people . And yet , like loaded dice , there is jugglery and deception at the bottom . As in sleight of hand , things are made to appear what they are not , so jugglers and cheats in religion deceive people by a show of piety and holiness , under the cover of which they hide the most destructive errors . Books , apparently very religious , but filled with infidelity , lie on every railway stall ; Jesuits , male and female , creep into families and schools as tutors and governesses , masters and mistresses , to entangle the young with Popish wiles ; Puseyites , with the Church of England in their mouth , and the Church of Rome in their heart , steal from house to house undermining all Protestant principles . The friends of truth are asleep , and the enemies awake ; simple souls are caught , but still the game goes on . Yet of all gamblers , religious gamblers are the worst , for the throw is for eternity , and the soul is at stake .

iv . But the Apostle uses another expression of great pith and power : “ cunning craftiness . ” The word means literally , “ the unprincipled conduct of a designing wretch , who will do anything to gain his ends . ” Such is the nature of error , that when

once a man's mind becomes thoroughly imbued with it, he cannot rest but as he propagates it. The man who holds error is sure to be ten times firmer in that error than many a child of God is in truth. Amazing, too, is the "cunning craftiness" of these erroneous men, "whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Though so deeply fixed in their errors, yet there is in them an instinctive consciousness that their views will not bear the light, and that the verdict of God's people is against them. "The righteous is as bold as a lion," but they are as crafty as a serpent. They therefore lie in wait, "as a serpent by the way as an adder in the path." David describes them well. "He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages; in the secret places doth he murder the innocent; his eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly, as a lion in his den. He lieth in wait to catch the poor; he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net" (Psalm 10: 8 & 9). Their delight is to catch some simple-hearted child of God, and under a show of deep experience, or wonderful manifestation, instil their poisonous errors into his ear and heart. Thus: "they lie in wait to deceive," or, as the words may be rendered, they pursue a systematic plan of deception, laying schemes to entrap the unwary, and are never so much pleased as when they can beguile an unstable soul into their net.

II. Now, how are we to be preserved from these dangers? If we remain always children, we shall not only be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but run

imminent hazard of being juggled into error by these dicers in religion, entrapped into some heresy by these crafty deceivers. A child playing with a gambler has small chance of winning; an unstable soul arguing with a crafty heretic is more likely to be beaten than to beat. What, then, is our safeguard? To be "sincere in love." I adopt, you will perceive, the marginal reading. It is more literal, and throws more light upon the passage. We have not a word in our language to convey the exact meaning. If I might coin a word for a moment, I would render it "truthing it"; that is, being truthful throughout — not merely truthful in speech, but in heart and life. "To speak the truth" is but the fruit; to be truthful or sincere is to possess the root. Nor is it the truthful lip, but the truthful heart that preserves from the sleight of men and the cunning craftiness of unprincipled deceivers. Sincerity lies at the root of all gracious profession. If a man be not sincere he is nothing. God makes a man sincere by planting His truth in his heart; and whenever God does make a man sincere, the truth which He has implanted will grow. Truth does not lie in a man's soul dead and motionless like a stone in Gower Street; it is a living, active, expansive principle. If the truth be in the soul it will be ever pushing out error, because the two principles cannot exist together; and as Isaac thrust out Ishmael, and Jacob proved stronger than Esau, so will simplicity and godly sincerity be ever mightier than craft and deception. The truth of God in the heart will not wither and die, but will be shined upon by the

sun of righteousness , and sunned into fruitfulness by the smiles of God ; and as truth becomes day by day more and more precious , so will error and evil become day by day more and more hateful . A sincere soul stand " girt about with truth , " and truth forms its shield and buckler .

But how does this Christian sincerity prove the soul 's safeguard from error ? By putting it ever on the watch tower , looking out and looking up for the teaching of God and the light of His countenance . A soul made spiritually sincere takes nothing upon trust , requires the seal of God on all it receives , and the witness of the Spirit to all that it feels . As a modest female is preserved by her modesty from the very approach of the seducer , her retiring sensitiveness forming her truest , her most impenetrable protection , so the very sincerity of an honest soul is its best safeguard from error . He who is sincere sees the rocks ahead , on which other concerning faith make shipwreck ; and being well ballasted with temptations , afflictions and trials , he is not easily tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine . His desire to be right keeps him right ; his fear to be wrong preserves him from wrong . Knowing the worth of his soul , he will not sit down with religious dicers and gamblers to take it upon the throw of their loaded dice ; and as he walks warily and cautiously , he is not easily bitten by the adder in the hedge , or caught by the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive . The light of God in his soul makes him see ; the life of God in his heart makes him feel ; the fear of

God in his conscience makes him honest ; the love of God in his affections makes him love ; and all this gives truth that firm place in him that there is no room for error . The Apostle adds , therefore , " in love . " It is not enough to be " sincere " ; we must be " sincere in love . " Mark that . It is not receiving God 's truth as a certain orderly system ; it is not furnishing our heads with a sound doctrinal creed and compact Calvinistic scheme which will avail us in the trying hour ; but it is to have the truth of God brought into our soul by a divine power , and realizing such unutterable sweetness in it as communicates a firm abiding love , both to the truth itself , and to Him of whom it testifies and from whom it comes . It is thus we are made " sincere in love . " The fear of God creates the sincerity , the application of the truth with power creates the love to it . And when we are thus made " sincere in love , " we are brought out of the childish state in which we are carried about with every wind of doctrine , and in danger of being entrapped by the cunning craft of every deceiver . We know the truth , love the truth , and become established in the truth .

The soul 's best , truest safeguard is love . The Apostle tells us why men " perish in all deceivableness of unrighteousness . " It is because " they receive not the love of the truth " ( 2 Thess . 2:10 ) . They fall into error because they never really loved the truth which they professed . The truth , when known by Divine teaching , makes free not only from guilt and bondage , but also from evil and error . Once love

the truth , and error never more can have a place in your heart .

III . But I was to show you what would be the end and blessed result : “ That we may grow up into Him in all things , which is the Head , even Christ . ” We have to grow up into Christ . Where self - righteousness or self - indulgence , self - conceit or self - dependence , or in whatever other form self may come , it is a deadly enemy to growth in grace .

There are two things we must ever be afraid of , error and evil . As the truth of God gets possession of your soul it displaces error and subdues evil . We learn to abhor them , and cannot willingly take such wretches into our bosom . Truth is like a person naturally clean and nice in his person , dress , and habits ; he cannot endure anything that is not clean also . Error and evil are like the filthy tramp , never so happy as in his dirt ; scissors and soap his intense abhorrence . As then truth is loved , error is hated ; as Christ is made precious , sin is abhorred . Thus , by the love of truth , the soul grows out of self in all its manifold forms , and becomes conformed , in its measure sure , to the image of its blessed Master . He is now no more a child , tossed to and fro , but a man in Christ . He stands firm in the gospel of Christ , because he has received the love of the truth , and the truth has made him free . It has been applied to his heart with divine power . He has tasted , felt and handled its sweetness and blessedness . Self sinks , error is spurned , evil is abhorred , the world — at least as to its alluring charms — forsaken , and experimental knowledge is ob-

tained of the Son of God , and thus he grows up into Christ in all things — in faith , in hope , in love , in union and communion , in obedience and in conformity .

Here we see the blessedness of a Gospel ministry ; for if you read the connection of the text you will clearly see that it is closely associated with the perfecting of the saints , the work of the ministry , the edifying of the body of Christ . Those , therefore , who despise a Gospel ministry , only write themselves down ignorant . No child of God who has ever been blessed under a Gospel ministry can despise it . It is , in the hands of God , a means of building up the Church , and by its instrumentality the Holy Spirit brings the saints out of their childish state into the maturity of the Christian life .

The great want of to - day is a Gospel ministry of this nature . We want men who can preach the Gospel as it was preached in days of old , with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven ; and owing to this , in a measure , it is that many of God 's dear saints are tossed to and fro all their days .

This growth we may view as threefold : 1 . The growth of the mystical body of Christ considered as a whole . The body of Christ may be considered incomplete until all the members are brought out into their decreed position . “ In Thy book all My members were written when as yet there was none of them . ” The members were written in the book of life before one of them came into actual being ; but until those that are lying in the womb of time come forth into actual and spiritual manifesta -

tion, the body lacks a part of its full completion. The accession, therefore, of every regenerated soul to the Church of Christ is an accession to its growth. As a building grows by the addition of stone after stone, so the continual addition of living stones makes the spiritual building grow "unto a holy temple in the Lord."

2. Another growth is the growth of a Gospel church; and this growth is twofold — the growth from without, by the goodly addition of godly members; and the growth from within, by the goodly increase of godly fruit. And these usually go together. A decaying church dies gradually in the branches, from the necessary bereavements it sustains and the non-addition of godly members; and dies gradually at the same time at the root by the decay of the life of God within. The two things go together. A church dying at the root pushes forth no fresh branches, and gradually becomes a withered trunk; whilst a church with life in the root is ever pushing forth living branches.

3. The third growth is of the believer individually, when he goes forth and grows up as a calf of the stall.

Blessed is it when the body of Christ as a whole — a Gospel church as an integral part of that whole — and individual believers as members of Christ, are thus growing up into Him in all things — in knowledge, in faith, in love, in obedience, and in conformity to His image and example. Blessed is it when they grow in humility, godly fear, deadness to the world, submission to His Word and will, separation from evil,

spirituality of mind, brokenness of heart, contrition of spirit, love and liberality to the saints, simplicity and godly sincerity, prayerfulness and watchfulness; in a word, in every Christian fruit and heavenly grace. To grow up into Christ in all things is the sum and substance of vital godliness.

I have spoken feebly and imperfectly, for there is a depth of truth in this passage which I feel to exhaust all my powers to speak of adequately. I have, therefore, merely given you a few fragmentary thoughts, though I have been purposely brief on the last head, as hoping to pursue the subject this evening. But may the Lord bless them to your souls, supply all my deficiency, and lead you into the truth for yourselves. Meditate upon these things. Pray that the Lord would establish them in your heart and conscience, that you may see the blessedness and beauty of them, and be led by the Spirit of God, who alone can lead you into all truth. The Lord give His blessing, and crown with His own heavenly dew and sacred unction what has been spoken in His Name.

J. C. Philpot

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 3 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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## STABILITY

*New Vernon, N.Y., Nov. 15, 1842.*

**T**he apostle has warned the members of the christian church against being carried about by divers and strange doctrines, and urges the importance of their hearts being established with grace. It is essential, not only to our usefulness in our connection with the citizens of Zion, but also to our own individual peace and comfort. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways," and is not therefore to be relied on in anything. However sincere or well meaning, he is at the mercy of every wind that blows. At one moment he professes firm and unshaken faith in the doctrine and order of the gospel, his faith appears to be sufficient to remove mountains, his zeal is ardent and love flaming; but alas! the wind veers about, and his ear is caught by some strange and novel sound, his eye is allured by some new wildfire light, and he is afloat upon the bosom of some treacherous and uncertain sea without chart or compass. To-day he mingles with the flock of Jesus, weeps in sympathy for their tears, burns with ardent devotion when they pray, sounds the highest notes when they sing, and participates with them in all the variety of their exercises — anon he is seen in the ranks of the alien, laboring to impeach the doctrine of Christ, joins in the clamor of those who ridicule the experience of the children of God, and is loud and long in repudiating the order of the house of God. Again as though conscious of his propensity to err, he seeks a middle

way, places himself between the firing of the two conflicting interests of Christ and Belial, and offers a treaty of peace to both. Such professors of religion are never to be relied on; they cause continual agitation and turmoil in the church, and, so far as their influence is felt among the young and weak of the saints, cause wavering and fear.

Now while the dread hurricane of delusion and heresy is sweeping our country with all kinds of false doctrines, how important it is that the saints should be established in the truth, should have on the whole armor of righteousness, and having done all, stand fast; firmness and decision are very important. No one should take the Old School Baptist stand who can conveniently be anything else, and certainly one might suppose there is very little inducement among us to allure those who wish to be in favor with the world, the flesh or Satan. Those who from thorough conviction of the correctness of the ground we occupy find a necessity laid on them to join our ranks, will be likely to endure hardness as good soldiers, and count all things but dross for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Such persons will be stable, and such will prove a blessing to Zion in comforting, encouraging and confirming the feeble and the wavering, and to such we bid a hearty welcome to bear with us the cross and share with us the crown.

We are informed the apostles went about confirming the souls of those who believed. If those who are strong among the flock of Christ

would copy the apostolic example , and endeavor to strengthen the hands that hang down and confirm the feeble knees , the result would be more happy than to denounce all who , for want of deeper experience and more extensive instruction , have failed to come up to their standard of orthodoxy . If the strong are required to bear the infirmities of the weak , let the energies of those who by reason of age are able to digest the strong meat , remember that the lambs require to be fed on the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby . We certainly need to have in exercise all the gifts of the Spirit with all wisdom and patience , that we may put to flight the armies of the aliens , and dash all their little ones against the wall , and at the same time “ Hurt not the corn nor the oil .”

Elder Beebe

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**PROVERBS 17 : 27 & 28 .**

*He that hath knowledge spareth his words : and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit .*

*Even a fool , when he holdeth his peace , is counted wise : and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding .*

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**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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**CONTRIBUTIONS**

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Mrs Ilene Clifton , VA .....	2.00
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**OBITUARIES**

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**BROTHER CISCO BARRON**

**W**e at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Spearsville, La. feel a great loss in the passing of Brother Cisco Barron , a precious and faithful brother and deacon , but

let us not weep as those who have no hope. Surely, surely, our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Barron united with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church Sept., 2, 1933 and was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes. He was ordained deacon in November, 1956 and also served as clerk for many, many years.

He loved the precious doctrine of Salvation by Grace and loved to talk of the gracious, all wise, all powerful God. He loved those of like precious faith, and he and his companion have entertained Old Baptists from far and near many years.

He was born Oct. 26, 1904, the second son of Henry and Ela Rockett Barron and departed this life Oct. 4, 1989. He is survived by his dear wife of almost 61 years, Ruby S. Barron; two sons: Ned and Bruce; four grandchildren: Tim, Pam, Clint, and Kelli; two brothers: Gurvis and Harold; three sisters: Ruth Wade, Florine Kelley and Nell McWaters and Stepmother, Mrs. Ethel Gray. He is also survived by a host of friends and loved ones which was manifested by all the kindness, floral offerings and memorial donations to our church and other organizations.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Graydon Smith Oct. 5, 1989 at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church. Burial followed in the Spearsville Cemetery with Elder Jimmy Hamrick assisting Elder Smith with graveside prayer.

Although he will be deeply missed as a dear brother, deacon, husband, father and friend, may we be given to bow in humble sub-

mission to our God, giving thanks for the many years of love and fellowship we've been blessed to share with this dear one.

Written by order of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church while in conference Nov. 4, 1989.

By one who loved him dearly,  
Mary Barron

### MILTON BEDFORD FOUNTAIN

**B**y request of Hadnot Creek Church, will try to write a few words in memory of our beloved brother. Brother Milton was born Jan. 1st, 1924 — died July 9th, 1989. Leaving to mourn, his dear wife Marie (Williams) Fountain, whom he married Oct. 8th, 1950, one son Rex Fountain, and one daughter Mrs. Diana F. Dail. Three grandchildren and one brother Philip Fountain. Brother Milton joined New Bay Church in 1974 and while a member there was ordained to the office of Deacon. In 1987 he was received into Hadnot Creek Church as a Deacon. He also served as clerk of the Contentnea Union and Association, also was chosen to serve on the board of trustees of the American Union of Baptist. Headquarters in Salisbury, MD.

Brother Milton was one of strong conviction. He was blessed to stand firm in the Doctrine of God our Savior sometimes even in the midst of heartbreaking circumstances.

Brother Milton served faithfully in all that he was faced with, a God-fearing Brother, a loving husband

and father to his family .

May God bless us all with reconciling Grace and say sleep on dear brother , take thy rest , looking forward to that blessed day when there will be no more sad partings , but all join in everlasting praise to one that doeth all things well .

Humbly submitted ,  
Pastor , J . T . Prescott  
Clerk , Vilma Rhue

### REBECCA MARTIN WARF MOON

**R**ebecca Martin Warf Moon , daughter of Andrew and Agnes Jenkins Martin was born February 5 , 1902 and died June 5 , 1989 .

Sister Moon joined The Willow Springs Church in Hickman County July 12 , 1919 and was baptized by Elder C . M . Wood . She served as church clerk at Willow Springs from August 1921 until 1924 when she moved out of the vicinity . She joined the Church at Bordeaux , Tenn . by letter from the Willow Springs Church on January 6 , 1960 and remained a faithful member until her death . She was able to attend church until a few months before she died .

She was elected clerk of the Bordeaux Church shortly before the writer was called as their pastor and I have known and loved her since that time . Her church was the center of her life and she was devoted to it and to the members and friends . It can be said that she was strong in the faith and loved the doctrine of salva-

tion by the sovreign grace of an all wise , all powerful God who created all things for himself .

Sister Moon was survived by sons : Harrel Warf of Nashville , Tenn . , J . B . Warf of Santa Fe , Tenn . eight grandchildren , nine great grandchildren , one great great grandchild ; sisters Myrtle Cockran , Lyles , Tenn . , Viola Curle , Fairview , Tenn . ; brothers James Martin , Zulfo Springs , Fla . and Freeman Martin , Hermitage , Tenn .

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Richard H . Campbell at the Woodlawn Funeral Home in Nashville .

Written by request of the Church ,  
Richard H . Campbell  
Marjorie Cook

### SISTER ELSIE BRUMFIELD SWANN

**W**e humbly bow to the will of God , A God that does all things well . Sister Elsie Swann was born February 21 , 1902 to the late William C . Brumfield and Leala Giles Brumfield . She died May 26 , 1989 in Memorial Hospital , Danville , Va . , leaving two Brothers , Vernard C . Brumfield and J . Howard Brumfield , one Sister , Ocie B . Blair , a number of nieces and nephews . Sister Elsie married Rufus F . Swann Oct . 11 , 1944 . He died October 3 , 1954 . She had been a member of Danville Primitive Baptist Church for nearly 40 years . Her funeral was held at Barker Funeral Home by her Pastor , Elder H . W . Wray . She was laid to rest in Hyland Burial Park to wait for

the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ . Wrote by Russell Holley by the request of Danville Church .

Elder H. W. Wray , Mod .  
R. T. Holley , Clerk

#### ELDER JOSHUA " TOM " TURNER

**H**enry County 's oldest citizen died Thursday , January 25 , 1990 at the Eldercare in Rocky Mount .

Elder Joshua Thomas Turner was 104 .

Although he was born April 17 , 1885 , on the Franklin County side , his mailing address was Dodson , Va. , in Patrick County . His parents were the late Robert " Robin " Turner and the late Sarah Ellen Turner . He grew up on a farm in the Union Bridge Community , helping his father in his blacksmith shop . Turner would later operate his own smithy .

Following a stint in West Virginia where he built mining cars for a coal company , he returned to Bassett to work in a furniture factory , and shortly thereafter opened a small grocery store which he would operate for 18 years . He also purchased a store in the Fort Trial Community and still later the Trading Post at Oak Level . Later he bought the old Bassett Shoe Shop and operated that another 15 years .

While Turner had a variety of careers , none was more influential on him than his service as a minister in the Primitive Baptist Church for more than 60 years . He was a former

pastor and member of Knob Primitive Baptist Church .

He is survived by five daughters , Mrs . William G . ( Eva ) Hill of Stanleytown , Mrs . Nelson ( Clara ) Bryant of Bassett , Miss Esther Turner of Oak Level , Mrs . Kenneth ( Lula ) Fulcher of West End , N. C. , and Mrs . Wilbur ( Lillie ) Doyle of Martinsville ; three sons , Lancaster Turner of Irisburg , Elmeade Turner of Oak Level , and Thomas G. Turner of Bassett ; 19 grandchildren ; 34 great- grandchildren , and five great- great- grandchildren .

The funeral was conducted at 2 p. m. Sunday , January 28 , from the Chapel of Collins Funeral Services in Bassett . Burial followed in Rose - lawn Burial Park .

#### PROVERBS 24 : 1 - 7 .

*Be not thou envious against evil men , neither desire to be with them .*

*For their heart studieth destruction , and their lips talk of mischief .*

*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 .*

*A wise man is strong ; yea , a man of knowledge increaseth strength .*

*For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war : and in multitude of counsellors there is safety .*

*Wisdom is too high for a fool : he openeth not his mouth in the gate .*

# Signs of the Times

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*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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## TRIBULATION

*Tribulation is A troublesome route,  
Brings you down in the region of doubts,  
But when we know that the people of God  
Were chosen out of the furnace, brought  
down with the rod.*

*Israel wept, when Moses led,  
Them into the wilderness, to be fed,  
They didn't like the knowledge of the  
truth,  
For their fleshy lives this did not suit.*

*Many fell in the wilderness way,  
As so do all who come to that day,  
But when we fall we know that we,  
Are depending on God to make us see.*

*The beauty lies in God's own hands,  
To bring us through the wilderness land,  
Though troubled times will make us sad,  
It paves the way that makes us glad.*

*From Egypt we traveled, to the wilder-  
ness of sin,  
Where we break the laws of God and we  
feel it within,  
But Christ paid, for the sins we've done,  
He opened the way to peace, with A voice  
that says come.*

*A sister in hope of a better world,  
Kate Mathews, Shreveport, La.*

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 EDITORIAL
 

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Some thoughts on a scripture I have wondered about a long time. These came to mind last Sunday as Elder Chapell was preaching re : Abraham , Ishmael and Isaac .

*Verily , verily I say unto you , he that believeth on me , the works that I do shall ye do also ; and greater works than these shall he do ; because I go to my Father . John XIV , vs . 12 .*



Elder R. H. Campbell

I have read this verse of scripture many times over the years and each time I was made to wonder at these words of Jesus . It was at a very solemn time in his ministry ; he

had eaten his last passover with his apostles , washed their feet and was spending some of his last few hours with them before he was to be crucified . He was teaching them the things that would be accomplished by his work here on earth and how it would be reflected in their lives down through the generations to come , and what their role would be in the gospel dispensation . They did not know the meaning of what Jesus was saying either because they did not have the spiritual discernment to know the things of the spirit . They had been with Jesus throughout his ministry and many times they questioned what he was saying and did not understand what he was teaching . On one occasion just prior to his crucifixion ; when he appeared in their midst and frightened them , he showed them evidence that he was really Jesus and as he taught them the scripture ( Luke XXIV vs. 45 says , ) “ Then opened he their understanding , that they might understand the scriptures ,”

When the subject text was spoken by Jesus , they were still under the law ; he was teaching the gospel truths that were contained in the law , fulfilling what was prophesied by the prophets of old but at the time they were still under the law . The law was to the natural man , God 's chosen nation of Israel its true , but was to the natural man in the flesh . The law was given to direct him in the way that he should live and by so living he was blessed in the natural things of the world and would be blessed and cared for by the giver of the law . The law led the children of Israel to the gospel day but did not reveal the fullness of the truths contained

therein; it brought them to Christ but it did not enable them to know him unless he revealed himself to them during his ministry here on earth. He revealed himself to his elect, those chosen in him before time began and to no one else. The world by their natural wisdom knows not God nor his son, then now, or anytime in the future. The nation of Israel had to be told by the prophets of old that a deliverer would come and deliver them, but, they thought in natural terms and believed that he would restore the natural kingdom of Israel to its former glory and therefore did not understand what was happening

Christ, while here on earth performed many miracles and mighty works in the midst of the children of Israel, and while it was the work of the spirit that did them, the things that were done were to the man in the flesh. When he gave sight to the blind, the man received his natural sight for the remaining days of his life and enjoyed the things of nature and a normal natural life. When one was raised from the dead and restored to life, he lived for a few more years and then died again. When the lepers were cleansed, the lame healed and the hungry multitudes fed, they were all blessings in nature to the man in the flesh for their enjoyment in this life and then they went the way of all flesh. These miracles indeed gave to all of them a better quality of life in the flesh; and although great and wonderful displays of the powers of God over his Creation, they were, as the law, to the flesh and all ended at death. This is not to imply that they are not beautiful and marvelous demonstra-

tions of God's mighty power and show his love and mercy toward them but they are still blessings to the man in the flesh for his enjoyment, comfort and pleasure in this life.

All of this is to show that just as the law still prevailed during Jesus' life and that the law and grace do not mix. Just as the law included types which carry over to the gospel day and Jesus' miracles were types of what would be in the gospel day they were all still under the law which is to the man in natural things. Jesus was teaching spiritual truths to those who had not the spirit and would not have it til the day of Pentecost. As the scriptures says in several places, when miracles were performed, that after spiritual life they would remember those things which he had taught them, and understand the teachings.

When Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father" was speaking of a time to come when he would have gone to be with his Father and they would do the works that he had done and indeed would do even greater works than these. We would say; how could they do greater works than Jesus did? John XIV 16, 17 states, "And I will pray unto my Father, and he will 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." These are all part of the same text and explains how these works

shall be performed ; they are the same beautiful line of truth and inspiring prophecy of things to come in the gospel dispensation in which we live today . The last words that Jesus spoke to his disciples while here on earth were ,” But ye shall receive power , after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem , and in Judea , and in Samaria , and unto the uttermost part of the earth .” The same glorious line of truth and brings about the way in which the subject text was brought to pass .

As we have stated the works that Jesus did were miracles of nature and applied to the man in the flesh and benefited him naturally . On the day of Pentecost , these Apostles were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind , and it filled the house in which they were sitting . And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire , and sat upon each of them . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost , and began to speak with other tongues , as the spirit gave them utterance . Now they have been qualified to do those works that Jesus did and yea greater works than those that Jesus did . They are no longer under the law and bound to the flesh , they have been baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire and are freed from the shackles of flesh and are able to do spiritual works in the hearts and minds of the elect because of the Spirit of truth dwelleth with them and is in them . They spake with

other tongues by this spirit and devout men out of every nation under heaven heard them in their own tongue , turned to God and three thousand souls were added to them on that day . Is not the turning of mens hearts and minds from the things of nature unto God greater works that healing the lame of body and feeding the hungry . These greater works that the Apostles did are because they are spiritual and eternal , the benefits do not end at death , rather they increase as the children grow in grace and knowledge of their salvation and will reach the full fruition when they enter into the joy of their Lord and King on heavens bright shore .

I believe that surely this is the truth of the above text as Jesus speaks of the greater works that they shall do , but remember , he says that ye shall do them because I go unto my Father . It is a precious privilege to be where , on certain occasions , we feel to behold some of those greater works being made manifest as an Elder is blessed to stand and proclaim the glorious truths in all its beauty and purity and observe the effects as the children of God are fed with the manna from on high . Surely this is a greater work than feeding of the multitudes with bread and fishes , although , I believe that this miracle of the loaves and fishes is a type pointing to this spiritual feasting which we experience .

In bonds of love ,  
Richard H. Campbell

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 CORRESPONDENCE
 

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716 Hill Ave .  
Salem , Va . 24153

Dear Editor ,

**H**orace E . Walker departed this life Jan . 1 , 1990 for a better one with his Lord Jesus Christ .

He dictated his last letter to the Signs of the Times Dec . 27 , 1989 and passed away the following Monday at 7:15 p . m .

( See obituary this issue . )

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 WALKING THROUGH THE YEARS

February 5 , 1990

Dear Brethren & Sisters in Christ :

**I** have been shut - in a few days with bronchial asthma and I have missed church a lot . I am doing better now . The past Saturday evening I lay down on my bed to rest . I looked over at the clock . It was time for singing to start at my church . A flood of tears filled my eyes and rolled down my cheeks . Something I had been hoping and begging for . It seems for a long time I have been shut away . I could not cry , neither could I enjoy the preaching as I once did . I said over and over , " Return unto me the joys of thy salvation . " It is so good when we can rejoice in the Love of God , which is past all natural understand-

ing . Since then my mind has been carried way back in my life .

I am the youngest of 13 children . I had wonderful parents — Davis and Milia Dudley . I was a mischievous child and needed correction . My mother was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church . She joined Chestnut Primitive Baptist Church in 1900 . She took her baby in her lap ( my brother Vernon ) , rode a horse on a side saddle to church .

My Daddy worked hard on the farm to make a living for his children . Mother told him she offered to the church and they received her in so much love . He said if you had told me I would have gone . He was a believer in Christ but did not join until he was 61 . My first thoughts of God was when I was a very small girl . A Bible salesman came by our house and my mother bought a New Testament with large print . He gave me the Book of Matthew with red backs on it . I carried it and read it until I wore the backs out and Mother sewed them on with black thread . I always got my verses for school out of it . I knew way back there was a " hereafter " and I feared hell . I wanted to know more .

My mother was a praying lady . I could hear her sometimes real low begging God to lead and guide her and to keep her in the straight and narrow way and help her raise her family . " Oh , If I Could Hear My Mother Pray Again " She loved her Bible and had a beautiful voice . She sang hymns a lot as she worked . She had her little Goble hymn book well worn . In winter , sometimes as we sat around the fireplace , she would lead the songs . Most of us

children knew them by heart. I could tell her the number of most of the pages of them. I enjoyed singing with her. They were Special Moments. I still love her prayer and it became my prayer.

In 1922 my Dad went to church all the time with Mother and sat on the front bench. One day he laid down to rest after lunch. While on his bed he asked God was it right for him to set on the front bench. The answer came back to him, "You have a perfect right." He came out of the bedroom singing "Amazing Grace" to the top of his voice and he looked at me and said, "Florence, go get Walter." I went through a path in the woods like a bullet. They talked all evening. On a Sunday in August when Dad was 60 years old he offered to the church at Sandy Level. Elder Randolph Perdue was pastor there. As Dad turned to come off the stand, he threw his arms wide open and said, "O, here comes Walter." What a rejoicing time they had. Everyone was crying. I cried, too. I guess I knew something about it, in part — a wee part. Mother moved her membership to Sandy Level also.

My parents had the ministers in their home for lunch or spend the night and would talk late at night. I loved to listen and sometime would fall asleep somewhere back in the corner on the floor. Elder Randolph Perdue was a favorite of mine.

I lived not too far from my parents after I was married. My daughter, Elnora, and I would walk through Jackson Park to get to their home as it was not far from them. She would run in the house to get Grandma. In

the summer many times my Daddy would be sitting under a tree with the Bible. He would ask me to sit down as he wanted to tell me what he was reading. I tried to keep him from knowing I was interested in every word. He told me that some day I would be a Primitive Baptist. I tried so hard to come up the wrong way. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Time went on a long time before I could have told you what real prayer was. I don't know whether I had really truly prayed, but I know this one time my prayer was answered in a moment. My daughter had to have her appendix removed at the age of 5. After she came home from the hospital she became real ill with a kidney infection. On Sunday night she did not notice us. Roy said, "I am going to get your mother." When he closed the door, the thought came to me forcibly — you need the healing power of Jesus. I knelt down on my knees by her bed and tried to beg God if it be His will to heal my baby. I don't know how long I was there. The tears flowed. A neighbor knocked at the door to ask how Elnora was. He said, "Mrs. Maxey you are crying. Is she all right?" When I went back to her, she had picked up her doll. No one could not tell me that was not a prayer answered in a moment. O, what a kind and loving Jesus, OH! how thankful I was. Roy and Mother came a few minutes later. Roy could not believe she had changed so much for the better and I could not tell them about my prayer until later. This has always been so precious to me.

In 1938 when Elnora was 7 years old , I gave birth to Siamese twin boys . They were grown together on the side near the abdomen area . I was at home . The doctor called in another doctor . My husband and his sister were there . The doctor said it was my life or theirs . Together they weighed almost 12 pounds . This weighed on my mind . One of my neighbors brought my lunch one day while I was still in bed and she talked to me so sweet . I remember her words that helped so much . “ Wouldn ’ t you rather your babies would be in Jesus ’ arms than yours . ”

After this for many years it seemed I just rolled along . Some - time seeing myself a hell deserving sinner . I did not feel I was fit to be noticed . Then this would leave me and I would be going along doing the things that young people like to do .

In 1941 on March 25th my Dad was taken from us . He had been paralyzed 10 years previously but had overcome a lot of his disability . My mother had come over to my home . I had cut out a dress to make for her . Dad went up in his little garden with his hoe and had a heart attack and fell against the fence . Their neighbor saw him and called her doctor and got him in the back porch . Jack McGuire came to get us . Dad was in such pain . I called the doctor and ask if there was anything that I could do . He told me a blood vessel had broken and was flooding his heart . He passed away at 7:00 P . M .

I had been under the doctor ’ s care . Some of my family spent the night with us . The next morning I

was not able to get up and fix breakfast . My fingers and toes drew under . The doctor told me I could not go to the funeral . He gave me an injection to relax me . I had to go ! Oh , how I tried to thank my Jesus .

In 1944 my dear husband was called into service . Oh , how we missed each other . My daughter was 13 years old . She was at the age she needed to be with her school friends . Our hearts were broken . Roy and I wrote regularly . Some - times we would jot down a chapter and verse of a scripture . We both were searching . He was in service January , 1944 until June , 1946 .

In August , 1945 he was transferred from England by boat to the Pacific , near Manila . We did not hear from him for 45 days . Elnora and I were frantic — then , just a little card — “ Safe will write later . ” His boat was picked up by the enemy . Of course , the men were upset . Roy was praying . He told me he felt the arms of God wrapped around the boat and was shown that they would be saved .

Oh , what a kind and loving Savior that loves us and cares when are not aware . I feel sometime that I could praise his Name forever . Then , I am down in the valley again .

In January , 1947 I went to Roanoke Church by bus . Roy was called to work that day . The sermon seemed to be to me . I shed so many tears . I tried to get out of the church without notice . A friend , Lena Holland , caught me and she said , “ Here is a girl that needs to talk to the Church . ” I said , “ No , I felt so unfit . ” I ran to catch my bus . I could not tell my mother about this . She

did not know us for one month before she died . She passed away on January 28 , 1947 . I could not tell anyone about anything . I felt so sinful !

In November , 1947 I had been waiting two weeks for a room in the hospital for an operation . Roy went hunting that day . When they called to tell me they had a room and for me to be there by 3:00 P.M . , I left a note , took my bag , and caught the bus . Roy and Elnora came to the hospital that night . I was operated on the next morning . I'll never forget the band of angels over my carriage singing loud , " God will take care of you ." My special nurse went with me in the operating room . She told me later that in all her nursing she had never seen such a smile on anyone's face .

I was so sick part of my stay in the hospital from the ether . An old lady across the hall thought I was going to die . I told my nurse to tell her , " No , I would be all right ." I could still hear those angels singing .

Soon I became so burdened again and my prayer , if it was prayer , was Lord , have mercy . I felt so sinful for justice . I was like the poor Publican that did not feel he could lift his eyes to heaven .

We attended church most every Sunday at this time . Elder Cecil Turner was coming to the church on the 1st Saturday and Sunday and 5th Sunday . Elder Landon Harris on the 3rd Sunday .

I was burdened so heavy one night begging God to show me the way . My Dad appeared before me with open arms . He said , " Come on , Florence , you are all right ."

On the 3rd Sunday , March , 1948 , we went to church . Elder Harris took his text from James 2 ( 17-26 ) . I was sitting two-thirds of the way back beside my brother's wife , Mattie Dudley . Elder Harris explained this so beautifully to me . Faith without works is dead . He preached so wonderful to me . He said that works through faith was singing songs of praise to God , visiting the sick , lending a helping hand , giving a cup of cold water . I did not mean to join that day , but , I found myself down there talking . I don't know what I said , only I loved the church and felt unfit . They received me in so much love . I was happy that day and night but the next morning I felt I should not have gone to the Church . How could I deceive those dear people ! I was unfit !

I had to go downtown the next day to pay our service bills . When I got on the bus , a dear neighbor and friend , Sister Sally English , was on there . I did not feel fit to touch that dear one . She hugged me and said , " Florence , you were so pretty yesterday . You told us such pretty things and your face shone as the sun ." ( I took her to church in her later years as long as she was able to go .)

Oh , what a miserable person I was . I had deceived the most precious people . I did not know many of them — only by faces . I could not stay in the bed at night . I would try to slip out and go back to my breakfast room chair . There to try to beg some more . Sometimes I would go to the attic or basement . I was scheduled for baptism by Elder Turner with Sister Clara Hale the 1st

Saturday in April (Easter Saturday). I just did not see how I could. I knew I could not the way I felt. I had rather changed places with the dog or the bait worms. I was glad for my Roy to go to work Elnora to go to school. I wanted to read my Bible but I did not want them to know. I read the new Testament through those two weeks. I felt so sinful I did not know how they could touch me. Oh, dear ones, I was on my knees so much, begging and asking God to show me the way. One evening Roy came in from work and found me on my knees with the Bible open in front of me to John, Chapter 15, verse 16-19. He was so kind and dear to me. I said, "Daddy, read this. Can you explain it to me?" He told me what he thought about it. We both sat in the chair together and he said, "Florence, I believe in religion but I am afraid you are going to lose your mind." So tender! I kept reading my Bible.

My brother, Harry belonged to my church. I knew he was coming to see me and I thought he had been a member so long that he could tell me what to do. When he came, I froze. I could not talk about that. I was shown this was between God and me. No human hand could help. On Friday before I was to be baptized on Saturday, I had the vacuum out to clean. I went down on my knees to beg my God some more. All at once the room lit up like the rays of the noon day. I looked up and a scroll seemed to open across the heaven with my name on it. My burden rolled away. Oh, what a precious Savior. When I came out of the water the

tears rolled. Everyone was so loving.

Father's Day, June, 1950, my dear husband joined. Elder Harris' text was The Prodigal Son. He was baptized the 3rd Sunday in July by Elder Harris. The day Roy joined was also a day of rejoicing. He was put in as deacon at Roanoke Church, Jan. 5, 1957.

We moved in our new home on Monday, the day after he was baptized. We were so happy together. Our daughter married in November. She gave us a son-in-law, Marion Paitzel who has always been kind and good to us. We enjoyed going to Associations in different places — Upper County Line, Virginia Correspondence. Also, Hopewell in Alabama where we spent the night with Elder Griffin. It seemed we both loved everyone. From 1948 — 1965 were great years with our church people. We kept meeting more and more dear ones. Our home was open to them. Elder Lambert stayed with us two weeks one time and we loved every minute of it.

In September, 1958 the American Viscose closed its plant in Roanoke. This was a hard blow for us as this had been Roy's employment since he was 16 years of age.

In 1964 along came Alzheimer's disease. No one knows how hard that was to stand by and watch body and mind deteriorate. Finally, the last 18 months he did not know me or his daughter whom he loved so much.

Following the closing of the American Viscose, Brother E. V. Poff asked Roy to come and work for them in his stock room. They were very dear

friends . The Association was at Roanoke Church in 1964 . About 2 days before that Association Brother Poff came to my home . ( Elnora was there , too .) He told us that Roy 's health had gone down so he could not keep him on . We knew all about his health . I wanted him to tell me when it became a problem . Roy was so restless . I walked and walked with him . My children wanted me to take driving lessons . That helped so much — when he was so tense , I would take him out in the car for awhile . The doctor asked did he have a trade . He had been a barber while in service . The doctor suggested he go to Barber School for six months . If he did not pass the test he said it would be good for him anyway . When it was time to go to Richmond for the test our dear son - in - law , who was so good to him , took him there and was his model for the testing . He passed the test and worked for a while for a Mr . Cadd whom he had known . He would wake up at night — “ Mommy , I did not cut the lights out , or I did not empty the till in the cash register .” I would always get up and go with him . Everything was always all right .

I quit my work to stay with him . My personnel manager told me I was going to lose a lot in profit sharing , but , Roy came first with me .

In February , 1970 he had to go to the Veterans Hospital . I could not manage him . He tried all the time to go outside in the cold in his pajamas . Also he had a cross disposition . It was snowing and Valentine 's Day . We had been up all night and I was at my wit 's end . The doctor said , “ Mrs . Maxey , you will have to take him to

Veterans Hospital .” I cried my heart out . I want to praise the Veterans Hospital and their staff . I felt they cared for him well . Either my daughter or I visited him most every-day by 1:00 P .M . We did not want him to forget us . He was there 25 1/2 months and passed away on March 25 , 1972 .

I have a lovely granddaughter , Melissa . She has always been a pride and joy . Her husband is Tom Vaughan and I now have two great grandsons whom I love dearly .

Family ties are sweet , but my church and church family are a world of joy . Elder Cecil Turner was my pastor for 32 years . He and his dear wife were in our home a lot . He was a good pastor . He always liked good order . They both were so kind to me during Roy 's illness . They visited Roy a lot . I could always go to him with questions on Bible verses and he gave me careful consideration . Elder Leonard Brammer is my pastor now . He and his wife are very dear . It was hard for me to give up Elder Turner . The Lord knows best . I love to have a few of my church people in my home for lunch , but my joy in that is hearing the scripture discussed . Elder Brammer handed the Bible to Elder Clarence Stone the last time I had them here . He told him , this is what she wants to hear .

The 139th Psalm is so precious to me . I felt as David — The Lord know our down sittings and uprising , and our thoughts from afar . What thoughts sometime ?

If I know my heart I love my church — the Household of Faith everywhere . I pray that the Lord will keep me in the right way .

On 2nd Sunday , February 11 , I went with three of my church friends to Chestnut Church . Elder Lane Carter is pastor there . My pastor , Elder Leonard Bramer , was there also . I thought it was a wonderful meeting . Crumbs from the Master's table ! I requested the song , " I Need Thee Precious Jesus " and in closing " What Wondrous Love Is This . " My cup ran over .

Blessed be His Holy Name .

A little one , if one at all ,  
Florence D . Maxey

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### ARTICLES

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The following article is a reprint from the Danville Register and Bee , Danville , Virginia dated February 1990 . Sent to the " Signs " by Mrs . Mildred Weatherford Hanks .

#### COUNTY PREACHER JAILED FOR SERMONS

**E**n route to Java and Riceville along Route 640 , one comes upon a modest country church moments after crossing Route 832 , " the South Boston Bypass . " At the entrance to this church — Shockoe Baptist by name — stands a historical marker honoring an early pioneer of religious liberty — Elder John Weatherford .

To religious scholars , the name is familiar , but to most of those who have driven within preaching distance of his grave , John Weatherford is simply a figure from the dark recesses of history , a man the state of Virginia has deemed worthy of

recognition — by motorists whizzing by at 55 mph . But how many of these folks have taken the time to stop for a quick look - see at the signpost ?

As is the case with all such markers , the details are sketchy . One learns that Weatherford died at the ripe old age of 93 and is buried a half - mile from the church . One also discovers that this dissenting minister preached the Word for 70 years and was defended by no less a personage than Patrick Henry after being arrested for unlicensed preaching and thrown into the Chesterfield County jail .

#### LICENSE TO PREACH

However , the marker provokes more queries than it answers . For example , just why would the colonial authorities imprison a kindly man of the cloth — which , by all accounts , John Weatherford was ?

To answer such a question , it behooves one to understand the religious tenor of the times , both in England and in her prized colony named for the Virgin Queen . Anglicanism was the established religion and the Church of England was the Established Church . Any waywardness from the Book of Common Prayer was frowned upon ; religious toleration , though mandated by the decree of William and Mary in 1689 , was scarcely recognized and even more infrequently enforced .

As early as 1623 , less than two decades after the first settlers scrambled ashore at Jamestown , every plantation or settlement was required to have a church or

meetingroom where worship could take place according to the tenets of the Church of England. Laws were passed in intervening stages thereafter to make Virginia safe for Anglicanism, and decidedly unsafe for any religious non-conformists.

However, during the Interregnum, when Cromwell ruled England, the colonial parishes were left to their own consciences as to what form their worship would take. For this brief period, an understated religious pluralism flourished. But upon the Restoration of Charles II to the throne of England, the supremacy of the Established Church was restored as well.

Then came though the Glorious Revolution of 1689 and the ascension to the throne of William and Mary. Their landmark Toleration Act secured the right, theoretically if not in practice, "to worship freely beyond the pale of the state church." In Virginia, a Presbyterian congregation quickly sprung up along the banks of the Elizabeth River in Norfolk County.

However, obtaining the license to preach dissenting doctrine was easier said than done. Because county courts would not grant such permission, all such preachers were obliged to travel to Williamsburg, the colonial capital, to receive their licenses. What's more, their requests had to be accompanied by a petition signed by two county magistrates and 20 people of similar religious persuasion and then verified by a clergyman of the Established Church.

So stringent were these regulations that, by the turn of the 18

century, only a "feeble" few Baptists openly practiced their religion in Virginia. After 1700, however, this situation began to change. By 1761, when John Weatherford started preaching the gospel, the first Baptist church in Pittsylvania County — Dan River, whose congregation was ministered to by preacher Dutton Lane — had been in existence for more than a year.

#### ' A PLAIN MAN '

"A plain man without any pretensions to learning," John Weatherford was born in Charlotte County in 1740. Blessed with a fiery eloquence, this "zealous... herald of the cross" preached the Baptist faith — without benefit of license — throughout his native Southside. Extremely popular, he drew large crowds wherever he ventured to make converts. These talents, needless to say, vexed the Anglican hierarchy.

In 1773, one of these ministerial excursions took Weatherford to Chesterfield County, where he was promptly thrown in jail, one of seven itinerant Dissenters to be so treated. Never one to be discouraged easily, he began preaching at the jailhouse door. When this privilege was revoked, he commenced addressing a growing flock through the barred window of his cell.

One day while Weatherford was preaching from within the jail, the county powers — that — be stationed "base fellows" armed with knives outside Weatherford's window. Their intentions were obvious, in that when Weatherford spoke he

often gestured wildly with his hands. That day, he extended his hands through the prison bars in an effort to make his points. Whenever he did, these men slashed at the preacher, cutting his hands repeatedly.

But still Weatherford refused to be cowed. The crowds grew so large that the county magistrates ordered a 12-foot wall built in front of Weatherford's cell. However, his congregation was not easily cowed either. Whenever a large enough crowd had gathered, one in the throng would raise a white handkerchief on a long pole, thus signaling Weatherford, who would then begin his sermon.

#### FREE AT LAST

Late in the fifth month of Weatherford's stay, it was learned that a lawyer from north of the James River in Hanover County was a staunch defender of liberty — and Baptist Dissidents. So five colonial pounds were raised to secure the services of this young firebrand for Weatherford's defense.

True to his reputation, Patrick Henry of Scotchtown summarily gained for his client "the privilege of the prison bounds" and then, just as quickly, Weatherford's outright release. However, the jailer refused to set Weatherford free until his jail fees were paid. After nearly five months' incarceration, these fees amounted to a considerable sum, and so Weatherford remained in jail. Not long thereafter, the preacher was informed that an anonymous benefactor had paid the money, thus unlocking the door to his cramped cell.

Twenty years later when Henry resided at Red Hill along the Staunton and Weatherford was overseeing a church in his native Charlotte County, the latter learned that it was Henry who had paid his bill. Thereafter, the mere mention of Henry's name by Weatherford, was accompanied by a certain "glow of affection."

#### 15 CHILDREN

Never destined to be a rich man, Weatherford, after the American Revolution, settled eight miles from Chatham. There he farmed to supplement his meager earnings as a preacher and raised a brood of 15 children, 12 of them daughters. A gentle, generous man, this fiery minister of the gospel was the sort willing, as the story goes, to sell his horse and crop so that an indigent (and ne'er-do-well) neighbor might be spared the agony of the poor-house.

His ministerial duties had Weatherford and his family forever on the move. After serving congregations in Charlotte and Campbell counties, he moved to Halifax County in 1813 at the age of 73. A decade later, he returned to Pittsylvania, too sick by then to travel the circuit but still determined to preach the word to his home congregation.

Soothed and bolstered by the strains of "Amazing Grace," John Weatherford died on Jan. 23, 1833 at the home of a Mr. Nowlen, who lived near Shockoe Church. Some 40 years later, Dr. William White, a prominent Chatham physician, remembered accompanying his father to the crowded funeral. He

remembered as well the sight of Weatherford's crossed hands, with their jagged white scars crisscrossing the knuckles and extending down to the wrists.

Weatherford was buried not far from Shockoe Church near the foot of White Oak Mountain in what was known as the "Owen burying ground."

In 1906 the local Baptist association dedicated a monument to his memory in the Shockoe churchyard. As simple and straightforward as the man it honors, the monument says, "John Weatherford — A sufferer for conscience sake; an earnest and faithful minister of the Gospel."

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*VOICES OF THE PAST*

"he being dead yet speaketh"

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**EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE  
MINISTRY OF THE LATE ELDER  
S. L. MORAN, FLOYD COUNTRY, VA.**

I have had a desire to leave something with my people in regard to the Doctrine that I have contended for from a child.

I had serious thoughts about things of God, and I was made to know without a doubt there was a God in Heaven, and that he loved me and that I loved him. And I felt that love filled my soul, and if I had to throw that away it would leave me with nothing.

I was very young but that stayed with me. I grew up as other boys and as wild as any of them, but when I did wrong it would hurt me and I would say I would not do that anymore. I would find myself going on in the same way, and continued to make

the same promises but never able to keep them. I went on in this way until I was a grown man. I thought I could live a different life, but the more I promised the worse I got. I thought I could do better but found I was a failure.

After my first wife died, I felt she was saved, and I had a feeling I wanted to be prepared to meet her. I got down on my knees and tried to pray, and of all the wretches that ever made the attempt, I was the worst, and said in my mind that I would never attempt such a thing again.

I went on in my wild way until I married again, and I felt the Lord had given me a help-mate. Everything seemed to be getting along well with me until suddenly a change took place in my life. One night after going to bed, sometime during the night I was brought up before the Great God of all the earth. He was taking the Righteous on the right and the Sinners on the left. I was wondering what would be my doom. When I was brought up, I thought I would make some plea, but before I could speak I was taken on the left, and then I knew I was a lost sinner, justly condemned before a just God; and if all the world had told me there was a chance for me, it would not have done any good. My life had been so wrong and sinful, I knew there was no hope for such a sinner as I. And from that time on for months and years I went begging for mercy. I would go in the mountains to try to find peace of soul. I had to give up all for lost and thought I would not try any more, but I was still begging in my mind. I felt I must try

one time more . I went to the lowest place I could find and fell on my face and put my mouth in the dirt and all I could say was , “ God be merciful to me a condemned Sinner .” And when I got up everything was new and that burden of sin and condemnation was gone . I felt to be in a new world , and made to praise God from whom all blessings flow . I thought I would go to the house and tell my wife , but I did not . I was afraid I was mistaken .

I went on sometime wondering what all of this meant . I had never heard any preaching for I had not attended any church , for I was not interested in church matters , and I had no thought of where the church was . I thought anywhere they claimed to worship was the Church .

There came a time I felt I wanted a home among God’s people . I went to the Methodist to find a home . I went with full intention of joining them . But , lo , when the preacher began his sermon everything he said was against my hope . When he got through he left me without any hope . I went home and felt then I would not go to church anymore , but I soon got restless , and it came in my mind to go to Laurel Creek Church and see what Elder Cole would say . I went and when he began preaching , in the place of condemning me , he told my troubles better than I could . And when he got through I knew he had told the truth ; and I did not have to look for the church anymore . Since that time I have not searched for the church . I have no doubt where the church is and no desire to find any other .

I went on for a year or two going to hear the Baptist preach . The more

I heard the more I loved them . I did not feel I would ever join the church . But there came a time something took place with me very unexpected to me . The 4th Sunday in November , 1910 , I told my wife that morning , I was going to Laurel Creek Church to hear Elder’s Cole and J.J. Spangler preach . She said , “ If you are going to join the church I want to go with you .” I said , “ If that is all you are going for , don ’t worry I have no thought of that , and I don ’t guess I ever will ; and I know , not today .” I went to church and both preachers preached . Elder Cole gave invitation for members and when they began singing to dismiss , something took hold of me with such power it caused me to tremble . I said , “ I am not going ,” but getting up and starting to the pulpit still saying , “ I am not going .” But went on and began telling what I felt the Lord had done for me . They received me , and I rejoiced .

Then came a question in my soul “ What kind of a man have you been ? ” I answered that question , “ Very bad .” Then , “ What have you done ? Can you do any better ? ” And I said , “ No .” “ You know you will have to be turned out of the church , they will not keep you in the church .” I went home with a greater burden than I have ever been able to tell in words .

Elder Cole asked when I wanted to be baptized . I replied , “ I don ’t know .” He said , “ that is unfinished business .” I went on until the next meeting which was the 4th Sunday in December , 1910 and yet I had no desire to be baptized . But on the night of the same month , if I have been called to preach it was the 25th

of that month . I went under a great burden since joining the church and had no thought of preaching until during the night . I saw a cloud come over me . I felt it was the power of God and a weight was so powerful it was pressing my life out ; and a voice spoke out of that cloud and said , “ Take up thy cross and follow me . ” I said , “ Is it to Pray ? ” And the power got harder . I said , “ Is it to preach ? ” The weight was lifted off me and I sat up in bed , and I felt a power over me that I never will be able to tell . I commenced speaking . I felt to know that it was the power of God . I had no doubt at that time , and I commenced speaking with as much assurance as I ever have since ; and I said , “ I will go wherever I am sent for the God of Heaven has called me . ” I did not have any doubt at that time , but when I came to my self I knew that was impossible . I told my wife not to tell of what I have said for I can ’ t do that . I felt I would not go to church the January meeting . I still had no feeling to be baptized . I thought they would think strange of me for not saying anything about being baptized .

I had some work to do that day and started out to get some help . I was stopped on the way and this Scripture came into my heart , “ He that forsaketh not father , mother , house and land , wife and children for my name ’ s sake is not worthy of me . Take up thy cross and follow me . ” That turned me around and I went back to the house . My wife said , “ I thought you were going to haul hay . ” And I said , “ No , I am going to church . ” I went and after the meeting was over , invitation for

members was given . Henry Board came forth and gave a good reason of his hope and was received . He said , “ I want to tell a dream I had . I was baptized in a pretty pond of water and there were two fishes one on each side of me , and I loved them . ” Elder Cole said , “ When do you want to be baptized ? ” And he said , “ This evening . ” I felt I was bound to be baptized with him . I said “ Brother Cole , I want to be baptized tomorrow . ” And Brother Board was willing to wait until the next day .

The next day it was raining . I thought there was not any reason in going out on such a day , but fixing all the time to go . When we got to the place they were coming out of the house to go to the pond . Elder Cole had told me to tell my wife to bring her clothes and be baptized with us . I told her and she said she couldn ’ t do that . I said , “ He told me to tell you and that is all I will say . ” My wife went and was received . Elder Cole took me in and baptized me first , then took brother Henry Board , and then my wife . Brother Board said , “ I see my two fishes and I love them . ”

That was the happiest day I have ever seen fulfilled and there was not a thing that stood against me . I felt I was in a new world .

I thought all my troubles were over , but in this I was sadly mistaken . I had to go down , so much so that I felt I had deceived the Church . I felt I had to go to the church and tell them I was mistaken , but before the next meeting , I was more satisfied when Paul ’ s writing came in my mind so sweetly , “ There is a thorn given me in the flesh to buffet me lest I

become exalted above measure . I besought the Lord thrice that it might be removed from me . The Lord said, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness .”

That was my case . When that came in my heart I had read the Bible but very little , but I knew that was Scripture . I went to the house and opened the Bible and it opened at that place without turning a leaf . That gave me great consolation .

After that my burden became the same as it did that night when the Lord said , “ Take up thy cross and follow me .” The same voice said , “ You have lied to God .” I awoke my wife crying aloud . She asked me what was the matter . I told her I had lied to God , and it was more than I could stand . I went on wondering what to do .

Sometime after that I had a trip to make . I had to go in the mountains , and as I was walking along thinking of my troubles , it came in my mind that all I had seen was in the night . Maybe it was only a dream . That same voice came in my heart and soul , “ You have lied to God .” I fell on my face and made a promise to God if he would let me live if I was ever called on , I would go . I thought that would let me off for I was not going to tell anyone ; but it was not long until I told a brother and asked him not to tell anyone . It was not long after that , Elder Sumner came to our house . We were talking over many things , and the first thing I knew , I was telling him ; but told him it was impossible for me to ever preach .

I went to Pine Forest Church .

Brother Sumner asked me to go home with him . I went that night . He asked me if my impression was with me as much as it had been , and I told him not as much as it had been . We went back to the church the next day and he told me he was going to call on me . It shocked me so I could hardly speak . Then I remembered the vow I had taken and said , If it doesn ’t make any difference with you , don ’t call on me , it will embarrass me for I just can ’t go .” I will never be able to tell the feeling that went in my heart and soul . I could not stay in the house . I walked below the church and stood for a few minutes , and if I know my heart , I asked the Lord to take my life for it was more than I could bear . It was not because I did not want to preach , I would have given anything if I could but I knew I could not . I thought I would go to the woods and try to ask the Lord to let this cup pass , but I was unable to even bow . A voice seemed to say , “ You fool , why stand you here ! ”

I went back to the house . Elder Sumner was in prayer . I slipped in the house and got in behind someone . Elder Sumner saw me and said , “ You just as well come on up here , you will have to anyway .” I went and stood on the steps of the stand . I spoke a few words , but in the place of getting relief , I felt I had brought disgrace on my people ; but the worst was , I had disgraced the Church . When I got home , I told my wife she could be getting things in shape for I was not going to stay in this country , and I certainly meant every word at that time . The next Sunday was the 4th Sunday , which

was Laurel Creek meeting . Elder Cole hearing I had gotten up at Pine Forest , asked me in the stand . It seemed I had no resistance and went on and that was still worse than the first .

My wife and I started to Brother Board's to spend Saturday night . As we went I told her that was the last time I would ever go ; and I verily thought I was telling the truth . That night at Brother Board's , something took place with me , I will never forget . After retiring , I will never know if I was asleep or awake , but let that be as it may . All at once I was in a strange country and I wanted to go home . I came out to go home , but I found myself in a wilderness . I could see a narrow path . I would follow that path until it would come to a solid wall . I would have to turn back and try another path it seemed . I continued trying and felt I would have to give up , then I saw a narrow path leading up a hill . I knew I would have to go that way . And when I got to the top of that hill , I looked across a Beautiful Valley and saw a passenger train , and I was glad for I knew I would be able to get home . When I got to the train the first thing I knew I was in a buggy with a young man , and I will never be able to tell the sweetness I felt in that ride . But it soon came to an end . All at once we came to a wide river and there was a covered bridge . When we got to the bridge , a shutter came down and cut us off . The young man was gone and I was left alone . I wondered what to do . I walked around the end of the bridge and looked at the river . It looked deep but I knew I had to go that way . I dreaded it but it was not

as deep as I expected it to be . Then I got in the same road , it was a plain old road . When I got in this road , I looked ahead of me and I saw an oldlike woman walking ahead of me . She had on an old - time slat bonnet like my mother used to wear . I thought if I could catch up with her she could tell me of my troubles . But when I caught up with her , I began telling her my troubles . She began kissing her hand and laid it on my cheek , showing the love she had for me .

When I came to myself , I never doubted she was the Church , for the church had shown me all the kindness I could ask of them . That vision caused me to go , and I went to some church every weekend , but felt to have no liberty to preach ; until I got to the place I lost all hope of ever being able to preach . I feel the Lord gave me endurance and I feel that it was his time .

I went to Old Pine Creek Church . As I went around the cemetery , a Scripture came in my mind . It was sweet to me . I was not in the habit of reading a text . Elder Cole passed by me and dropped the Bible in my lap . I turned to the text that was on my mind . I read it and then began talking I felt with another tongue , for it was altogether different to me . I looked over that crowd of folks and they all looked good to me . I spoke for around 30 or 35 minutes and felt satisfied the Lord turned me loose and I would go and preach the rest of my time just like I did then . Only I would preach longer .

That was the first Sunday . The next Sunday there was meeting at Old Salem Church . That was the

longest week I thought I had ever seen , but when Saturday came I went . But not to preach . I knew there would be more people there on Sunday , so I refused on Saturday . There was an old Brother said to me , “ Go with me to my nephew’s .” And I said , “ Alright .” That night after retiring , whether asleep or awake I cannot tell , but I was in a room and the man that kept that room had to keep everything just right in that room . I used to dance and I thought I had not tried to dance for a long time . I began dancing over the floor , and the man that kept the room began whipping me with fire . It came around my waist and began taking my breath . I looked back over my shoulder to see who it was whipping me . I saw no one but I was picked up like a feather , and there was liquid fire in front of me and I was thrown in that fire and consumed . And a voice came into me , “ God is a consuming Fire .” I wondered what that meant .

When I got to the Church that morning , I found out what that meant for instead of preaching , if I ever opened my mouth I never knew it . I sat down crying , longing to get out of that church and never to be there any more . When I was leaving I was bidding every thing goodbye . But before I got out of sight of the church something took place with me . This sentence of Scripture came into my mind with sweetness , “ We rejoice therefore in tribulations , knowing tribulations works patience , patience experience hope , and hope maketh not ashamed , for the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is

given us .” So I was made to rejoice and shed tears of joy . I was made glad the Lord had shut my mouth and taught me some sense .

The next Sunday was the third Sunday and I went to Pine Forest . And I went in the fear of the Lord , and he gave me liberty to speak ; and I have been going ever since . I know I am about through for if I live until February 22 , 1959 , I’ll be 82 years old . And I can’t expect many more years . The Lord has been wonderfully good to me and my Brethren and Friends have showed me all the kindness I could wish for . They are bound to see something in me that I can’t see in myself , for I see nothing in my vile flesh that is good .

I hope I have not set forth anything in this writing to give myself any honor , for if I have been shown anything , it is the rottenness of my nature . It makes no difference how much the Lord has shown me I still see nothing good in my flesh .

There was a period of time in my ministry that the sweetness of the Gospel seemed to be completely taken from me . I felt I would have to give it up , but in that time I had a dream . I was traveling a road that was muddy and I was so worried on my journey . I felt I had gone as far as I could go and had given up . Then I viewed a road in front of me that was so beautiful , I can’t describe it . When I had put my feet in that road , I felt as light as a feather . I began leaping and jumping and quoting one Psalm after another in praises to God and I wondered how long that would last . When I awoke I told my wife I had been seeing something wonderful to me . And from that time on for a

few years I had sweet liberty continually for a while , baptizing six or eight . Then I could see what that beautiful road meant .

The longer I live the more of my vileness I see in the flesh . And I can say of a truth , “ In my flesh dwelleth no good thing .”

S . L . Moran

---

Elder Moran is well remembered among the Baptists of Virginia . He united with Laurel Creek Church , Floyd County , Va . , and later united by letter with the Salem Church ( Head of the River ) in the same county . He served as Moderator of the Smith River Association from 1932 until his death in 1960 . He was ordained in 1916 and served five churches during his ministry .

The above was written by Elder Moran December 30 , 1958 , and we are glad to publish it in his memory .

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*Reprinted from March issue of the Signs 1974 , at the request of Sister Mary Poff , Copperhill , Va .*

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## EXPERIENCE

**I**f it could be profitable to the Cause, I would like to give “ a reason of the hope that is in me with meekness and fear .” The fear is — what if I am mistaken about what I have believed are the Lord’s dealings with me , and , in relating them , I deceive you who read this into thinking I have a Christian experience ? Then the thought comes , the Lord’s people are discerning people and not only can they separate law and gospel , but that truth or doctrine that separates sheep from goats .

I was given an abiding love for the church at the age of 13 . Through a dream , I saw myself a sinner . I became a member of what is now known as a limited church . Although I read a great deal , I did not understand the fundamentals of our doctrine . I read about the life of Joseph and firmly believed , or so I thought , “ Ye thought evil against me , but God meant it unto good .” But as I grew older I became very zealous of good works and took a great deal of pride in my religion and in my zeal and I decided to devote my life to the church . I had zeal without knowledge .

Shortly after our marriage , my husband expressed dissatisfaction with the church of our membership , but I felt the trouble could only be in him as I saw the church as perfect and that his devotion was a little lacking . I felt he should be studying his Bible more . I was so full of good works ( my own ) that I couldn’t see my faults .

In a few years trouble came in the church of our membership and it resulted in a division . Those believing as my husband , predestination of all things , both good and bad , went with him , and the others went their way . Not understanding the difference , I had not realized he had been preaching it for some time . Most of those he had baptized believed as he did and went with him . I had been given a church letter at the time of the division , but I vowed to myself that I never would join another church and certainly not the “ Absoluters ,” so I burned the letter .

From this time on our home was frequented with “ Absoluters ,” and

contrary to what I had been told about them many years before, they were kind, careful not to hurt my feelings, and tolerant of my occasional outbursts and foolish questions. Three old preachers, now passed on, were especially kind and helpful. One of them often visited us for several days at a time. After such a visit and much discussion on controversial subjects, I awoke early one morning with this Scripture on my mind, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I thought, "Now there's a Scripture I'd like to see him get around, since he said our obedience is passive. I'll just keep that in mind and ask him when I see him again." I believed this Scripture was an admonition and an invitation. In a few months we attended a meeting about 200 miles away and this old brother was there. I had not told anyone about my intention, not even my husband, and I was going to "spring" the text on the old brother when he went home with us. On Sunday morning, he was called on to preach and his text was, "Come unto me, all ye that labour," etc. As he unfolded its meaning and compared it to Rev. 22:17, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I began to see for the first time that the "comes" in my text and in Revelation were commands, not invitations. To get around the Arminian doctrine, I had heard it preached and had believed for many years that the text in Revelation was only to the elect, the only

ones who were given the will, so I understood that they had to come. So if both were commands and came from the same source, then why wouldn't they be equally forceful? If one could be thwarted, then why couldn't the other? Did I believe in a God whose command could be refused on one hand and obeyed on the other? I was made to tremble.

One of the sorest trials at this time was to break off from the fellowship of my old friends whom I loved very much and still do. I knew they wouldn't understand, therefore an explanation was useless. Again, this old brother was a help to me and made me see that when the Saviour said, "Take my yoke upon you" meant that you had no choice whatever about taking that yoke. When He says, "Take my yoke," you take it. He does not say, "if you will take it." And once you take it, there is no turning back. Like the children of Israel, I murmured and complained and looked back to Egypt. I wanted back where I didn't have so many doubts and fears. But Jesus promises "My yoke is easy, and my burden light." Yes, it is so easy, the trials of this life forgotten, when we are blessed to worship Him in spirit and in truth, when we are made to rejoice in this beautiful doctrine. There is a rest for His children. Our striving to help ourselves is over. He has done it all.

Of course, there were many, many questions in my mind. I searched and asked questions and little by little I would be given a little insight. But I still had some false pride. At one communion meeting at my husband's home church, I felt

rather bitter because I couldn't take part. I felt physically and spiritually sick, and when I got home I went to bed. I felt so low that I thought I would die. The truth is, I did die; I died to that false pride. My good works were at an end. I now knew what it meant to be totally depraved. It is a terrifying picture.

Soon after this I had a dream that I was married to a very wonderful person but wasn't living with him, and my father (deceased) was trying to help make arrangements for us to live together. After I awoke, I felt condemned for not living in the church, and I had a compelling desire to ask for membership which I did at the first opportunity. I asked them to watch over me and look over my many imperfections which they have always done. Only that love, that charity that suffereth long, could put up with all the imperfections I have and that is the only reason I am still a member to this day.

The older I grow the more firmly convinced I am of the total depravity of man and the complete sovereignty of God over all things. . . . When man is left to Satan to devour, there is nothing too low for him to do, any man. When it pleases God to keep him and to give man the will to be upright and follow after Him, it only proves to me that that man is blessed with God's grace, and all the praise for that man's good deeds belongs to God, the author and finisher of our faith. No, God is not the author of confusion because there can be no confusion where God is concerned. What seems confusion to us is not confusion to

the Creator of all things who has predestinated the end from the beginning and all things in between as well, or else there would be all kinds of confusion.

As I have been writing this, I have prayed that what I might write would praise Him as much as words could from one so ignorant of His truth, for I would that I might spend the rest of my days praising Him, but He has not so willed it. I will no doubt be guilty of denying Him in a very short time.

I feel like thanking Him for a little glimpse of His wonderful Kingdom.

With love for all His little ones,  
Grace Jefferson (Deceased)  
Bakersfield, California  
(Written about the year 1960)

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### CONTRIBUTIONS

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#### FOR JANUARY 1990

Mrs. Mamie D. Ferguson, VA. . . .	2.00
Rufus L. Jacks, AL . . . . .	7.00
Mrs. Aline C. Jacks, AL In memory of husband	
Colman G. Jacks . . . . .	57.00
Mrs. Allyne Page, TX . . . . .	7.00
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OBITUARIES

SISTER EMMA HALL

It has been our heavenly father's will to call from Dan River Primitive Bapt. Church another one of our dear members , Emma Denny Hall Oct. 7 , 1989 at Morehead Memorial Hospital , Eden , N.C. She was native of Pittsylvania Co . , Va . but had lived most her life at 760 Summit Rd . , Eden , N.C. and was a Fieldcrest retiree .

She was daughter of late Elder Sam Denny and Nannie Lou Matherly ly , was married to William Leslie Hall Aug. 2 , 1927 by Elder J.W. Flinchum To this union , one daughter Mrs . Sam Rodgers ( Ruth ) Waynesboro , Va . , one son Edward L . Hall , Greensboro , N.C . , three grand - daughters , two grandsons and five great grandchildren .

She and her husband joined Dan River Church April 26 , 1964 and was baptized by their pastor Elder D . V . Spangler . She was a faithful member until her health failed . When visiting her , she would mention looking forward to getting able to come to church again .

I had the privilege of working with her many years and admired how they both attended church of their faith and were not wavered

about with every trial . It made me rejoice to see them ask a home with us at Dan River Church .

Her funeral was held at Fair 's Funeral Home Chapel Oct . 9 , 1989 by Elder Haywood Wray assisted by Elder Kenneth Key . Her body was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery , Eden , N.C .

Besides her family she leaves to mourn three sisters , Lillie Williams , Alyne Law , Eden , N .C . , Ruby Shropshire , Eden , N.C . and three brothers John Denny , Irvin Denny , Eden , N.C . and Drewery Denny , Hopewell , Ala .

We the members will miss her . May the grace of our heavenly father reconcile each of you to his will .

Written by request in conference ,  
 Lottie Minter  
 Eld . Kenneth Key , Mod .  
 Bro . Bob Collie , Clerk

HORACE E . WALKER

Horace died as he lived and believed in the full sovereignty of God .

Funeral services were conducted by Pastor David Neal at Oakey 's Funeral Chapel in Salem , Va . , Jan . 4 at 3 p .m . He was laid to rest in Sherwood Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ .

He leaves behind his wife Agnes H . Walker and two daughters and sons - in - law Sharon & John Stump , Bedford , Va . , Rebecca & Sam Pauley , Salem , Va . One brother Woodrow Walker , Danville , Va . Two sisters , Mary Cousins , Danville , Va . Thelma Hundley , Danville , Va . Four grandchildren and one great grand - daughter .  
 Agnes H . Walker

## HOMA NEVADA RAINEY

**H**oma Nevada Rainey was born June 28 , 1909 the daughter of , Forrest and Iyora Rainey. She died July 12 , 1989 after a lengthy illness .

Homa never united with the Church although she believed and loved the doctrine that it contended for . She was a regular and faithful attendant and supported the Church financially and with her time and energy. Many times she was the first one there to open the Church and welcome all as they arrived. She was able to attend until a few months before her death , many times when physically she was not able . This demonstrates the deep love and devotion she had for the Church .

She is survived by a son , Dr . Fred Rainey of Elizabethtown , Ky . , four grandchildren , one great grandchild : sisters Burbin McFarland of Centerville , Tenn . , Lillie Russell of Lyles , Tenn . , Fannie Mayberry of Primm Springs , Tenn . , and Annie Lou Lee , Panama City , Florida .

Her funeral was conducted at the McDonald 's Funeral Home in Centerville by Elder Richard H. Campbell followed by interment in the Harpeth Cemetery .

She will be greatly missed by her family and by her Church . She was an inspiration to all who witnessed her battle with the disease which took her from us . She never complained or gave evidence of the pain she suffered . She was a beautiful person and will be in our minds and hearts as long as we live .

In loving Memory  
Richard H. Campbell

## MEETINGS

## STAUNTON RIVER UNION

**T**he Staunton River Union will be held , the Lord willing , with Union Primitive Baptist Church , Sunday and Saturday before the fifth Sunday , April 1990 . State Road 605 .

All lovers of the truth are invited to come and worship with us .

Elder Raymond Goad , Mod .  
Silas Payne , Clerk

## WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

**T**he West Country Line Union will meet , the Lord willing , fifth Sunday in April at Big Meadows Church , Chatham County . Take I-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

# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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## EGYPTS CORN

*Corn they sought in Egypt land ,  
It had to come by Joseph 's hand ;  
Corn to end the famine at home ,  
Christ gives freely to all His own .*

*This corn of Grace couldn 't be bought ,  
Yet the world its strength has sought ;  
The price long ago was fully paid ,  
When God 's covenant with Israel was made .*

*Corn stored up before the need ,  
Given freely His family to feed ;  
No labor of works to endure ,  
A gift of God by Grace made sure .*

*Corn to help them in their need ,  
Their fainting , drooping souls to feed ;  
Corn that holds the strength of life ,  
Christ sends His family to end the strife .*

*Corn to lift our weary soul ,  
Grains of mercy pure as gold ;  
Corn of rejoicing and of praise ,  
Love of Christ made known in His ways .*

*Corn of Heaven and Glorious light ,  
That shows His love and too , His Might ;  
Corn that surely will call us home ,  
The bag of Grace says we are His own .*

*Corn that 's stored beyond the Gate ,  
When reached will end our mournful state ;  
Corn we 'll have there forever more ,  
Corn of Christ an endless store .*

C . B . Davis , Jr .

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Clara Myrtle Tipton	
Annie Irene Watson	

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## EDITORIAL

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The following is a sermon preached by  
Elder C.B. Davis at Moons Creek Church on  
Sunday , February 18 , 1990 .



Elder C .B . Davis , Jr .

**T**he word virgin seems to be strongly upon my mind may the Lord bless us that we might for a few moments touch upon the virtues of the word virgin as it pertains to God 's people and to the church because that 's what is under consideration .

In the eleventh chapter of 2nd Corinthians I would read to you the first three verses , after which I shall turn to the book of Revelation and

read also . “ These are the words of the writings of Paul , “ Would to God ye bear with me a little in my folly : and indeed bear with me . For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy : for I have espoused you to one husband , that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ .” He 's talking to none other than God 's people . “ But I fear , lest by any means , as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilly , so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ .”

I well remember in the use of this word simplicity when Elder Campbell spoke at the Staunton River Union last year of the Simplicity of the Gospel .

So Paul in essence is saying the same thing , the simplicity that is in Jesus Christ . It is indeed a simplicity , a simplicity to the Gospel , to all of those who believe and are called according to his purpose , but to the world it is a stumbling block . Even to the Jews the scripture relates that the Gospel is a stumbling block - and foolishness to the Greeks . And so it was not simple , as we use the term , to those people , but let us still think about what Paul says here in that I have espoused you to one husband , that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ .

And then we find in the book of Revelation something that takes place in the last time that also speaks of the perfection that Paul here is setting forth . The fourteenth chapter of Revelation , the third and fourth verses , “ And they sung as it were a new song before the throne , and before the four beasts , and the elders : and no man could learn that

song but the hundred and forty and four thousand , which were redeemed from the earth . These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins . These are they which follow the Lamb whitherso - ever he goeth . These were re - deemed from among men , being the first - fruits unto God and to the Lamb .”

We think as we think of the word virgin that it has many meanings , but we find that in Webster ’s dictionary he defines it as being pure , he de - fines the word virgin as meaning clean , he defines the word virgin as meaning ; and here we go back to the writing of Paul ; simplicity of expres - sion , simplicity of dress , simplicity of love , meaning that its pure in every sense of the word . And that it cannot and I declare to you has not been defiled .

Paul says that the serpent who beguiled Eve would or should corrupt the minds of those that see the sim - plicity that is in Christ . But I declare to you that your hope , your faith , is a virgin hope and a virgin faith , be - cause in so being it has not known any man . Let us remember that these are the words of Mary , when she was told that she should con - ceive and bring forth a son . And she said how can this be , I have known no man , the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been adulterated . That ’s another expression that Webster used and its that which has not been adulterated . The Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been adulterated by the hands of man . Now I know there are those in the world who would be satisfied were it possible to do so , to adulterate it to the extent that it

would mislead God ’s people ( those who have experienced a virgin birth) . Because if we are what we hope to be , our spiritual birth , that is the birth that Christ expressed to Nicodemus is not the birth of natural man . It is a spiritual birth , it is that birth that springs from Christ himself . As Paul speaks of it here , and it is indeed a virgin birth because no man upon the face of the earth had anything whatsoever to do with it .

We go back to the creation and we find the very beginning of the word virgin , because each act of creation that God brought about did not have the hand of man involved in any sense of the word . And every - thing that He created He beheld it and said it was good . Had it been adulterated in any sense , had it not been virgin in its very creativity he could not have said it was good , but He beheld it and He said it was good . We find that Adam had not an earthly father , he had not an earthly mother so he was a virgin being in the begin - ning naturally .

But the time would come when he would be subjected to the powers of the serpent , not through himself but through the weakness of the flesh . That weakness of the flesh was his own bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh from which Eve was made . And so the serpent did not attempt to deceive him . The scrip - ture relates he was not deceived . What he did he entered into willingly because of the great love for this wife if we might use that term that God had given him . Because she was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone .

We think again as we think of the

term virgin and all things that God created were indeed virgin . All things that we view through his creations were virgin , but now I can declare unto you that our earth , our air , our water has been adulterated because it has been touched by the contaminating hands of man . We have poisoned everything that we have access to , except one thing and that 's the Gospel of Jesus Christ and it cannot be poisoned my beloved , because it is virgin , because it sprang from God himself . We know that as I mention our waters , our streams are now so polluted that the water is not fit to consume , but I can declare to you that I see another stream as John relates in the book of Revelation , and this stream has not been contaminated , its not adulterated , its that stream of grace that flows out , grace and mercy that flows out from the throne of God . And John says , its a pure and shining river , crystal clear . It shall never be contaminated by the ways of man . It flows out from the very throne of God so therefore it began as a virgin stream .

It shall be because all of this is virgin that he beholds in this , his experience in this His vision . I say to you this morning that your faith , your hope , is just as virgin as anything that the word might be applied to . I don 't care what sense of the word some individual or those of the world might use to desecrate this , might even try to change our thoughts upon the matter . It cannot be done because God has a people from the foundation of the world and these are the people , that have become the virgins of his purpose and will ,

my beloved . Paul is touching upon that very thing and he says I am jealous over you with godly jealousy for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ . He 's talking about being married to the true husband of the bride and that bride is virgin .

Our true mother as we use it in the spiritual sense is the church because it is the bride of Jesus Christ and it 's the mother of us all . We are proclaimed in the scriptures that being the sons and the daughters of God if that be so then the church the bride , the true bride , the virgin bride of Jesus Christ is our mother . And we are virgin in the sense as I said a few minutes ago that no man that ever walked upon the face of the earth had one iota of power in the matter of our salvation , or our hope , or our faith . We have been delivered from the condemnation , from the contamination if you please of the sin that erupted in the Garden of Eden . And the only thing that can set us free from that is the virginity of the person of the blood of Jesus Christ because that was virgin blood , because it was holy blood , that flowed through His veins and He shed that blood willingly upon the cross , that we might become virgins of his desire and love . This is what its all about .

If I didn 't believe that , I wouldn 't dare be in this place . And I feel an unworthiness to be here , every time I come . But thanks be unto God that I know I feel like I know where my hope and my faith lies and its not in the contamination of the ways of man , I have enough of that right

here . This sinful creature that you see before you , this flesh I have enough of that and I have to carry them to such time as I breathe out my last breath and then that virgin spirit is going to climb as it were the promises of God and go back to heaven from whence it came , but this old body is going into the earth . It was made from the earth and is going back to the earth , nothing can prevent it . By the same token there is nothing whatsoever that can prevent the virginity of the spirit within because it belongs to God , because its perfect in every sense of the word , and its the only thing about man that is perfect . Its going back to rejoice in the presence of God and Jesus Christ . Its going back to be there when time shall be no more .

And as its spoken of , as John speaks of it in the book of Revelation and he can say to God , that is , Christ can say to God ; These are those that were redeemed from among the men of the earth and they are all virgins . It doesn 't matter whether your gender is male or female , it doesn 't make a bit of difference in the sight of God because the scripture relates that in heaven there will be no marriage , no giving in marriage , no male and no female .

Then these virgins are virgins of the lamb they are virgins of the love and mercy of God . They are virgins that have been made so by the sufferings of Jesus Christ . They have not been made virgins by devious cunningness of the mind of man and I declare to you that it is absolutely impossible , for the devious cunningness of the mind of man to make a virgin out of any human being that

walks upon the face of this earth . I believe that just as strongly as I believe that I am standing before you this morning . But the power of God does , it has from the beginning , it has from the foundation of the earth .

In keeping with the wills and purposes of God designed by his own hand the virginity of his word , the virginity of his beloved , the virginity that would draw unto himself the spirits of those who he chose to be called His sons and daughters . John speaks of them as a number of a hundred and forty and four thousand , these signify the twelve tribes of Israel , twelve thousand from each tribe .

But John also sees an enumerable host as we read further in the book of revelation and he says that number is greater than the sand of the sea and no man can enumerate it . It 's virgin , the number is virgin , why do I say the number is virgin ? because the number was complete in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world . It 's a virgin number . Did you and I choose the way we should go ? Did you and I choose our own salvation ? Did you and I declare to some individual that I 'm going before the church , I 'm going up to be saved , no , the work was performed within us .

In keeping with that virgin will of God that would draw us unto himself , that we might come forth and acknowledge that something had been done for us , that the world knows not and neither can understand . Aren 't you thankful this morning that we can rejoice in the thought , that he has done something for us to relieve us , of the con -

demnation of sin , to relieve us even from the throes of death . I 'm not talking about the first death . Every human being that's ever walked upon the face of the earth and shall ever walk upon the face of the earth has to die , one time . Death is promised to every individual , promised once unto all men to die so the scripture said but John again sees all these things come together to complete the will and the purpose of God . He sees here an enumerable host and they stand before the white throne of God and he who sits upon the throne . Then he starts talking about the second death , my beloved this second death is so much worse than the first death .

The first death shall separate the spirit from the body , and it shall be a time of rejoicing for that spirit but this second death that he sees , these are the ones he said whose name , whose record , whose works are written in the books . He says he sees the books open , he uses the term plural and then he says he sees another book open and that book is the book of the Lamb . And he says all whose names are not recorded in the book of the Lamb , in the book of life , are cast into the burning lake of fire . And satan is cast into the burning lake of fire , and the books are cast into the burning lake of fire .

I say to you this morning that the fires of that lake are just as eternal as is the bliss that awaits you in the climes of glory . And then John says and this is the second death . That second death shall have no power whatsoever , over God 's people . It shall have no power whatsoever to those who have been touched by the

virginity of his power . And this burning lake of fire is going to consume all of the adulterated bodies , all of the adulterated thoughts that ever existed upon the face of the earth because they are going to burn forever and ever , and they are going to be destroyed .

That 's when satan will be destroyed . Sometimes I hear somebody say , and they don 't know what they are talking about , that the power of satan has been subdued that they've been taken . No , not in this day and time . I look at the world today and I can 't see how it could have been any worse in the days of Noah than it is today . I can 't see how it could be possible for it to be but yet I don 't know . But I can declare unto you that I know who controls it .

And I know who works within this earth , works within this earthen vessel , your earthly vessel because that 's what it is . And Paul speaks of the treasures in earthen vessels and in the book of Isaiah , I shall show ye the treasures of darkness , these treasures are virgin treasures , they come not by the power of man , they come because of the mercy of God . And he expresses those things to each one of His children , in order that they might call Him Father , in order that they might express their love for Him as we express our tokens of fellowship and love one for another , whenever we are together . And the agent that binds us together is the virgin blood of Jesus Christ .

It binds us together and it causes us to express our love and fellowship one for another . That is that part of us , that is the spirit speaking . Oh , this old flesh , this old flesh would

turn its back upon it every time were it possible to do so . But the spirit is more powerful than the body . The spirit drives the body , even those times that we don 't feel like going maybe or physically we 'd rather do this or we 'd rather do that . But the spirit the virginity of the power of God cannot be subdued .

We remember in the scripture after Moses had slain an Egyptian he departed the country , to live a life of exile but God wasn 't finished with him . Let us remember that his parents saw as he was just a babe that there was something proper about him . God wasn 't finished with him , so God sends him back , he says to go back and bring my people out of bondage .

We find the flesh saying , Lord I can 't go I'm of a stammering tongue and slow of speech . But God says go , and here we see the first thing that Moses said , as evidence of the flesh . But then God says I will send Aaron with thee and he shall be a spokesman , here 's the spirit . The flesh couldn 't go alone but the spirit must go with it , cause the spirit must speak for it . And so then Moses said who shall I say has sent me , here we see the virginity of the very word of God , the power of God , he said tell them that the great I Am , that I Am has sent thee .

So Moses didn 't have to answer to any man , he didn 't have to go and say the king sent me or the president sent me , but he who holds the power of all things in his hand , he who is the I Am has sent me . And he sent me to fulfill a purpose .

We know of another that was sent to fulfill a purpose it was

Joseph . And they are both types of Christ . Joseph went forty years before his brethren and they didn 't know him . As they went to purchase corn , they heard there was grains of corn in Egypt and they were famished and they were starving . That 's what you heard , my beloved when you were famished and you were starving you desired something that you couldn 't feast upon of nature . You desired the taste of something that was sweeter than the bitterness of the thought of sin and condemnation . And you began to go , you went to Egypt as it were . You went seeking your brother , your brother Christ . You went seeking Him , and they went but they didn 't know who they were seeking but that they were seeking sustenance . And that 's what God 's people seek when they find themselves desolate and an hungred and in due time Joseph made himself known to his brethren .

We see and hear again the work of the virgin power of God fully expressed to this extent , they paid for the grain that they took with them . But as they stopped to feast on their travel home they found their money in the mouths of the sacks . What did that tell them ? It told them the same thing that we know today that grace cannot be bought because its not sold in the markets of the world . It 's virgin because it comes from the very purity of God . And it 's the only thing that we have given that is absolutely free .

We pay a price for everything that we have use of in one way or another . We pay the price of sin with death . We pay the price of not taking care of ourselves physically , with

pain and illness . There are many ways that we pay a price for each thing that takes place in our lives but we don 't pay a price for salvation , because that price was paid in the virginity of the person of Christ when he hung upon the cross , and when he had shed his blood completely and he bowed his head and said it 's finished .

He meant my brethren that it was finished , He didn 't mean it left something else to be desired , he didn 't mean that it would take another savior to come somewhere along the eons of time . But he meant that he had completed salvation for every heir of promise , reaching all the way back to the Garden of Eden . The virginity of creation , reaching all the way into the book of Revelation when John sees the virgin soul standing in the presence of God , and John heareth the angel say these are those who are redeemed from among men and the world .

And he uses another term and he says they are those who are not defiled with women but he 's not talking about natural women he 's talking about the doctrines and theories of this time world . Let us go back to historical Israel , and many many times Love will find that Israel , as she fell away from godliness , was admonished .

The Lord will say thou hast become an adulteress nation , thou art following after strange and adulteress women , what was he talking about ? They were worshipping graven images . They were worshipping those things that are not virgin because they have been made by the carnal hands of man . That 's what he

is talking about , that 's the women he is talking about that these virgins are not defiled with .

I say to you that our heart is set with the purity of Christ with the burning desire on the inside that we might see him someday . We have not been defiled by the theories and the things of this world that the multitudes follow after . We have not been defiled by some individual who declares that he or she has the answers to everything , and there are some who claim they do . But they are going to find themselves come short of the word of God and here at the end we find it virgin in every sense of the word when he says come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom that is prepared for you from the foundation of the world . And to those on the left , he shall say depart from me you workers of iniquity I never knew you .

Those words that say depart have just as much strength as those words that say come . Come ye blessed of my father , oh what a time to face the second death . Oh , what a time to find that the faith of the world , faith that they boasted of and a hope that they have boasted and they know they have , shall find them coming short , they shall find that their faith and their hope is not virgin , they shall find that it 's contaminated . They shall find that it has no merit , they shall find its been defiled by the ways of man . They shall find that the end thereof is the depths of hell nor can they extricate themselves from those circumstances or conditions , not in any sense whatsoever because it 's not the will of God , that it might be .

God has brought about through Christ the deliverance of every heir of promise and his promise is to you that I will not leave or forsake you, I'll go all the way even unto death that's the virgin promise. It stands today and it shall stand when the worlds on fire and it shall be enough. You know Jacob when Joseph's brothers went back to Jacob they said we've found our brother. Jacob there typifies the church when one goes longing and seeking for the grain of the corn they find they are filled they use the term my cup runneth over and they're finally fed and they go to the church, they go to the father as it were and their conversation is we've found our brother, he's alive, I say to you this morning that your brother Christ is alive, he's alive forever more. And Jacob couldn't believe it, when they said He wants us to come He has a land of promise, a land of plenty. And He wants you and all of us to come and Jacob said I couldn't believe it but the scripture relates that when he saw the wagons coming he said its enough, its enough I know that my son liveth, he knew that Joseph was alive, because he could see the promise itself being fulfilled.

Through that virgin spirit that you have within you are a witness to the power of Christ. You are a witness that will say when you have that feeling within that all has been satisfied and these feelings come once in a while. We don't have access to them day to day and they don't last the full day when they come but for a fleeting moment everything is satisfied then you can say its enough.

Its enough just to know that this

has taken place, and it is that, that renews us day to day. It's that, that causes us to cling tenaciously to this virgin word, this virgin truth that we hold dear in our heart and we would not trade it if we could for all that the world holds.

One of the writers said, to learn of God is more precious than all the gold of Ophir or the rubies thereof, its more precious than anything we could have access to in the this time world because it holds within itself the promise of eternal life.

May God bless you and keep you is my prayer.

Elder C.B. Davis

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### PSALM 150

*Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.*

*Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.*

*Praise him with the sound of trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp.*

*Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.*

*Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.*

*Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.*

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**VOICES OF THE PAST**

*"he being dead yet speaketh"*

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**BLASPHEMY AGAINST  
THE HOLY GHOST**

Preached on Lord's Day Evening, 15th  
November, 1925 at Brixton Tabernacle

*"And whosoever speaketh a word  
against the Son of Man, it shall be  
forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh  
against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be  
forgiven him, neither in this world,  
neither in the world to come."*  
(Matthew 12 : 32)

**S**uch words spoken by Him who cannot lie, and spoken in such a plain way, must, if we have any grace in our hearts, make us tremble. To speak upon these words, apart from divine help, is impossible. The Lord help us! This morning we spoke to the former verse, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men," showing, I trust, the sufficiency of the atonement and the boundless grace of God in forgiving sin. Here we have a sin which shall never be forgiven. It is a solemn, searching, terrible scripture; I am not aware of another scripture which utterly excludes hope as this; for, if one is left to commit this sin, he is locked up unto eternal despair. Seeing the Saviour Himself spake these words, and the Spirit caused three evangelists to write them, we may safely say they teach a most important lesson. It is not desired to make one heart sad whom the Lord would not have made sad, but

that, if God is pleased to help and bless us in our meditation tonight, we may ascertain something of the meaning of the Spirit in this portion, and have a solemn knowledge of the terrible nature of sin in general and of this sin in particular. Moreover, it may be someone is here now who has been troubled greatly respecting this sin, and the Lord may have a gracious purpose to make known to such an one.

One is reminded of Mr. Algar Locke, who preached for the immortal coalheaver (W. Huntington, S.S. S.S.). He had been an itinerant preacher, but from sore temptation, especially that he had committed this sin, he gave the preaching up. One day he was struggling along Cheapside with this temptation strong in his soul, that he had blasphemed against the Holy Ghost. So great was his distress that, to save himself from falling to the ground, he caught hold of a post at the corner of Bow Church. Just there was an old lady (grace only makes ladies as grace only can make gentlemen) selling tapes, and she invited him to sit down on her stool, which he did. She could discern his trouble was more mental than physical, and asked Locke if it were not so. He admitted it was. "Oh then", says she, "you must hear the coalheaver, sir; he will suit you; he preaches near by every Tuesday night." He went. That night God sent Huntington into the pulpit with this very text, "The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." As soon as Mr. Locke heard the words read he feared he should hear his condemnation sealed, and

cried out, "Let me out! Let me out!" In those days the spirit of hearing was so abundant that the chapel was crowded, and, when once in, it was a difficult matter to get out until the service was ended. So poor Locke had to stay, and never regretted it, for the Lord made it clear to his soul in that sermon that he had not been guilty of this terrible sin. The temptation with some souls is the same now, for Satan may make much use of such a scripture to torment a sinner; and though Huntington is dead (yet lives and speaks) the Lord is alive to carry on His work, and if He is pleased to apply anything one may say to the ease and comfort of a tempted soul, it will not be in vain that we have met together.

It will be wise to consider, in passing, the exact terms by which the Holy Spirit has described this sin. This is judged highly important, for it is often called unpardonable. To quarrel about mere words is an indication of a small mind and very little grace, yet, in a case like the present, we shall do well to use "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth" and drop the words taught by man's wisdom. I cannot decide whether it is correct to call it 'unpardonable', but, this we can say, the Holy Spirit does not so speak of it. If by 'unpardonable' should be meant there is something in this sin which God could not pardon, or as if there were something lacking in the atonement of Christ whereby this sin could not be blotted out, but on the contrary binds the sinner down by an eternal sin, then, personally, I should be disposed to say the term is not a good

one. There is nothing lacking in the atonement of Christ, as we tried to show this morning. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men" is the strongest statement one knows of to set forth the all-sufficiency of the atonement of Christ. Unpardonable might seem to imply that when Christ died, Son of God as He was, Son of Man as He was, yet there was a something in one sin which His precious blood could not put away. It does not appear to be a question of inability of God to pardon (hence, not insufficiency of the atonement) as it is a matter of God's will. This will, perhaps, appear if we pass in review what the evangelists say, and it is observable that neither of them speak of it as unpardonable. Matthew says, "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him." Terrible words indeed — "it shall not (not cannot) be forgiven him." Luke says, "But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven." Mark says, "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Mark, you see, speaking by the Spirit, declares the same as Matthew and Luke, but use a great word "never" — "hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation," or "is bound by an eternal sin." None of them call it unpardonable, as if there were something in it God cannot forgive, but all do say it shall never be forgiven, that it binds one down under the awful weight and power of eternal sin. God's sovereignty by the atonement

of His dear Son sweeps away all sin , but this one — blasphemy against the Holy Ghost — this He will not forgive , and sovereignty shines in the one He will never forgive to the glory of His justice and truth , even as sovereignty shines in the forgiveness of all other kinds of sins to the glory of justice , truth and grace .

What is it that shall never be forgiven ? Read the three evangelists once more . Matthew , as taught by the Spirit , declares it to be “ blasphemy ” — the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost .” Mark , “ BlaspHEME ,” — he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost .” Luke , “ Blasphemeth ” — “ But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost , it shall not be forgiven .” The united testimony is “ blasphemy ,” “ blaspHEME ,” “ blasphemeth ” ; the difference is of tense only , in each case the act is the same . In Matthew there is one word that should not be passed by ; it is the word “ speaketh ” as in the text , “ whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost .” This indicates that “ the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost ,” concerning which God declares it shall never be forgiven , is spoken blasphemy . Blasphemy expressed in words — that is the terrible sin which will sink one down to the pit without a vestige of hope — expressed blasphemy against the Holy Ghost . Had we more grace we should be careful with the unruly member . Little do we think of the terrible power of words , albeit they may be , and often are , very treacherous . To speak after the manner of men , hell hangs on words . Of everything on land and in the sea -

beasts , birds , serpents — we each have a something far worse than they all . All kinds of beast have been tamed of mankind , but the tongue no man can tame ; it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison : in short , it is set on fire of hell . “ By thy words thou shalt be justified , and by thy words thou shalt be condemned .” Little do most people think of the consequences of the sins of the tongue . By this member at any rate , is the sin committed which hath never forgiveness . God mercifully salt our tongues with grace !

Let us now look at the circumstances out of which our text grew . The Lord had healed the man “ possessed with a devil , blind , and dumb ” ; the majority of the common people admitted on the strength of that miracle that He was the Messiah . “ Is not this the Son of David ? ” say they . This went against the pharisees ; it stained their glory , cut against their selfish interest , and then the native enmity of their hearts came out thus : “ This fellow doth not cast out devils , but by Beelzebub , the prince of the devils .” The Saviour delivered several arguments to show the impossibility of their charge against Him , and then solemnly asserted the following , “ Wherefore ( indicating the connection with the foregoing )... the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men .” “ I say unto you ” , says Christ , “ I , who will be your Judge in the great day , I say unto you , that by knowingly , deliberately , and out of pure malice asserting that My works are done by union with the devil , when they are done ( as you well

know ) by the Spirit of God , this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men .” Judged by circumstances whence the text arose , it would indicate the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to be the expression of the blasphemy which was in their hearts , namely , vile abuse of the Son of God , and that in full knowledge and out of absolute malice against Him . The abuse was against the Holy Ghost , since it was by Him that Christ , as Mediator , performed His wondrous works . Mark sets this forth without any ambiguity , “ But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness , but is in danger of eternal damnation : Because they said , He hath an unclean spirit .”

Is there no sense in which this sin can still be committed ? I fear the answer must be , “ Yes , undoubtedly ,” for the Scriptures are for all time , and not merely for the period and people long since past . It would appear that this sin arises generally , if not always , from people who , like ourselves , have made some profession of religion . It was so , at any rate , in the first case , for who were greater enemies to Christ and His true people than they ? Who indeed ? Profession may be of the public kind , as by baptism and joining some local church ; or in a tacit way , that is , by meeting with God ’s people at prayer meetings , preaching services , and generally being known as one among the people of God . Among this general profession as a whole is a people who also possess what they either publicly or tacitly profess and ,

without being harsh , one is justified in saying there are biblical reason for fearing that a very small portion of the bulk of professors of any kind of religious faith have the “ root of the matter ” in them . If tares and wheat grow together ( and Christ said so ) , it is to be suspected that tares are in every field . Happy man who has a godly jealousy over himself lest he should prove a tare ! From the ranks of profession arise the people who commit this sin , this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost . This sin does not , perhaps , come about all at once ; there may be stages thereto , and , without pretending to anything approaching the prerogative of the Almighty , namely , power to read the heart , yet there are a few things which may lawfully be taken as indicating persons to be in a very solemn state and on the highway to committing this terrible sin if they have not already done so .

Irreverent language of God , or to God , when knowingly and maliciously spoken , is a very solemn mark against one . This vituperation is fairly prevalent in some quarters . What does not fit in with certain religious preachers and hearers stirs up their enmity to an awful degree , and the most malicious things are spoken by such which , by their very profession and attendance at so-called means of grace , they must know is wrong . Yet they do it , and will do it , deliberately and persistently , against the rebukes of their conscience and the Word of God . What do many say of the work of the Spirit in a sinner ’s soul ? What does it all mean when preachers and hearers , who profess to be born of

the Spirit , simply hate and abominate the workings and teachings of the Spirit of God in a sinner 's heart ? A soul truly convicted of sin , made to mourn heartily , goes in darkness for months , lying under the law 's condemnation , trying to seek for mercy and finding none , grieving over his felt depravity before God , unable to rest in the mere and bare notion of the truths of the Scriptures , in due time so blessed of the Spirit as to enjoy felt forgiveness of sins , and thereby is made to separate from all form for the love of the power ; now what do the majority of both speakers and hearers say of that person ? Who has not heard their vituperation ? " Such an one is mad ," say they . " He lives by feelings " says another , while a third cries , " He is always miserable ." Yet others of the same fraternity will say , " I do not want a religion like so and so ," naming him or her as the case may be . Such know very well that their religion never cost them one night 's wakefulness , one hour 's godly sorrow for sin , and that not yet have they ever had any felt and enjoyed revelation of Christ or His truth in their heart . Their peace is quiet enough , being dead , their conscience firm enough , never having been stabbed by the Holy Ghost , their whole religion from beginning to end lying in the wisdom of men and not in the power of God ; and yet from these will come the vilest abuse , the most savage but oblique knocks , and all for one reason , which they know quite well : " And wherefore slew he him ? Because his own works were evil , and his brother 's righteous ." This persecution of the

true family of God out of enmity , and malice , by Pharises , Cains , and dead , dry Calvinists , is bidding fair , unless grace prevent , to terminate in this eternal sin ; for slander , abuse of God 's people because of their loyalty and uprightness to truth , is slander against the good Spirit of God . Such may well tremble unless , indeed , they are already given up to blindness and hardness of heart and have lost the very capacity to feel the solemn truth of God . People will not ( unless raving mad and lost to all sense of common decency ) openly blaspheme the Father , or the Son , or the Spirit , yet thousands are doing it constantly in abusing the saints of God . What is done to the member is done to the Head of the body .

Knowledge — yes , such as commit this sin have knowledge — but it is of that kind which " puffeth up " , and they swell out with great swelling words of vanity as to what they have for the Lord , and for this person and the other ; how that such and such a matter would have come to nothing but for their wisdom , skill and charity . Give these a text , it matters not what sort , and such is their knowledge that they can preach upon it within five minutes . The hearers — well , they come because form binds them , not because they hunger to hear for their souls ' profit ; indeed , they know far more than any ordinary or extraordinary mortal could tell them . They know all about God 's election of a people to be saved , and they know right well that they are of that number . The covenant made between the Trinity in Unity , that they know all about with everything it contains , and will sing

most confidently :

*Come , saints , and sing in sweet accord ,  
With solemn pleasure tell :  
The covenant made with David 's Lord ,  
In all things ordered well ."*

But have they ever had that personal election sealed home to their hearts ? If so , malice and abuse of God 's truth , ways and people would be turned out . Have such ever had the covenant made one of life in their hearts ? If so , humility , tender fear of God , holy sobriety , and love to His glory as the first thing would be in evidence . So one might name every truth of the gospel , as the incarnation of the Son of God , His holy life , vicarious death , His precious blood , but the one great and all - important point is this : Has the Holy Ghost taught one these things , or is the knowledge of them notional , educational by teachers , preachers , parents , or natural religion , of which we all are full ? This empty yet pride - filling knowledge will fill chapels with hearers and churches with members ; there they may remain for years too , die and are buried as godly people , but , " The Lord knoweth them that are His ." But in some cases the time comes when they " forsake the assembling of themselves together " , and those who once sang the loudest of the doctrines of grace will unite with arminians , who hate the doctrines of truth , and if spoken to upon the matter , the serpent hisses from their breasts , The forsaking of godly assemblings is the first outward mark of something being radically wrong in the heart , and then , generally , it may be , and will be

( if God prevents not ) such go from one stage to another until they get firmly seated in the seat of the scorner , and tread under foot the Son of God , and count the blood of the covenant , wherewith he was sanctified , an unholy thing , and do despite unto the Spirit of grace . They first ignore the ways of God ( because of inward hate to Him ) then go on by terrible stages until they do despite to the Spirit of grace , and how far short , if at all , of committing this eternal sin , that is , the day will declare !

None who fall into this sin of blasphemy against the Spirit ever get out of it , and none who fear God with a broken and contrite heart , and tremble at His solemn Word , ever get into it . God has given some solemn tokens in this life against mockers who do so out of a knowing , deliberately hateful heart . It will be a fearful thing to fall ( out of the pulpit and pew ) into the hands of the living God , of whom it is said , " Vengeance belongeth unto Me . I will recompense , saith the Lord ." May we never know that ! Some of this class of people have been sent raving mad , some have died in terrible convulsions , others have rushed to eternity by their own hand , and not a few have died with filthy diseases too revolting almost for nurses to attend to , and thus have ended their mortal career under the manifested curse of a holy God . And where is it not marked in this life , eternity will prove that not one mocker of truth and truth - loving people , who has died as a mocker , has escaped the fiery indignation of God .

Ernest Roe

## FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE

### A SERMON

PREACHED ON LORD'S DAY EVENING,

July 4, 1841

BY J. C. PHILPOT

At Zoar Chapel, Great Alie St., Whitechapel.

*"That thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."* 1 Timothy 1:18 & 19.

I have been frequently led to admire, and I trust, not only to admire, but to feel also, the Epistles of Paul to Timothy. There are in them, to my mind, two very striking features. The one is the mellowed tone which is diffused through them. "Paul, the aged," writes as one meekened and softened by his long and wearisome pilgrimage; therefore, though he writes with authority as an apostle, yet that authority is tempered by a spirit of meekness and gentleness, produced by a long series of afflictions and consolations, as well as by the recollection of what he had been before grace came into his heart. He never forgot that he had "persecuted the church of God," had been "a blasphemer and injurious;" and the continual recollection of what he had been before the Lord called him by his grace, kept him humble at his feet. Therefore, he says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Still the chief of sinners, though "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles;" "less than the least of all saints," though

he had been caught up to the third heaven, and there had heard unspeakable words, which were not lawful (or possible) for a man to utter. The other feature in these two Epistles is, the fatherly tone in which he writes to Timothy, as being "his own son in the faith;" not using the language of haughty dictation, as though Timothy were to bow down to him sitting in the professor's chair; but writing with authority as his father in Christ, and yet that authority softened down by the affection which he had towards him, as his "dearly beloved son." Thus the warnings and instructions which he gives to his son Timothy, however solemn and faithful they are, are yet mingled with the utmost tenderness of affection and feeling. And it is the union of faithfulness and affection which gives point to all instruction, as well as edge and force to all reproof. The minister who stands up in the name of God to take forth the precious from the vile, should combine (and he will combine them, if the Lord the Spirit is his teacher,) the extremest faithfulness with the tenderest affection; so that he may come up to that standard laid down by Paul, "speaking the truth in love." Truth must needs offend; it is a sword with a keen and cutting edge, and must needs inflict deep and painful wounds in the conscience. But we are not called upon to jag the edge by harshness in our manner and spirit, but so to use the word of truth, "the sword of the Spirit," that it may do just God's work and no more, that it may just cut between flesh and spirit, natural religion and spiritual religion, and yet not so cut

as to cut away anything of God's implantation, or to wound the tenderest heart that God himself has touched with his finger. But as in other cases, here we continually err. I know not what you feel, but I know that I have never done anything right in my life; I have never said a word, nor ever done an action that could bear a strict and spiritual scrutiny. Something of my own has marred it before, in, or after it passed from me. If it came from right motives, some base and selfish feeling mingled with it and defiled it. Nor have I ever been able to wield the sword of truth aright. My heart has staggered, and my hand wavered between the two extremes of harshness and softness; and all I seem to have said and done has been clumsily and ineffectually, like one fighting with an enemy in a dream, aiming right, but the sinews weak, and the arm unsteady, and every blow powerless and vain.

The apostle then lays before his son Timothy most solemn warnings and most profitable instruction; and yet the blessed Spirit so filled his heart with tenderness, and so anointed his pen with authority and power, that one alive in God's fear cannot recoil from the one or the other. And as our text seems to contain in it this admixture of instruction, warning, and tenderness, I shall, without farther preface, simply take up the subject as it lies before me, believing that "rightly to divide the word of truth," and to divide the living from the dead, is a division more suitable with the Scriptures, and more profitable to the people of God, than a formal

division into heads of my own making, which were I to adopt, I should probably not be able to adhere to. "That thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."

"That thou by them." What does the apostle mean by this expression? It refers to the words that immediately precede. "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies that went before on thee, that thou by them" (that is, by the prophecies, according to them, in obedience to them, acting with reference to them.) "mightest war a good warfare." In the primitive church there were persons who were called prophets, (1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11.) Their office was not, generally speaking, to predict future events, — they were not prophets in the Old Testament sense of the word, but they were what we should call, in modern language, "preachers." This seems evident from the effect ascribed to their prophesying, (1 Corinthians 14:24 & 25.) "But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: and thus are the secrets of his heart and manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." Here we see what the effect of their prophesying was. The prediction of future events could not "judge," that is, condemn a casual hearer, nor make manifest the secrets of his

heart ; but the preaching of truth in the power of God the Holy Ghost , is every way calculated to convince of sin , and lay bare the hidden recesses of conscience . Again , we read , “ Let the prophets speak two or three and let the other ” ( that is those who sit by , ) “ judge , ” that is , decide , if he preaches truth . They could not judge whether he predicted future events aright , for that could be proved only by their fulfillment . “ For ye may all prophesy one by one , that all may learn , and all may be comforted . ” The prediction of events to come , communicates neither instruction nor comfort at the time , but preaching does both . And , therefore , we gather that these prophets were not prophets in the strict sense of the term , as predicting events to come , but preachers of God’s truth . Now it seems that when Timothy was set apart for the work of the ministry , there were certain prophecies uttered by those preachers in the church to which Timothy belonged . No doubt , lessons of instruction how Timothy was to conduct himself ; no doubt , lessons of deep and solemn warnings , that he should be faithful to the Lord that had put him into the ministry ; no doubt , encouragements also and promises that the Lord would stand by him , and enable him to do that work to which he had called him .

The apostle then , writing to Timothy , reminds him of what was spoken to him , when he was set apart for the ministry . “ This charge I commit unto thee , son Timothy , according to the prophecies which went before on thee , that thou by

them , ” — that is , “ that thou , ” in strict compliance with them , “ that thou ” by their weight and their power resting upon thy mind , “ that thou ” by the application of them to thy conscience , and by walking in the path which those prophecies pointed , “ that thou , ” in strict accordance with those solemn words of instruction which were dropped from the mouth of God through his prophets , “ mightest war that good warfare ” to which thou art called . This seems to me to be the most consistent and the most scriptural interpretation of the words .

But we gather from this apostolic charge , that Timothy was a soldier of Jesus Christ . He says to him , in his second Epistle , ( 2:3 & 4 ) teaching him under figures , “ Thou , therefore , endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ . No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life , that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier . ” Timothy then had been enlisted under the banner of the Lord . He was no voluntary recruit , but the Lord “ had chosen him to be a soldier , ” had selected him out of others for the express purpose that he might fight his battles , had called him by his grace , and quickened him by his Spirit , had put upon him the whole armour of God , equipped him with “ the breastplate of righteousness , the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith , having shod his feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace , and girt his loins about with truth , ” and thus sent him into the field to war a good warfare , and to fight under the banner of Immanuel .

The apostle then , addressing

him as a " faithful soldier of Jesus Christ," tells him that he must " war a good warfare," and gives him some instructions how he is to war this " good warfare," by holding " faith and a good conscience," solemnly warning him that some who had put away " a good conscience, concerning faith had made shipwreck." The first part of his injunction is " to war a good warfare." This implies that there is such a thing as warring a bad warfare; for if there were no warring a bad warfare, there could be no meaning in the charge, that he was to war " a good warfare." There are many who are guilty of this capital charge. Those, for instance, war a bad warfare who fight on the side of error against truth: this comprehends all Arminians, Arians, Socinians, and other opposers of the doctrines of grace. Those too war a bad warfare, who fight against the convictions of their own consciences, and against all the solemn warnings that are in the word of God against the impenitent, the ungodly, and the unbelieving. But the charge given to Timothy that he was to take especial heed to war " a good warfare," implies that is possible even for the soldier of the Lord to war a bad warfare. The good soldier then wars a bad warfare, when he goes out into the field of battle in his own strength, wisdom, and righteousness, " at his own charges," as the apostle elsewhere speaks, ( 1 Cor. 9:7,) equipped in armour of his own making, and his own putting on. Of this folly those are guilty who attempt to convince people of the truths of religion by argument, to make proselytes to a certain scheme

of doctrine, and to enlist under the banner of party those who the Spirit of God does not call by his quickening grace.

He, too, wars a bad warfare who contends for truth in a bitter spirit, who dips his words in vinegar, and cannot spread forth a table with the milk and honey of the gospel, without setting on it the wormwood and gall of his own morose temper.

He also wars a bad warfare, who distresses " the poor and needy" of God's family. He plays the part of Amalek, who fell upon the rear of Israel's army, and " smote the hindmost of them, even all that were feeble, faint, and weary," ( Deut. 25:18,) and therefore, unable to keep up with the march of Israel.

Timothy was a minister of righteousness, and yet Paul warns him to war a good warfare. Ministers, then, of truth may be led aside into warring a bad warfare. Good men have preached the gospel in their own spirit; have built up hypocrites and distressed the living family; have sought to make proselytes to their own opinions, rather than to bring converts to the feet of Jesus; have gone forth in their own strength, as though they would beat down error by weapons of their own manufacture, instead of going as " poor and needy," weak and feeble, and hanging wholly and solely upon the strength of the Lord.

And so private Christians war a bad warfare, by fighting with weapons which are not put into their hands by the Spirit of God. The living soul sometimes finds a powerful working of sin in him, a rising up of base lusts, carving and hankering

after forbidden things . Convinced of the guilt of these things , and of the hatred of God against them , he seeks to overcome them in the strength of the flesh . This is not warring “ a good warfare ,” because he wars not against his passions with spiritual weapons , but encounters flesh by flesh , and employs the strength and wisdom of the creature to keep down the evil and corruption of the creature .

Others of God ’s children war not “ a good warfare ,” by not keeping to the post which the Lord has assigned them in the battle . The Lord places each of his children in a certain post ; some he chooses should be weak and feeble ; others he chooses should be powerful and strong . Some he sends into the front ranks to fight manfully “ the good fight of faith ;” others he places in the rear , because he knows that they are not strong enough to fight against his enemies . He then , whom God places in the front rank to fight his battles , that deserts his post through cowardice or love of lucre , wars not “ a good warfare ; he is a deserter from the post where the Lord has placed him . And he that rushes , uncalled , into the front ranks , when the Lord has assigned him an inferior place ; he that instigated , by his own pride and presumption , pushes himself into the pulpit , without the Lord ’s calling him up there , wars not a good warfare , by assuming a situation to which the Captain of armies has never appointed him . He too wars a bad warfare , that leagues with God ’s enemies , and deserts God ’s friends , that wears the regimentals of

the corps in which he is enlisted , and yet is carrying on treacherous designs with the enemy . Are there not professors of religion , yea , some who we hope are God ’s people , that can be , as they say , “ all things to all men ,” and change their creed according to their company , that desert the principles which they profess to hold in one place , when those principles are attacked in another ? And thus wearing the dress , and receiving the pay of the great King , they through cowardice , or fickleness , espouse the part of the enemy .

Again ; those war a bad warfare who hang on the outskirts of the army , watching every unguarded place , observing every wavering regiment , scanning with curious eyes the weakest points , and perhaps affording intelligence to the enemy . These are the spies and renegades that hang upon the flanks of the army of the Lord of Hosts . Are not some such here ? you keen-eyed observers that are watching for the slips and falls of God ’s children , that are ready to catch up every incautious expression dropped from their lips , that are ever seeking to make a minister an offender for a word , and carp and cavil unless every syllable be squared or rounded according to your fancy , are not you warring a bad warfare ?

But the apostle tells Timothy what weapons he must make use of in order to war “ a good warfare .” “ Holding faith and a good conscience , which some having put away , concerning faith have made shipwreck .” These are the two weapons which the Lord of Host

equips his champions with , and which he bids them hold fast . We will consider them separately , and see how appropriate and suitable these weapons are to the soldiers that fight under the Lord 's banner .

The first weapon which he is to hold is " faith ." It is not an implement for show , but for use ; not to be suspended in the armoury , like the pistols and bayonets in the Tower , nor like a rusty broad - sword over a man 's chimney piece ; but to be grasped and held . But before he can hold it he must have it . The weapon must be put into his hands . It is the King 's gift , for faith is " the gift of God ." It is that which is committed to him . " O , Timothy , " he says , " keep that which is committed unto thy trust ." The weapon of faith therefore is put into the hand of the soldiers of the cross ; not suspended in God 's word , that armoury of truth ; not admired as worn by the side of others ; not a mere weapon in readiness for some nightly thief , which may never be needed for a whole life ; but a weapon for daily use , first received and then held , and wielded in such a way as the Lord himself shall direct .

But what has faith to do in this " good warfare ? " why should it be so important , so indispensable a weapon ? Because every step of ground that we advance upon , we can only advance upon through faith every enemy that we have to contend against , we can only contend against in faith ; every promise that shall be for our support , every instruction which shall direct us how to act , every reproof and solemn rebuke that shall be for our spiritual

chastisement , we can only receive by faith . And therefore the soldier , without the weapon of faith , stands naked and defenceless before his enemy . Think not yourselves , then , soldiers in the army of the Lord of Hosts , unless you know something of what it is to hold a weapon of faith in your hands .

This " good warfare " is carried on against three principal enemies — the flesh , the world , and the devil ; and each of these enemies so closely allied to ourselves , and each so powerful and so hostile , that they must surely overcome us , unless we are " strengthened with strength in the inner man ." There is the flesh , with all its baits , charms , and subtle attractions , continually laying its gins and traps for our feet ; perpetually ensnaring us in some evil word or some evil work , and we in ourselves utterly defenceless against it . — Said I defenceless ? — yea , eager to run into it , like the silly bird that sees the grains of corn spread in the trap , but thinks not , when it flutters around it , that the brick will fall and confine it a prisoner . So we , allured by a few grains of corn spread before our eyes , often see not the snare , until we are fast entangled therein . Faith then is that eye of the soul which sees the concealed hook ; by faith we call upon the Lord to deliver us from snatching at the bait ; and by faith , as a spiritual weapon , we cut at times the snare asunder . Oh , how defenceless are we , when the temptations and allurements of the flesh plead for indulgence , unless faith is in exercise , unless faith realizes the hatred of God against sin , and brings

into our consciences a sense of God's heart - searching eye , and his wrath against all transgression ! But where the Lord has put this weapon of faith into the hand of his soldier , he will often strengthen his arm to wield it in these seasons of extremity , even though that weapon should cut and wound self .

“ How Joseph was enabled to resist the snares spread for his feet , by calling to mind the presence of the Lord ! How he was strengthened to break asunder that bond which was fast twining round his heart , when faith sprung up in his soul , and he said , “ How , can I do this great wickedness , and sin against God ! ” How the three children who were about to be cast into the burning fiery furnace , unless they would worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up , overcame that dreadful temptation to renounce their God and prove apostates , by living faith ! How the worthies recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews , who wandered about in sheep - skins and goat - skins , being destitute , afflicted , tormented : “ out of weakness were made strong and waxed valiant in fight , ” simply through that faith whereby they were enabled to see the invisible God and the glories of the unseen world ! And how in this country and in this very metropolis , martyrs have gone to the stake , and died horrible deaths , rather than renounce the Lord Jesus , simply and solely , through the exercise of that living faith which the God of all grace had implanted in their souls ! Oh , what a weapon faith is , when the Lord does but give us power to wield it ! How , as Hart says ,

*“ It cuts its way through hosts of devils  
While they fall before the word . ”*

But when sin , temptation , and unbelief beat this weapon out of our hands , when it lies seemingly shivered at our feet , and we cannot get another such sword from God 's armoury , how we stand naked and defenceless before our enemies ! Therefore what need we have not merely of this heavenly grace in our souls , but to hold it fast and not let it go , lest the enchantress should catch our feet in her wiles and snares .

J . C . Philpot

( Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig . )

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### GALATIANS 1 : 8-12 .

*But though we , or an angel from heaven , preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you , let him be accursed .*

*As we said before , so say I now again , If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received , let him be accursed .*

*For do I now persuade men , or God ? or do I seek to please men ? for if I yet pleased men , I should not be the servant of Christ .*

*But I certify you , brethren , that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man .*

*For I neither received it of man , neither was I taught it , but by the revelation of Jesus Christ .*

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great grandchildren , one son , and one daughter preceeded her in death .

At the time of their passing Sister Virgie and Deacon Johnny Marze were members of Mount Pisgah Primitive Baptist Church at Fields , La . She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for over 45 years . She dearly loved the church and visited other churches on a regular basis . During 3 day meetings , she gladly entertained members in her home at the Junction near Merryville , La . Those who knew sister Virgie loved her and miss her .

A sister that loved her ,  
Odessa Marze

IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 5 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

OBITUARIES

VIRGIE McMILLIN MARZE

**S**ister Virgie Marze passed away in DeRidder , La . Memorial Hospital , Septemer 20, 1989 , as the age of 87 years . She was married to her late husband , Deacon Johnny L . Marze . To this union were born 2 sons , 3 daughters , and many grandchildren and

CLARA MYRTLE TIPTON

**O**ur precious sister , Myrtle Tipton was called from the walks of life , Jan . 7 , 1990 . “ And Joseph went up to bury his father .” Genesis 50:7 . We understand that Jacob had made preparations for his grave in the land of Cannan . Sister Tipton had made all the necessary arrangements for her funeral . We feel that the God of truth , love and mercy blessed her with a believing heart that his blessed will is done in

the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth . Her husband , Elder Austin Tipton , one daughter and two sons feel the sorrow of the loss of a precious member of their family . She was also survived by one sister , six brothers , ten grand - children and twelve great grand - children .

Many seasons we enjoyed with our precious sister at the Little Flock Church , Bakersfield , Ca . and also went to Texas and Mobile , Ala . to meet with our Kindred in hope . In fulfilling Sister Tipton 's request , this unworthy one spoke a few words , hoping that our God would be honored at this solemn meeting . " The Lord of hosts , he is king of glory , " Psalms 24:10 .

Walter B . Wilson

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#### ANNIE IRENE WATSON

**A**nnie Irene Watson , daughter of the late Spencer and Walcie Cook Palmer born February 5 , 1902 and died on January 5 , 1990 making her earthly pilgrimage one month short of 88 years . She lived a long and good life and was loved and respected by many in her community as evidenced by the attendance at her funeral .

Sister Watson joined the Friendship Predestinarian Baptist Church in , Whitehouse , Tennessee , many years ago , being baptized by the late Elder Ramer Lee Biggs her pastor and a widely known and loved minister in the Nashville Area and surrounding states . She was a faithful and devoted member of her church

and her home was open to baptist at any time and was a favorite gathering place at their annual meetings .

She was in poor health for several years but attended meetings as often as she could and many times when she was really too sick . Her last time to attend was at their annual meeting at her home church in November and she had to have oxygen , but she attended and enjoyed both days . She had expressed a desire that the funeral be held in her home church , but , the doors were too narrow for the Casket . There was a eulogy service conducted in Cole and Garrett Funeral Home in Whitehouse , Tenn . by her grandson Freddy Cope , then the procession to the cemetery stopped at the church , her casket was rolled onto the driveway in front of the church and her funeral service was conducted there in the yard by Elder Richard H . Campbell .

Sister Watson is survived by sons ; Robert Cope of Goodlettsville , Tenn . Claude Cope of Portland , Tenn . and Jerry Cope of Frankfort , Ky . , a daughter Frances Frenary preceded her in death , 14 grandchildren , 19 great grandchildren and 1 great , great grandchild , a sister Atlas Covington , Goodlettsville , Tenn . and a brother Clyde Palmer of Whitehouse , Tenn .

May the sadness of her death always be eclipsed by the precious memories of her life and all that she meant to her family , her church and others who loved her dearly .

Written by request of the Church ,  
Richard H . Campbell  
Marjorie Cook

# Signs of the Times

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*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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## POEM

*Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,  
Who makes your cause his own;  
The hope that's built upon his word  
Can ne'er be overthrown.*

*Though many foes beset your road,  
And feeble is your arm,  
Your life is hid with Christ in God,  
Beyond the reach of harm.*

*Weak as you are, you shall not faint,  
Or fainting, shall not die!  
Jesus, the strength of every saint,  
Will aid you from on high.*

*Though not unseen by outward  
sense,  
Faith sees him always near;  
A guide, a glory, a defense —  
Then what have you to fear?*

*As surely as he overcame  
And triumphed once for you,  
So surely you that love his name,  
Shall triumph in him, too.*

Newton.

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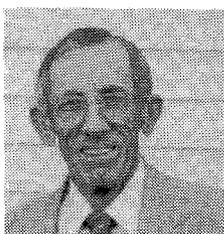
 EDITORIAL
 

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*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John : 1:1 .*



ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

**F**rom my ability to reason this verse alone, will stop all men from trying to understand or teach others to understand the Bible from natural ability, if they are honest with themselves.

First let us and all men living in a time frame which the earth contains try to explain the beginning. Our beginning starting with life itself, (this being debated throughout the world today when earth began) and even this life's beginning we can't remember for the first several years.

We read God is the beginning and the end, but when was the beginning? As old as men that study such, say it is. If this earth is thousands of millions of years old, even they can't explain when was the beginning.

How can we understand, when, how or what of something that was in the beginning, and was with God and was God. Then can we obtain unto or explain to others or know of anything that has been, "In the beginning?"

The more I've thought of this the more a mystery it becomes, but some way we can't deny the Word has ever been with God and is God. We think it's an acceptable idea that this Word spoken of here is Christ, that was to come. The Savior of His people. My mind is searching, but rests each time on the thought that if, in the mind and purpose of God, and His ways and His thoughts are as high above man's ways and thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, His people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the earth, then they were also in the beginning.

We can as carnal beings remember when in the beginning of our spiritual experience. God came to us, to speak peace to our troubled souls, if not deceived in the matter. This was God's beginning with us, this we remember and treasure; it was a beginning of something new with us, the first glimpse of God who has forever been, yet begins a good work in us that will be performed until the day of Jesus Christ. Names of His children written in the Book and sealed. Wasn't this in the beginning

God's recording of things sure to come? Each thing accomplished by human effort is done at a certain time, we live in a time world. The bible verifies this in Eccles. 3 ch. verse 2 "a time to be born, and a time to die," etc. Yet with God there is nothing new, a day as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day. For generation after generation promised to never leave or forsake, but be with each of His people all the way, even to the end. Psalm 136 each were reading "for his mercy endureth forever."

In time we trust, in time we faint, in time we pray if blessed, we live in time, short or long as it may be, all we do or say every act is in time with constant change, yet He who was in the beginning says Malachi; chap. 3 verse 6 "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." What a precious thought, though we can't understand God, only small parts that may be revealed, we believe He has forever loved His people, does today, and will fulfill His promise to them some day although not according to a time world at His time He will come again to claim all His people. We and all time will pass, but He who was in the beginning with God and was God will present a saved people to God the Father without spot or blemish, a cleansed people washed white in the blood of the Lamb. No end with God, only with us.

J. R. Williams

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### CORRESPONDENCE

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To the Household of faith:

**W**hat do I believe? and why? Those above questions are daily upon my mind. Along with others such as; am I truthfully even aware of what I do believe? And if so, is it only a head type religion? Or could it be, in my heart and soul also? Is what I feel and hope, of the "Lord," and therefore in and of the Holy truth as it is in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Oh how I do hope, it is of Him whom is the one and only Giver of every good and perfect gift. For if that so be, then I do believe the Holy truth, and my hope is not in vain; For it is a gift from God. If this hope I feel, so be His gift unto me, then my sweet hope shall surely continue throughout this earthly life, as that by which I live. For God said, His children live by hope. (I hope I could be one of them.) Now if what I feel, indeed is my belief; then I do feel and believe that "God is" — eternal; and therefore without beginning of days or ending of years. and that "He is" almighty and unchanging." That "as were His thoughts concerning all heaven and earth and the fullness thereof and all its comings and goings and continuations and/or endings, and any and all events to ever transpire or take place throughout all time and eternity. So shall it be. I believe "God" cannot lie. I believe those words recorded in the bible are and were pinned down; as the

original writers were inspired by the Holy Spirit of God to write them; and therefore are the word of God. I have read all those writings; and I must confess; that most of what I read, I had no understanding of their true meaning; and yet I feel they all are the Holy truth in their true meaning. One of the few things of which I do (from time to time) feel to have a clear understanding of is; that I (of myself) am as near nothing and less than nothing, as it is possible for one to be. Another thing I feel to know for a certainty, is that without "God" (that is to say, His furnishing of any and all necessary strength, for my very existence and being and doing.) Then no part nor portion of any of my being or living, could ever function at all, and most assuredly, except His Holy Spirit worketh an understanding within me, then no part nor portion of His Holy truth could I ever understand. I feel to believe, that all creations were and are created by God and for His use in the fulfilling of His purpose as was and is His own good pleasure. That His power and greatness might be made known unto men; and all to His own glory. I feel to believe that the natural mind of man has never even remotely comprehended any portion of the reality of God as He is. I feel to further believe, that none except His afore chosen children shall ever comprehend of His reality as He is; until that final closing or ending of all time for their world to stand has come; When every knee shall bow and confess that "He is God." Then and only then, will all those "of" the world know for a certainty that "He is God" and besides Him there was

and is no God; and that all others they have worshipped were gods many; and of satan or the devil.

The world is preaching to all whom will listen, that mankind can by his own choosing gain merits toward the deliverance of his soul unto heaven and immortal glory. But inasmuch strength of firmness as God may (if His will) furnish me with; I desire to declare that no man (and let me say, this does include woman) save "Jesus Christ" who ever lived has ever (of himself) thought one thought; spake one word; taken one step, had one intent or purpose in either mind or heart, whereby could ever merit him or her even one favor from God. But instead, our every self matured function has been and is (as having to do with good as is good in the sight of God) deserving of no more highth than the bottomless pit of an ever burning hell. Now that is all (man of himself) has ever done; in so far as meriting, or earning, or making himself one iota worthy, of a place in heaven and immortal glory. Even if such method of earning were possible which I believe is not possible.

Troy G. Shepard

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 6 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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**VOICES OF THE PAST**

*"he being dead yet speaketh"*

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## FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE

### A SERMON

PREACHED ON LORD'S DAY EVENING,

July 4, 1841

BY J. C. PHILPOT

At Zoar Chapel, Great Alie St., Whitechapel.

*"That thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."* 1 Timothy 1:18 & 19.

**S**o again with respect to the world. What a snare the world is to God's people! Oh, the excitement of this past week! \* How many of God's children has it ensnared! How they have been carried headlong into the whirlpool of politics! How anxious they have been that the side which they favoured should be triumphant, and how deeply interested in all that has taken place! How their hearts have been drawn away from him who sitteth enthroned on the water-floods, holding the reins of government, and directing all things according to the counsel of his own will! But faith in a man's bosom in lively exercise will make him proof against such political agitation, such carnal excitement. He that can look upon a suffering Jesus, that can view with eyes of faith an agonizing God, who received into his soul dewdrops of atoning blood, and manifestations of redeeming mercy, who longs after some secluded spot, where he

can hold sweet communion with the risen Lord of life and glory, what interest can he feel who holds the helm of politics, or who stands at the head of the poll? But only so far as faith realizes these eternal realities, and the soldier of the cross holds his weapon fast, can he overcome that intoxicating spirit of political excitement which now makes well nigh every heart to beat and every eye to glisten. Only by faith leading him into some spiritual sympathy and communion with heavenly things can he view these exciting scenes as an empty pageant and gaudy show that is passing away with all its actors into an eternity of woe.

So again when Satan comes in with his fierce temptations and fiery darts, what but faith can enable the soul to stand up against them, as the apostle says, "above all having the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, Ephesians 6:16. Nothing but faith in God, in his power and presence; nothing but faith in Jesus, in his blood and his righteousness; nothing but faith in the Holy Ghost, as lifting up a standard in the heart by means of his divine operations; nothing but faith in a triune God can enable the soul to battle against Satan's assaults. Therefore see how indispensable faith is to fight a good fight, yea, so indispensable that a good fight is called emphatically "the fight of faith." "fight the good fight of faith," (1 Timothy 6:12), implying that true faith will enable a man to come off more than conqueror through every battle and to survive every conflict.

\* The week of the general election of members of Parliament for the City of London and Metropolitan boroughs.)

But the apostle adds another word, and a very solemn word it is, "holding faith," he says, "and a good conscience, which" (that is, "good conscience," the word in the original being in the singular number,) "some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."

There is another weapon, then which the soldier of the cross has, and holds — "good conscience." We find that, in the apostle's time, there were characters who held faith, or rather what they called faith, and put away "good conscience." He mentions by name, "Hymeneus and Alexander, who he had delivered unto Satan," that is, excommunicated them out of the church, as heretics and blasphemers. But if to have put good conscience away, stamps a man as unfit for the visible church of God, it behooves us to search whether we have this weapon at our side, and in our hand. What does the apostle, then, mean by "a good conscience?" I believe he means a conscience alive in God's fear, a spiritual conscience, a tender conscience, what he calls, in another part, "a pure conscience:" "holding faith in a pure conscience," that is, purified from ignorance, from guilt, from the power of sin, "a conscience void of offense toward God and men." Wherever, then, there is living faith in the soul, there will be united with it "a good conscience." The Lord never sends forth a soldier to fight his battles with the weapon of faith only; he puts faith in one hand and "a good conscience" in the other. And he that

goes forth with what he thinks to be faith, and casts aside "a good conscience," will manifest himself to be one of those characters, who "concerning faith, make shipwreck."

This is a solemn word of warning for you, that despise the workings of conscience, that think it legal, that are all for faith, and scorn all admonitions of an inward monitor. May the Lord apply it to your souls, lest you should prove to be one of those characters, who, having put away "a good conscience," "concerning faith, will make shipwreck."

But why is it called "a good conscience?" Because it comes down from God, who is the author of all good, the giver of "every good gift, and every perfect gift." There is none good but he (Matthew 19:17), and there is nothing good but what he himself implants and communicates. This weapon of a good conscience, that the Lord arms his soldiers with, works with faith, as well as proves its sincerity of faith, and tests its genuineness and reality. Faith, without a good conscience, is dead. It bears upon it the mark of nature, and however high it may rise in confidence, or however it may seem to abound in good works, it is not the faith of God's elect, of which the end is the salvation of the soul.

But it may be asked, how does a good conscience work with faith? What is the connection between these two weapons, and how do they mutually support and strengthen each other? In this way. What faith believes, good conscience feels; what faith receives, good

conscience holds ; what faith embraces , good conscience rivets fast ; when faith is weak , good conscience is feeble ; and when faith is strong , good conscience is active. They grow and they wan together , and like two stems from one root together do they flourish and fade . For instance , sometime through cowardice we shrink back from the post to which God has assigned us . How glad should I often be never to mount a pulpit again . How willing should I be , at times , to retire to some sequestered spot , to live a quiet and secluded life , and be set free from all the trying exercises of the ministry , and all the arrows that presumptuous professors and ungodly men shoot at every one who desires to be faithful . But I feel that this cannot be ; I have put my hand to the plough and dare not look back . “ A good conscience ” begins to work . What ! to leave the Lord ’s work , and slink away , because the arrows fly thick and fast ! To desert one ’s allotted post ! Why , a sentinel that leaves his beat because the night is cold , or the enemy near , runs a risk of being shot . He has deserted his post through effeminacy or cowardice . He does not “ endure hardness ,” or he turns back in the day of battle .

Sometimes , on the other hand , as I hinted before , there is that in us , which would push us out of the place which God has assigned us , would thrust us forward , when the Lord ’s inward work would keep us back . Here too , “ good conscience begins to work . It manifests the secret presumption of those steps ; its acute ear detects the hollow

ground upon which we are walking ; its piercing eye discovers the volcano , near the crater of which we are treading ; it checks the onward step , and realizing some measure of the displeasure of God against those who slight his word , brings back the soul to its right place , the spot where the Holy Ghost has himself set it down . Thus , if a man goes forward , “ good conscience ” pulls him back to his place . If a man slink backward , “ good conscience ” pushes him forward into the spot which God has assigned him . Thus , “ good conscience ” keeps the soldier at the post where the God of armies has placed him .

So , when the flesh presents its tempting baits , and comes forward with all its allurements , “ good conscience ” is the sentinel on the watch . “ Good conscience ” describes the wiggling serpent gliding through the grass ; sees the crest , and hears the hissing of the adder . Before the rattle - snake springs forward , it hears the rattle , and begins to alarm and warn the soul of the dangers unperceived by all but itself . Thus , “ good conscience ,” as a watchful sentinel sounding the alarm in the soul , pulls the soldier back from the dangers that beset his path . It warns him of the mines that the enemy is working under his feet ; points out the hidden stakes on which he might run and destroy himself ; gives him notice of the stratagems and ambushes which the enemy is preparing . And thus , “ good conscience ” sounding its alarm in his ear , keeps him from the snare that is spread for his feet .

So , when the world , that power-

ful antagonist of the living soul , hangs out its charms , or brings forward its fears , when it comes in this shape , “ If you join yourselves to the people of God , you will sink in everybody’s estimation , you will lose your character , will injure your property , will offend your friends , will disgrace , as they consider it , your relations ; ” “ good conscience ” answers , “ I am firmly convinced that those whom you despise are the people of the living God ; that the experience which you ridicule is the truth of God ; that the things I have received are things to live and die by ; and therefore I will cleave to them at any cost , knowing that salvation is in them . ” Thus , “ good conscience ” keeps a man from being carried away by the fear of the world . So , when lukewarm professors , seek to draw us aside into their smooth and easy path , “ good conscience ” is upon the watch ; “ good conscience ” calls to remembrance the sufferings of Jesus ; and reminds us of the Lord’s dealings with all his saints , and with our own souls in times past . The Lord the Spirit drops his admonitions into the ear of conscience , and it testifies against all flowery paths in religion , and sounds aloud , “ Through much tribulation must you enter the kingdom of God . ” So , also , when Satan , the third antagonist of the living soul — the third enemy of the soldiers of the Lord , infuses base imaginations , and hurls his fiery darts , good conscience , being alive in God’s fear , recoils with horror from his injections and call loudly upon the Lord to bruise him under our feet , and give us help and strength to resist his fearful insin-

uations . Or , when this subtle enemy changes his garb , and transforms himself into an angel of light , good conscience , living under the Spirit’s teachings , sees the swarthy skin under the robe of light , and resists his delusions as firmly as his blasphemies .

He then alone wars the good warfare , who goes forth with faith in the one hand , and “ good conscience ” in the other ; faith strengthening conscience , and conscience strengthening faith ; each doing their separate office , but still tending to one end ; each accomplishing the work which the Lord has appointed , and yet each fighting the Lord’s battles , and bringing the soldier safe and victorious over his enemy .

But there were those in the apostle’s time , as there are those in our time , who “ put away good conscience . ” “ All they wanted , ” said they , “ was faith ; ” what had they to do with conscience ? What need they mind about sin ? Sin could not damn them , or do them any harm ; sin could not blot their names out of the covenant ; a child of God could not backslide , “ for his new nature , ” argued they with logical dexterity , “ could not go backward , and his old nature never went forward , and so between the two , backsliding was impossible . ” A true believer always stood firm in the liberty of the gospel , and was not to be entangled in the yoke of bondage . What then had they to do with this legal conscience ? These characters are described by Jude ( verse 12 , ) as “ feeding themselves without fear ; ” and by Peter , “ While they promise

them liberty , they themselves are the servants of corruption .” Their very language testifies an absence of living faith . They had , what they called , “ faith ,” but which would more properly be called , “ vain confidence , presumption , and delusion .” Bolstered up by this , they put away “ good conscience .” They would not have the ballast in the hold , that they might sail the faster . They did not want exercises , temptations , doubts , fears , distresses , and soul conflicts ; they wanted to hoist the main - sail to the wind . But this lightening of their ship by casting their lading into the sea , when they loose the rudder - bands , and hoist up the main - sail to the wind , will bring them into the same spot into which it brought the ship in which Paul was prisoner . “ And falling into a place where two seas met , they ran the ship aground ; and the fore - part stuck fast , and remained immovable , but the hinder part was broken with the violence of waves .” ( Acts 27:41.) That was the fruit of casting the wheat into the sea , and hoisting the main - sail to the wind . And those will meet with the same fate who cast out the ballast , and throw overboard “ good conscience ” as so much lumber and legality , who heave into the sea this burdensome companion , this moping creature that is always croaking between decks . Many professors in our day put away “ good conscience .” They want to travel faster than “ good conscience ” will allow . They love a few sins which “ good conscience ” remonstrates against . They like their strong glass , and a little wordly conversation , and a little

merry - making and amusement . A Christian , say they , is to be a cheerful character , he is not to be ever crying and groaning and sighing , and to confine himself to a few poor , moping creatures like himself , but to be lively and agreeable , to go into the world , and let his “ light so shine before men , that they may see his good works ,” ( Matthew 5:16 .) ‘ And ’ ( say others , of the same cast ) ‘ in business , we must do as other people do . There is no carrying on trade now a - days , unless you do business as it is generally done . You must not be so particular and so nice about drawing bills upon fictitious credit . If there is an advantage to be taken over an unwary customer , why it is quite reasonable to take it , and make the most of your superior knowledge . People , ‘ he says ’ of a scrupulous conscience may indeed call it cheating and swindling , but we call it a matter of trade , all in the way of business . ‘ I don ’ t see , ’ he argues , ‘ why the professor of religion should be debarred from acting as others , or why he should suffer in the world , as he can never rise to be a respectable tradesman , unless he takes such advantages as other people take in the same line of business . ’ Now what is all this ? It is putting away “ a good conscience .” It is casting aside that which God stamps in his word as a weapon for his soldiers to hold fast . It is manifesting the black mark of reprobation — a seared conscience . It is shewing the cloven foot beneath the robe of profession . And what is the consequence ? “ Concerning faith they make shipwreck .” That will be the fearful end , the awful termina -

tion of the voyage. And how do they make shipwreck? They strike upon some sandbank, or some hidden shoal, and when they are stuck fast there, the waves of God's vengeance, and the winds which he has held in his fists, rise in everlasting fury, beat against the ship, and dash it into a thousand pieces. As long as there were no shoals or rocks, they could ride gallantly over the waves, and outsail many a deeply laden vessel, but when they stuck upon the reef, and the breakers beat over their heads, they soon went down into the boiling waves. Thus some of these gallant ships run upon the sandbank of open sin, and when they are firmly fixed there, God manifest his wrath in their consciences, the waves of his indignation beat upon them, and down they go to eternal perdition with all their sins upon their heads. Others seem to be making with crowded sails for the harbour. But just as they near the port, a sudden and violent gust dashes them against the pier-head, and they make shipwreck, at the very moment when they think that they are about to enter, with flowing sheet, into the haven of eternal rest. Their false peace gives way on a deathbed, and they die in all the agonies of despair. And why do they make shipwreck? Because they sailed forth in a ship of their own providing; because the Lord never sat at the helm; because "good conscience" was never upon the look out; because faith was never examining the chart; and because there was no anxiety nor earnest cry, that the heavenly Pilot would steer their bark through the shoals and

sandbanks which lay in their course. But, on they went recklessly and carelessly; "sure," they said, "to be saved; they never could be lost; they stood so strong in Christ, they had such a scriptural creed, and were so well satisfied with the security of the ancient settlements, and eternal covenant transactions, that they were certain of going to heaven." And thus driven on by presumption, and neglecting all reproofs, warnings, precepts, and rebukes, trusting to the mere letter of truth, and ignorant of heavenly power, they made shipwreck of that very thing in which they put all their reliance — their faith. Now, these characters never had living faith, the faith of God's elect. Had they been possessed of divine faith, they would have had "a good conscience" with it. And therefore, when the apostle says, "who having put away a good conscience, concerning faith have made shipwreck," he does not mean to say, they had made shipwreck of real faith, but in the matter of faith, concerning that which they esteemed to be faith, but which, in reality, was daring presumption, of such faith as they had they made shipwreck. That bark to which they trusted their lives, and in which they expected to sail into the harbour of endless bliss, foundered and went down, because it was not built, chartered, steered, and preserved by the hands of God himself.

Now, you whom the Lord, as you profess, has called out of the world, and out of the general religion of the day to stand by the side of the gospel truth, what know you of these weapons? Has God equipped you with

his own hands ? Has he girt the sword of faith by your side ? Has he put this divine weapon into your hands ? Examine the blade ; look at its temper ; mark its edge . Is it of the true Damascus sort ? Has it been steeped in the waters of Jordan ? Has it been framed in the heavenly armour ? What is the other weapon that accompanies it ? Is it " a good conscience " a tender conscience , a living conscience , a conscience that trembles at God 's word ? We cannot often see our faith , but we can sometimes see our conscience . We cannot always rejoice in the Lord , but we can see whether we fear his great name . We cannot always triumph over our enemies , but we can sometimes observe whether there is a sentinel upon the look out . Thus , if you want to know whether you have faith , look at faith 's companion , see what faith is attended by ; and if you find not " a good conscience , " write death upon your religion . Throw away your sword ; it is useless ; it is of human manufacture ; it will break in pieces when you have to encounter your enemy , the king of terrors ; God 's lightnings will shiver it then . But if the Lord has given you " a good conscience , " a tender conscience , a pure conscience he will strengthen your arm to fight " the good fight of faith . " You will often think your sword is so short , and your arm so weak that you cannot fight the Lord 's battles . But if he has given you " a good conscience , " a conscience tender in his fear , he has put into your hands the sword of faith , and he will one day manifest it clearly , that he has himself equipped you with it ,

by giving you victory over all your foes . Oh , may the Lord raise up in our hearts , some sweet testimony , that we have a " good conscience , " and then we shall have this blessed consolation , that concerning faith we shall not make shipwreck .

J . C . Philpot

( Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig . )

#### MOVED OR MOVING ?

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Editors

#### BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST

Preached on Lord 's Day Evening , 15th November , 1925 at Brixton Tabernacle

*" And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man , it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost , it shall not be forgiven him , neither in this world , neither in the world to come . "*

( Matthew 12 : 32 )

**A**s some of God 's people have died under the most ravishing views by faith of Son of God and eternal glory , so some

of Satan's poor religious dupes have died under the most fearful tokens of the wrath of God most holy . Right knowledge of the truth humbles , empties of self , leads to believing , confession , and to love , thence to obedience to the gospel ; whereas , with but head knowledge only , there is pride , self-importance , nothing of living power in the soul ; no power constraining , humbling , making one to repent , to loathe self , and repent in dust and ashes before God ; no power to receive Jesus Christ nor truly to seek Him . The sow washed can and will turn to its wallowing in the mire , but not so the sheep .

One more thing may be mentioned here as a very dark sign . I refer to the deliberate , hateful persistent attempts to hinder the gospel and its good effects upon others . Where this is done out of spite , in knowledge of what one is doing , it places that person perilously near this solemn doom , if , indeed , it is not the actual committal of that sin . It is worthy of careful notice that in Luke , where this sin is mentioned , the immediate connection is : “ And when they bring you unto the synagogues , and unto magistrates , and powers , take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer , or what ye shall say : For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say .” Compare this with Acts 3 , 4 , “ And Peter , fastening his eyes upon him ( the lame man ) with John said , Look on us . And he gave heed unto them , expecting to receive something of them . Then Peter said , Silver and

gold have I none ; but such as I have give I thee : In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk .” It was so , for , “ immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength , And he leaping stood , and walked , and entered with them into the temple , walking , and leaping , and praising God .” Peter makes it abundantly clear to the multitude that it was not the holiness or power of him or John that made the man walk , but very powerfully preaches unto them Christ . Then the same old story has to be told : up came the religious leaders and teachers of that age , “ being grieved that they taught the people , and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead .” And in order to show their love , their Christian spirit ( who does not hear this talk today from the haters of Christ 's truth ? ) “ they laid hands on them , and put them in hold unto the next day .” The next day the Apostles are duly set before the rulers , elders , and scribes , and , in fulfilment exactly of the Saviour 's word in Luke 12 : 11 & 12 ( “ The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye shall say ” ) , we read , “ Then Peter , filled with the Holy Ghost ,” made his glorious defense and preaches Jesus Christ of Nazareth to them , and pointedly , faithfully says , “ This is the Stone which was set at nought of you builders , which is become the Head of the corner . Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men , whereby we must be saved .” What follows ? Mark the following points : “ They took knowledge of

them ,” and knew “ they had been with Jesus .” And beholding the healed man standing before them , “ They could say nothing against it .” Next they have a conference ( to slander another not there to defend himself ) among themselves , with this as the subject of debate , “ What shall we do to these men ? for that a notable miracle hath been done by them in manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem ; and we cannot deny it . But what we cannot deny , we can hate , and do , and so let us threaten them that they speak no more in this Name .” And so they did , but God ’s servants say , “ Whether it be right in the sight of God to harken unto you more than unto God , judge ye .” Gladly would these dear , nice , kind , religious leaders have laid the stripes on their backs and the stones on their hearts , but they could find “ nothing how they might punish them because of the people : for all men glorified God for that which was done .”

Now here was opposition to the Holy Ghost in the preaching of the gospel , and that not ignorantly , but knowingly and deliberately out of pure malice to truth . The could not deny good was done , but fought their best ( or worst ) against it with their eyes wide open . The days of the Apostles are over , but God has His own servants yet , and those He has sent He gives them of His Spirit , in measure , to preach the gospel of Christ , and He owns them and blesses them in the work , which is the sure signal for opposition from the religious leaders and their formal followers , who oppose with craft , cunning , conferences among them-

elves to stop the good work . In fact , such is their enmity to God ’s order and applied truth that they will stop at nothing to render void a servant of God in his testimony and work . Whoever we fight against , if we must fight at all , let it never be against a servant or child of God ; to touch those whom God calls the apple of His eye is to do what God will be certain to punish . This sin , which still flourishes among professors , to the great grief of the godly in Zion , where done in full knowledge and in spite against the truth , is very close to the sin which shall never be forgiven , if it is not the sin itself in one of its varied forms . All such professors rolled into one , with all their malignity , their cunning , their crafty counsels with one another , can never do a servant or child of God one grain of real harm , nor hinder truly the gospel , but as overruled by God will be made a great blessing . Yet the guilt of running deliberately against the Holy Ghost , in the ministry , is theirs . Such will hurt themselves , not the object of their hate . The same hate is seen where the virgin birth of Christ is denied ; also where the full work of the Spirit in Christ ’s human nature is denied ; and the plenary inspiration of the Word . In short , whatever is revealed in the Scriptures and is known in the conscience as right and true , yet , because it condemns one in his practice , or hurts his pride , or hits his envy and jealousy , is opposed simply out of hate and anger against the truth by professors of that truth ; such an one is truly in as solemn a state as he can possibly be .

There is something mysterious

as to why it should be against the Holy Ghost and not Christ . “ Who - soever speaketh a word against the Son of Man , it shall be forgiven him ; ” but he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost , it shall not be forgiven . “ All manner of sin and blasphemy ” against the Son of Man shall , when one is brought to repentance and faith in Christ , be forgiven him experimentally . I do not feel able to unravel this mystery , but it may be remarked : firstly , it is not because the Holy Ghost is greater than the Lord Jesus Christ , for the God of the Scriptures is revealed as subsisting in three Persons , each of who is equal in nature and perfections — God the Father , God the Son , God the Holy Ghost . Not three Gods , but three Persons who are equally God . What the Father is so is the Son , and so is the Holy Spirit , unto whom may we ever be helped to ascribe equal honour and glory for the hope of our salvation . Secondly , there may be something in the phrase “ Son of Man ” which is recorded both by Matthew and Luke . “ Son of Man ” , as applied to Christ Jesus , is a phrase denoting His humiliation , as thus : “ The foxes have holes , and the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head . ” During His humiliation His Deity was largely veiled : “ A root out of a dry ground . ” To speak against the Son of Man in the form of a Servant , while His Godhead was very largely veiled , is one thing ; but to speak with contempt and malice of the Holy Spirit in His clear revelations of Him as Son of God is another . In the resurrection of Christ ( in which the Holy Ghost wrought )

He is “ declared to be the Son of God with power , ” and the Holy Ghost has given the fullest attestation to His Deity and proper Sonship and divine mission and work . To speak against the Son of God out of malice and contempt , with scorn and hate , now the Holy Spirit has given such infallible proofs of what He was , and is and did , is not to speak merely against the Son of God , but it is to blaspheme the testimony of the Spirit . To speak contemptuously , maliciously , in face of knowledge to the contrary , against the Deity and Sonship of Christ , will be found eventually to differ very little , if any , from “ speaking against the Holy Ghost . ” To speak blasphemously against His testimony of the Son of God is not less than to speak against His work by Christ when Jesus by the “ finger of God ” cast out the devil . To pour scorn and carnal objections upon the testimony of the Spirit when He speaks plainly of the eternal , unique , relationship of the Son with His Father , when He thus reveals the fullest glory it is possible for the Son to have , “ The glory as of the only begotten of the Father ” ; when He shows unmistakably that the charge for which Christ died , because He said that God was His Father , making Himself equal with God was blessedly true of Him , for at His resurrection the good Spirit , jointly with His Father , raised Him from the dead , and most blessedly testified of Him that He was the Son of God , equal with God because He was God ; to ridicule this testimony and say it is a matter of no importance , in what does this differ from the people who in His day said He was in league

with Satan ? To speak against the Son of Man in His humiliation is one thing ; to speak against Him under the full blaze of glory as revealed by the Spirit will be found to be a most serious and solemn matter . God help us well to weigh this thought in the light of the Spirit 's teaching !

Thirdly , we would stress the word by Mark , who , speaking by the Spirit , declares the sin against the Holy Spirit to be " Because they said , He hath an unclean spirit . " This is attributing to Christ , in the face of clear evidence to the contrary , out of absolute spite against Him , unity with the most unclean spirit as implied in the filthy and disgusting name Beelzebub , or Dung - God ! As one has said , " This view of the matter is important , as implying a terrific aggravation of the sin committed by these pharisees in representing the wonderful acts of God as operations not of the devil only , but of Beelzebub , a name , though applied to Satan , is specially insulting , as it identifies Christ with the old Fly - god of the ancient enemies of Israel ( the Philistines ) and the Dung - god , into which this idol has been changed by the bitterness of Jewish controversial satire . "

Godly souls may ask , have we committed this terrible sin ? In general it may be said that none of God 's people can commit this sin unto death , not because their nature is not equal to it — for what others have done , they , possessing the same nature , can do — but because the Lord , in His care of His people , will not leave them to commit this sin . In particular it may be said that they who have not committed this

sin , being regenerated of God , are marked by hatred of all sin , specially to such a sin as the text brings before us . They hate it , they pray to hate it more ; they are sorry they cannot hate it always , fully , deeply , and universally , that is , in all its branches . A hatred of sin , as sin , not because of its punishment , is a good mark of grace in the soul . Confession of sin before God in general , that is , acknowledgement of sin done by one and in one , and also particular confession , that is , special sins will be dealt with by such and mourned over before God from time to time as grace melts the heart . Supplications before God for repentance to be granted , godly sorrow for sin to be felt and pardon bestowed , surely tells that such a suppliant has not committed this sin unto death . Reception of the words of Christ , in a warm heart , because they are given you to have as your own possession ; a falling under the authority of His truth with meekness , willingness , and counting it your greatest honour to be subject to His truth and not to argue how near one can drive to the precipice of disobedience without going over it , as thousands are doing today , is a proof of the reality of indwelling grace . Spiritual desires for separation in spirit first , then , because of that inward separation , an outward separation from the profane and the religious camps , is another proof . And until separation in some good measure is manifested there must be doubt as to the reality of the work being of God . Leaving form - people for living - people , the external for the internal , the shell for the kernel ,

the husk for the wheat, the respectable religious for the sinners, harlots and publicans, and finding such your spiritual companions — this is a grand mark of being free from this “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.”

Once more, to have feeling enough to be worried about this point, to be exercised about it, to pray over it and against it, to seek God for evidence from Him that one has not committed it: this alone proves such are yet out of this hole of despair. “Past feeling” characterises the sinner who has fallen into this sin. It does not worry him because he has not enough sensibility to worry; nothing godly is a worry to him; he is either hardened through the deceitfulness of open sin or blinded and hardened under and by a dead formal religion: in either case he is “past feeling.” Solemn state truly. A saint of God may have a hard heart, but he at his worst state is not “past feeling”, because he feels his hardness, and grieves in spirit because of it. Further, he would not have it hard, and he cannot make it soft, but he does cry to One who can and does. “For God maketh my heart soft,” and holy Job, and so say all the family of grace.

I have trespassed upon your time and, perhaps, patience too, but even now one feels he has scarcely touched this solemn theme, and having regard to the fact that this is the only sin which hath never forgiveness neither in this world nor in the world to come, one would try to say a few things about it in the interest of truth. Others with more grace than I have, could do much better, I am sure, on this terrible

subject, but I have done what I could, as helped.

Now in closing, honour the Holy Spirit! Reverence Him as God in His teachings, all through His Word, in the work of His grace in your hearts and others. In these things I would identify myself with the weakest of you, for if left to ourselves what are we? The secret of all real religion is “Christ in you the hope of glory;” the heart affected mightily in addition to the head; vital communications with and from Christ under the unction of the Holy Ghost, and all to the glory of the Triune Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Ernest Roe

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September 1934

COLOSSIAN III. 2-4.

*“Set your affection (or mind) on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”*

**T**he security of God’s people furnishes consolation for the tiding over many rough and stormy scenes this side the blissful state of eternity. If we had to look to anything belonging to the natural man for hope in the beyond I am persuaded that grace-taught children would be carried down so low in despair that they would cease to hope of ever seeing their Elder Brother, Jesus, and of ever being

with him and like him. In this time, when even the camps of Israel are being turned from peace and joy, trusting and resting in the wrought out righteousness of Jesus, to a tossed to and fro crowd, hearing the lo here and lo there, do we find many interpretations placed on the word. Some are telling us that we have the destiny of Zion and our own individual welfare in our own hands. We are commanded to place our minds on eternal things, instead of earthly things, because by so doing we may attain to large membership, active churches and all temporal things. But the eminent apostle does not tell us that. He gives a reason for doing this, but it is not for reward.

Let us digress a little, to get before your mind what is necessary for us to understand before we can heed the many scriptural admonitions. No man can of himself obey what is commanded. The word, as it is written by divine inspiration, does not put life or spiritual desires in the reader. Some of my best friends are people who seemingly are as destitute of the Spirit of God as any dead sinner can be, yet they can quote much Scripture. We must conclude that the Spirit alone teaches us to obey, because we would only be as foolish Galatians doing anything without the Lord. "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you,

doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" — Gal. iii. 2-5. Here is ample evidence that the Spirit is ministered unto us by the same One that begat us to a lively hope. (1 Peter i. 3.) He that began a good work in us will not desert us to our carnal desires, which are all evil, but we may rest assured that the same God, who cannot lie (Titus i. 2), promised eternal life before the world began, and will, for the perfecting of his glory and the bringing together of many heirs, perform it all to the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 6.) "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." — Phil. ii. 12, 13. How any man can construe this language to mean time salvation is beyond me. These were little children being addressed and admonished by their undershepherd along duty's ways. They were obeying characters, having always done so. The apostle is being led by the Spirit to admonish them to continue doing so, but, like all God-called ministers, he knows where the life is, so he is leaving the performing of that duty to God, and comfortingly tells them that all their salvation is of the Lord.

But let us desist just now on that because it would seem that the things Jesus has in store for his elect are the result of his feeling all righteousness, and that their walking in him and his commands are the direct result of his having given them the

will and working the do .

When the apostle wrote the Colossian brethren it was revelation from Jesus Christ. Set your mind on things above , and not on things of the earth . There must have been a reason other than a reward . Paul plainly tells that reason: " For ye are dead ." How is the quickened child of God dead? Before the life- giving Spirit comes into their heart teaching them what sinners they are then they are dead in sin . Let us emphasize the fact that death has no degrees . Anything that is dead is destitute of any of the life under consideration . Any one who agrees with Paul that the natural man is dead in sin must agree that the child born again is also dead and both deaths being complete . What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin , that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we , that are dead to sin , live any longer therein? 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 ." — Rom . vi . 1-4 . Here is good news indeed to the poor sin - burdened souls . They no longer love sin , but they hate it , and the hateful things in their flesh cause them much sorrow . " I find then a law , that , when I would do good , evil is present with me . For I delight in the law of God after the inner man ." — Rom . vii . 21 , 22 . Oh , so many times have worldlings flung in our face , If I believed as you do I would do just anything I wanted to . Yes , and I am persuaded that only the fear of the

law keeps them from it any way , because they still have the love of sin in their hearts . But with God ' s humble poor it is so different . They have their fill of sin and could they do the things that they would sin would be no more in their lives .

" Your life is hid with Christ in God ." Lift up your drooping eyes , little wayworn pilgrims , for all is safe and secure . God , in Christ , paid it all , and nothing can take the home away from his chosen people .

" Not all the pains that e'er I bore ,  
Shall spoil my future peace ;  
For death and hell can do no more  
Than what my Father please ."

Our lives ( if indeed he ransomed me ) are hid in Christ , and for one of the elect to be left must first dethrone God himself . " My sheep hear my voice , and I know them , and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life ; [ How can some believe that Christ would fail to keep those he gave eternal life , when the gift meant the sacrifice of his own blood? ] and they shall never perish , neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand . My Father , which gave them me , is greater than all ; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father ' s hand . I and my Father are one ." — John x . 27-30 . " And he that sent me is with me : the Father hath not left me alone . — John viii . 29 . " Believest thou not that I am in the Father , and the Father in me ? " " At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father , and ye in me , and I in you ." John xiv . 10 , 20 .

" When Christ , who is our life , shall appear , then shall ye also ap -

pear with him in glory." What glad tidings of great joy! What wonderful love is this manifested to poor sinners! Nothing about them to merit the notice of the sinless child Jesus, but the fact that they are covenant children, and for that reason he takes them from out the wilderness, wherein there is no water, and makes them to drink of water everlasting. That was all wrought out by him alone, when we were as yet enemies to him, but having loved his bride with an everlasting love, he goes about to pay their debt, and while paying it he is establishing a righteousness that is all complete, leaving them holy and without blame before him in love.

But our Savior is doing more for us than to die for us. By day and by night he keeps us, even when we are not mindful of ourselves. By the still waters he leads us and makes us to lie down in green pastures. The dear old walls and bulwarks of Zion are maintained by him and daily he adds to his church such as should be saved and that he would own at his second coming.

Let us not stop our meditation here, for his watchcare is not going to end at the grave. For countless ages our dust may moulder away, but his all-seeing eye never sleeps. When the Lord descends from heaven to gather his children home none will be left. They that are in the graves shall come forth; the sea shall give up its dead and those still living shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and all shall rise to meet him in the air. What more can we desire?

*" God , my Redeemer , lives ,  
And ever from the skies ,  
Looks down and watches all my dust ,  
Till he shall bid it rise ."*

The years of my youth I thought much of the cold and silent tomb, and shuddered with much fear and anxiety at the thought that some time I must leave all the things of nature and lie down in death. But although still young in years, I trust that I have been shown the vain and frivolous ways of this time journey I am on, until I no longer fear to quit the walks of men as I once did. True, the natural man still dreads the sting of death, but the fiery darts that are hurled at poor wayfaring pilgrims, together with the unceasing trials and afflictions, mingled with a stubborn nature and hateful disposition, at times leave me in such a state that it would be peace to depart and be with Jesus.

Just a little more and I am through. As much as is in you, dear reader, take courage and press on a few days longer. Just a little longer on the battle field and the war will be over. Then we that have a good hope in Christ shall die a natural death, trusting sweetly and assuredly in our Assurer that some glad to-morrow he " 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." Then shall the sheep enter into the Father's house, where there are many mansions, there to be with Jesus, and like him, to know no more the aches and pains and the things of time, but to walk in his light that illumines the city of our God,

and to sing redeeming love for ever  
and ever .

In a little hope ,

W.D. Griffin

### MEETINGS

#### STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

**T**he one hundred forty - ninth session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene , the Lord willing , with Danville Church July 6 , 7 , and 8th . Services begin on Friday a .m . at 11:00 and will continue through Sunday . All of our correspondents and believers in salvation by grace are invited . The location of the church is off highway 41 in Danville and signs will be posted to highway 1515 .

Burnell B. Williams  
Association Clerk

#### OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

**A**n annual all day meeting will be held , the Lord willing , at Old Pine Creek Church on the 4th of July , 1990 . 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

**T**he West Country Line Union will meet with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church , the Lord willing , on the fifth Sunday in July , 1990 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 MARCH 1990

Mrs . Helen Murphy , AR . . . . .	2.00
Mrs. Lillian S. Davis , NC . . . . .	22.00
Mrs . W .H . Spires , VA . . . . .	2.00
L .U . Chance , TX . . . . .	5.00
Miss Clarrise Brooks , NC . . . . .	7.00
Mrs . Erby Dalton , VA . . . . .	2.00
Mrs . Gertrude Payne , VA . . . . .	2.00
Richard Stegall , VA . . . . .	2.00
Burnell Williams , VA . . . . .	2.00
Mrs . Audrey Hamrick , TX . . . . .	2.00
D .W . Jones , VA . . . . .	2.00
J .E . Potter , VA . . . . .	2.00
James Cunningham , MO . . . . .	2.00
James E . Fortner , TX . . . . .	2.00
Mrs . Verta Haning , WV . . . . .	10.00
Mrs . Mildred Hanks , VA . . . . .	10.00
Don Jackson , TX . . . . .	7.00
Mrs . Vercie Bolejack , VA . . . . .	2.00
Donald R . Arrington , NC . . . . .	2.00
Mrs . Emma Mitchell , VA . . . . .	7.00
Floyd Bryant , VA . . . . .	2.00
Willard Potter , VA . . . . .	2.00
L .L . Bolich , GA . . . . .	2.00
Mrs . Flora Berry , NC . . . . .	2.00
Mrs . Bennie Clifton , VA . . . . .	2.00

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 OBITUARIES
 

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## ELDER ZENNIE L. RHUE

**E**lder Zennie Larone Rhue, a faithful servant of the cause and kingdom of Jesus Christ, departed from this life at the Forsyth Hospital in Winston-Salem, N.C. on December 24, 1989, at the age of 87. He was a native of Stella community in Carteret County, North Carolina and was born on December 15, 1902, a son of the late Elder Thomas David Rhue and Noma Prescott Rhue.

On December 23, 1926 he was united in marriage to Miss Lilian Hinsdale. Their union, which was blessed to endure for 63 years, was favored with four children: two sons, David and Aaron Rhue, both of whom preceded Elder Rhue in death; and two daughters, Sis. Blaine (Rebecca) Teague of Raleigh and Mrs. Mary Ellen Pyrtle of High Point, N.C.

As a young man Brother Rhue left home and went to Winston-Salem for what he thought would be a relatively short stay to attend theological school. However, the purpose of God placed him in the school of divine grace and settled for good both the bounds of his habitation and the true purpose of his life. When his teacher called on him to attempt to preach what men had tried to teach him, he preached instead the unsearchable riches of the grace and glory of Christ. On that basis he was told that he must be a hardshell

Baptist, and from that time his steps were directed unerringly to the militant church kingdom.

In due course he was received by experience into Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church at Kernersville, N.C. and was baptized by the late Elder George W. Hill. After many sore trials and much suffering he was liberated to exercise the gift God had placed in him. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1936, and in the following years was called to serve as pastor a number of churches in various parts of North Carolina. At the time of his death Elder Rhue was co-pastor of Bunker Hill Church, Rock Hill Church at Asheboro, and Suggs Creek Church at Seagrove, N.C.

For the balance of his earthly life (from 1936 on) Elder Rhue labored under the yoke laid on him by his Blessed Redeemer. While he was a meek and mild-mannered man in disposition, he was as bold as a lion in contending for the doctrine and practice in which he believed.

In the latter part of his life Brother Rhue was much afflicted in body, as well as in spirit. He bore his afflictions with great patience without murmuring or complaining. During that time the Lord recompensed him for much of what he had suffered and answered many of his long-sought desires. After a severe illness and decline of several weeks he died the death of the righteous on the last Sunday in 1989. Surely must we say of him what the Lord said to the church at Smyrna, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

In addition to his wife and daugh-

ters , Brother Rhue was survived by three brothers , Jesse , Redford and Roy Rhue ; and three sisters , Mrs . Eunice Norris , Mrs . Mildred Weeks and Mrs . Naomi Vinson ; and also , four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren .

His funeral service was conducted at Bunker Hill Church by Elders Thornton Manley , Paul Lambe , Paul Hopkins and John Wingfield . His body was laid to rest at Woodland Cemetery in Winston - Salem to await the consummation of his precious hope on the morning of the Resurrection . While those of us who knew and loved him sorrow for our loss , we rejoice for his great gain and hope to meet with him one day before the throne in Heaven .

Now , therefore , be it resolved that four copies of this memorial record be prepared : one for inclusion in our church minutes , one to be given to his family , and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times and one to the Zion 's Landmark for publication .

Done by order of Bunker Hill Church in conference the 27th day of January , 1990 .

Elder John T . Wingfield , Mod .  
Sis . June Baldwin , Clerk

Church and attended faithfully while his health permitted . He usually sat in the front pew and loved to hear the truth preached .

He was born on July 28 , 1908 , to John William and Bessie Potter Smith in Lowland , N . C . and had retired after a life of farming . He was preceded in death by his wife , Irene Jackson Smith . He is survived by three sons , Robert O . " Bobby " Smith of Roper , N . C . , J . G . Smith , Jr . of Pinetown , N . C . , and Joseph Smith of Belhaven ; two daughters , Mrs . Darrell ( Sarah ) Windley of Pantego , N . C . , and Mrs . David ( Jean ) Verdin of Austell , Ga . ; two sisters , Nelva Gray Ricadellia of Jacksonville , Fl . and Sanna Paul of Belhaven ; and one brother , Clemmon Smith of Belhaven . He had seventeen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren .

Elder J . T . Prescott of North Creek Church conducted the funeral service at Paul Funeral Home in Belhaven on Friday , March 2 , 1990 . Burial was in the Sidney Freewill Baptist Church Cemetery with his grandsons serving as pallbearers .

Brother Justus was sustained in this life by a strong hope in the Lord . He will be missed by his family and church .

Tom Thompson , Clerk

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IN MEMORY OF  
BROTHER JUSTUS G . SMITH

**B**rother Justus Smith of Rt . 2 , Belhaven , N . C . was called from this earth on Wednesday , February 28th , 1990 after a brief hospitalization . He was a member of the North Creek Primitive Baptist

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ALTA BURNESSE TEAL

**S**ister Alta Burness Teal was born August 24 , 1902 at St . Augustine , Texas to George Washington and Nancy Jane Loyd .

At the age of 87 , our heavenly Father by his divine wisdom called her from her suffering January 13 , 1990 after a lengthy stay in the Grady Memorial Hospital in Chickasha , Oklahoma .

She married Charles Simms Teal in St. Augustine , Texas in 1919 . To this union seven children were born , three sons and four daughters . They lost an infant son , L . C . Mr . Teal passed away in 1975 .

She united with Little Flock Church , Altus , Oklahoma on May 23 23 , 1987 and was baptized June 25 , 1987 . Even though she lived a good distance from Church , her son Jimmy was faithful to bring her when her health permitted . She loved the Church people and enjoyed hearing the singing and preaching .

We wish to extend our love and sympathy to her family , two sons , Jack and Jimmy of Chickasha , Oklahoma , four daughters , Margaret Hatfield of Tuttle , Oklahoma , Mildred White of Verden , Oklahoma , and Juanita Argo and Janie Bennet , both of Oklahoma City , Oklahoma , one brother , Bro . George Loyd of Cogar , Oklahoma , twenty - two grandchildren , forty great - grandchildren , and a host of other relatives and friends .

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor Elder C . M . Haygood at the First Baptist Church in Minco , Oklahoma . She was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery near Minco to await the second coming of her dear Lord and Saviour . The large assembly of family , friends and beautiful display of flowers were a tribute to her love of God and her Church . Even though we miss her

we believe our loss to be her gain .

Written in love and by request  
of Little Flock Church .  
Bernice Haygood

---

#### BROTHER HERMAN THOMPSON

**G**od by His infinite mercy saw fit to call from our midst Brother Herman Thompson July 19 , 1989 . He passed away during surgery at the age of 73 years and 11 months .

He married Ida Mae Burkhalter October 3 , 1943 at Lovington , New Mexico . They lived most of their married life around Tipton , Oklahoma .

They both asked for a home at Little Flock Church , Altus , Oklahoma in June 22 , 1968 . They were received by experience and baptism and were baptized by their pastor , Elder C . M . Haygood .

Brother Thompson was an ordained deacon of Little Flock Church and a faithful member until his death . He loved to travel and visit among the churches and associations .

He is survived by four brothers , Leroy of Arizona , and Paul , Charlie and Benton of California . His wife preceeded him in death on August 15 15 , 1983 .

We greatly miss his presence but trust our loss to be his eternal gain .

Service were conducted by Elder C . C . Morris and he was laid to rest in the Hess Cemetery to await the second coming of our Dear Lord .

Written by request of Little Flock Church .

Bernice Haygood

### SISTER NETTIE TURNER

**T**he Church at Tarboro feels that God's will has been done by the calling home of Sister Nettie Turner .

Sister Turner was born on April 13 , 1901 and died February 13 , 1990 , making her stay on earth 89 years . She was blessed to join our church first Sunday in February , 1990 , just a few days before her death . Even though she joined our church in her last days , she was a great believer of Salvation by Grace most all of her life . She believed in God as her Saviour and without Him we could do nothing . Sister Nettie never complained and was a sweet person to know . She had no children of her own , but she loved her many nieces and nephews .

We feel she is resting with our Saviour in peace . We send our sincere sympathy to her family as we feel our loss is her eternal gain .

It is our wish for three copies of this resolution to be made : one for the family , one for the church records , and one to be published in the " Signs of the Times ."

This done by order of conference at our March meeting .

Elder Henry C . Jones , Moderator  
John H . Coker , Clerk

### BROTHER HARRY TURNER

**W**e , the church at Tarboro , bow in submission to the passing of our dear Brother Harry Turner . Brother Turner was born on February 2 , 1905 and died February 21 , 1990 , making his stay on earth 85 years .

Brother Harry joined our church in August of 1989 . He was a dear member . Both he and his wife attended our church for many years before they united with Tarboro Church . Brother Harry was a great believer of Salvation by Grace and he loved to have his brethren visit him to talk about the Lord . He was always praising his God and giving thanks for all blessings .

Even though Brother Harry had no children , he was blessed to have a family of nieces and nephews who loved him dearly . One of his nephews made arrangements to see that he got to church after Brother Harry was unable to drive .

The Church at Tarboro resolve that three copies of this respect be made : one for the church records , one for the family , and one to be published in the " Signs of the Times " .

We feel our loss is Brother Turner's eternal gain . We trust he is now resting in peace and love with our dear Saviour .

This done by order at our March meeting .

Elder Henry C . Jones , Moderator  
John H . Coker , Clerk

# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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## SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

*The only way that we can see,  
What our gracious God hath done,  
That we're conformed in Him to be,  
His workings through His Son.  
With trials and troubles everywhere,  
We know not where to turn,  
There is no earthly place to share,  
The lessons we have learned.*

*This strange to natural man to see,  
A child of God on bended knees,  
Begging for mercy from His God,  
Because he's seen the road he's trod,  
His tear dimmed eyes A story tells,  
God's grace has taught him very well,  
Of all sweet blessings in disguise,  
This seems to be where beauty lies.*

*They're taught of things, this world  
can't know,  
Because it's not an earthly show,  
In truth and honesty, they confess,  
Deny themselves ask God to bless,  
And lead them on their journey  
through,  
We know theres nothing we can do,  
We're given to know that His staff and  
rod,  
Makes us stand still and know that He  
is God.*

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*EDITORIAL*


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Clifford Wilbanks

I was taught from an early age that man has a will concerning his destiny after this life on earth: he can accept Christ as his personal Saviour and be saved, or he can reject him and be cast into hell. The most quoted Scriptures to prove their point is John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Also, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It is contended

that man has a 'free will'; but the will of man has never been free, for it has always been controlled by the mind and the desires of the flesh which are evil continually. Gen. 6:5. "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." Man cannot even control his own destiny here on earth, Jeremiah says in chapter 10, verse 23, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." The natural man does not know God: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Enmity means hate, and if we hate God we cannot know him, "for God is love; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." I John 4:7-8. Who is he that is born of God? Is it he that wills it so? We are told that all we must do is accept him as our Saviour and we will be born again and become the sons of God. I will ask, Who do you know that has ever chosen his own parents? But what do the Scriptures say concerning this? Read St. John 1:11-13. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Many will tell you that they have received Christ and

believe on his name , therefore they know that they are saved . If they truly have received him and believe on him , it is not because of their own will , but by the operation of the Holy Spirit . Jesus said , “ Verily , verily I say unto thee , Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God . That which is born of the flesh is flesh : and that which 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 whence it cometh , and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit . John 3:5-8 .

Why must we be born again ? because we are dead in trespasses and sin . Man fell in the garden of Eden when Adam partook of the forbidden fruit . He transgressed the law of God : and sin is the transgression of the law . Adam being our federal head , we were in him and therefore fell in him . That Adam would fall was no surprise to God , for it was in his eternal purpose . It was his will that it should be so . God hates sin , but he had a purpose in it being in the world worthy of his Holy Name . Some will say that if it was God’s will for Adam to sin then he is the author of sin , for he made Adam do it . Not so ! God forbid ! When God made man he made him subject to vanity : “ For the creature was made subject to vanity , not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope .” Rom . 8:19-20 . God also made the crooked serpent ; and this serpent , Satan himself , tempted Eve with the forbidden fruit and lies . Eve ate of the fruit and gave

unto to Adam and he did eat because of his love for her . And in that day they died , for God had said , “ In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die .” Many will say that they did not die , because they lived to populate the earth . Surely they did not die a corporeal death , but they died unto whatever standing they had before God : they were cut off from God , for death means ‘ to be cut off ’ . When man dies a corporeal death he is only cut off from this life on earth , No ; God did not force nor tempt in any way Adam to eat the forbidden fruit . Neither was Adam deceived when he partook of the fruit , but because of his love for Eve he followed her into death willingly . This only pointed to Jesus Christ , for Adam was a figure of him that was to come . Because of his love for his bride , the church , Christ willingly laid down his life that he might redeem her from the curse of the law . Gal . 3:13 . Who is this bride ? Is she not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world according to the good pleasure of his will ? His will , not our . See Eph . 1:4-5 . Better yet , read the entire chapter . And is not her name written in the Lamb’s book of life from the foundation of the world ? Can one name be added thereto or one name be removed ? Never ! Our God is unchangeable : “ For I am the Lord , I change not ; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed . Mal . 3:6 .

Did Jesus redeem his bride ? Dare any one say , no ? 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 will

of him that sent me , that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but raise it up again at the last day . And this is the will of his that sent me , that every one which seeth the Son , and believeth on him , may have everlasting life : and I will raise him up at the last day .” John 6:38-40. Did Christ come to save the entire human race ? No ; only the ones God had given him : if otherwise the entire race is saved and there would be no fear of condemnation and hell. In Rev. 20:15 we read , “ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire . ” Wherefore we must conclude that Christ died not to save every one , because hell will receive those he died not for. And we must say that he finished the work that the Father sent him to do. In his prayer to the Father he said , “ As thou hast given him power over all flesh , that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him . And this is life eternal , that they might know thee the only true God , and Jesus Christ , whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do .” John 17:2-4 . In chapter 10 of Hebrews we read , “ Then said I , Lo , I come ( in the volume of the book it is written of me , ) to do thy will , O God , ” and “ — by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all . ” And , “ For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified . ” Before Christ was crucified

he prayed , saying , “ Father , if thou be willing , remove this cup from me : nevertheless not my will , but thine be done . ” Luke 22 : 42 .

Brethren , it is always the will of God that **MUST** be done ; not ours , nor even the will of Jesus . We read , “ — and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven , and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay his hand , or say unto him , What doest thou ? ” Dan. 4:35 . And , “ But he is in one mind , and who can turn him ? and what his soul desireth , even that he doeth . ” Job 23:13 .

Man has a fleshly will of course , but as I showed before , it is evil continually . All of us have in time past fulfilled the lusts of the flesh and the desires of the flesh and mind ; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others . 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 to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus . ( Eph. chapter 2 . ) It has been said that God works on our will , to make us willing , but that we must exercise that will in accepting or rejecting him ; because he will not save us against our will. I have never found any thing in the Scriptures to confirm such a belief , but I do find , “ Ye have not chose me , but I have chosen you , that ye should go and bring forth fruit . ” John 15:16 . And I find the only accepting done was of God : “ To the praise of the glory of

his grace , wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved .” Eph . 1:16 . When one has been quick - ened out of his dead alienated state and made to see his horrible , sinful condition and be made to realize that he has nothing with which to redeem himself , then he is not only willing to receive the grace of God ’s mercy , but he will beg for it: and what a great joy it is when one is made to feel that his sins have been forgiven , that his cold and stony heart has been taken away from his flesh and he has been given a new heart of flesh , ( Ezek . 11:19 ,) and Christ is revealed in him , the hope of glory . This hope is the sweetest thing in the world to a poor , lost sinner , and he would not trade it for the world and many more like it .

It has been said that God has two wills , one revealed and the other secret: but it has not been revealed to me thus in the Scriptures . I know that all things are secret until God reveals them to us . Jesus said , “ I thank thee , O Father , Lord of heaven and earth , because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent , and hast revealed them unto babes .” Matt . 11:25 . Only from the wise and prudent has God hidden things . He always reveals to his children all they need to know , when they need to know it . It is written in the prophets , “ And they shall all be taught of God .” John 6:45 . When one is taught of God he will surely learn every thing that is taught .

Those who contend that God has two wills say that his revealed will is his commandments . Let us ask , which of the two wills shall be done ? I believe I have already quoted enough Scripture to prove that

God ’s will shall be done . Now the question is , which ? If there be two wills , then they must differ , because if they are alike there can be only one . But if they differ , do they not of necessity cancel or oppose each other ? Let us examine a couple of examples .

When God placed Adam in the garden of Eden he gave him a commandment that he should not eat of the forbidden fruit . Yet God knew that Adam would break that commandment . Had it been God ’s will for Adam to keep the com - mandment , then surely he would have kept it . But God had a purpose for sin being in the world ; and had prepared already the cure ; for Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world . Rev . 13:8 . Although he knew it not , Adam was doing the will of God . If we say God ’s commandment to Adam was God ’s revealed will , then this will opposes God ’s will that sin should come into the world , and make one or both void .

Now let us examine the will of God concerning the crucifixion of Christ . He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknow - ledge of God , ( Acts 1:23 ,) therefore we know that it was his will for it to be done . Was it a secret will ? Certainly not: for it had been foretold by God ’s prophets hundreds of years before , and Jesus himself told his disciples that it would come to pass . But one of God ’s commandments is , “ Thou shalt do no murder .” If this com - mandment is considered to be God ’s will , does it not completely oppose his will that Christ should be crucified ? There was no fault

found in Jesus , yet the Jews demanded his death , preferring to keep a murderer in their midst . The Roman soldiers nailed him to the cross , but the Jews were just as guilty of murder as anyone ever . Therefore I must conclude that God 's commandment here should not be called his revealed will .

God works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure . Since we cannot stay his hand or say unto him , What doest thou ? then we MUST do his will . Has any one ever kept his commandments that were given as laws to be observed ? No . Not one , save Jesus Christ . He kept the law to a jot and a tittle . And James tells us that " Whosoever shall keep the whole law , and yet offend in one point , he is guilty of all ." James 2:10 . On the other hand we must do that which is well - pleasing in his sight : " For we are his workmanship , created in Christ Jesus unto good works , which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them ." This we should do willingly and not by constraint . Read I Cor . 9:16-17 and I Pet . 5:2 . Not only this , but God had said to his Christ , " Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power ." Since God has said that we will be willing , can we not be willing ? And is this not the day of his power ? If not , when will it be ?

Brethren , I must conclude that God has only one will . I have no desire to change your view on this or any other subject concerning the Scriptures , for I know that is in the hands of the Lord ; but if we differ ,

remember who it is that maketh us to differ , and all will be lovely .

Brethren , the Scriptures are filled with God 's promises and his gracious will concerning his chosen people . I have touched upon a very few , but if God be in the matter it is enough . May he bless the truth and pardon all error . May his love and peace abide in us , and may it be his will that you remember this poor sinner and worm of the dust when at the throne of grace and mercy .

Clifford Wilbanks

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CORRESPONDENCE

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Dear Elder Williams :

**E**nclosed is check for \$10.00 to cover subscription to " Signs of the Times " for one year .

In reading Elder R . H . Campbell 's editorial in the April issue of Signs , I was impressed that the revealed truth as set forth was basically the same as given in an editorial by Elder Silas H . Durand in " Fragments ," page 207 , March 1906 , proving that revealed truth is the same from generation to generation .

February of this year I was 74 years old . Often I am made to feel how little I know .

The experiences as given in the last issue were truly wonderful , but made me realize how far short I come .

I do so miss the good preaching since Elder John D . Wood 's sickness and death took him from us . But I believe the Lord , if it is his will , can raise others up .

Sincerely ,  
 Martha C . Lunsford  
 ( Mrs . E . Gordon Lunsford )

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*VOICES OF THE PAST*

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"he being dead yet speaketh"

**" THE SWORD OF THE LORD  
AND OF GIDEON ."**

**W**e deem it appropriate to begin the editorial section of the first issue of the 136th volume of **SIGNS OF THE TIMES** with the scriptural quotation : " The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ." This quotation has been the motto of the **SIGNS** these many decades . It appears on the front cover in bold letters . It has repeatedly appeared on the front cover of every issue since 1835 . Why was this quotation chosen in preference to others as the motto of this periodical , is the question that now concerns us .

We must go to the book of Judges in the Bible and read especially the 6th and 7th chapters in order to glean some of the reasons why this expression is so important to lovers of the truth . The book of Judges is a history of Israel during the period spoken of by Paul , " And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years , until Samuel the prophet ." ( Acts 13:20 ) Israel suffered many calamities as a result of their forsaking the Lord , and idol - worship . The anger of the Lord was hot against Israel so that God delivered them into the hands of spoilers many times , " Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges , which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them ." ( See Judges 2 : 13-17 ) The weakness and idolatry of

Israel within and of themselves were so manifest many times during the time of the Judges ' rule that each and every deliverance by the Lord made manifest His great mercy to a weak and rebellious people . Their whoring after other gods deserved the severe punishment of being cut off without remedy ; however , God would only deliver them into the hands of the enemy for the purpose of humbling them until they cried to Him for deliverance . Sometimes the sword of the Lord would be against Israel , sometimes against the enemy . The enemy always thought it was by their own hand that they subdued Israel , yet Israel was made to know that it was the gracious act of God that saved them from oblivion .

Continued circles of sins , judgments , repentances , and deliverances compose the book of Judges . These same circles make up the history of spiritual Israel , the Church . Church people mix with idolaters and become contaminated with Idolatry . The gross sin of idolatry of Israelites begets judgment upon them from God . This chastisement becomes so heavy that it begets repentance . This repentance is followed by speedy deliverance . Peace is only for a moment because the church forgets her deliverer in time of peace , and begins anew to mix and mingle with the world . She has sinned again and must go around the circle again . How prone we are to forget The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ! Immediately after the death of each of the judges , Israel corrupted themselves again . ( See Judges

2 : 19 ) When Israel did not have a special watchman , prophet , or judge , supplied and ordained by the Lord , she always went astray . We feel that it is a good sign of the Lord's watchful care over the church when He provides good pastors to watch over the flock .

It seems that Israel was in her worst plight during the time of the seven years plunder of the Midianites , Amalekites , and other nomad tribes . It had become so terrible that the Israelites were forced to dwell in caves , dens , and strongholds . The enemy came as grasshoppers for multitude ; they trampled down the fields ; they plundered vineyards and gardens ; and they seized the cattle , and plundered man and house . No sustenance for Israel was left . The riots were terrible . God had delivered Israel into the hands of the wicked in order to humble them . These afflictions were so severe that finally , “ . . . the children of Israel cried unto the Lord . ” ( Judges 6:6 ) No doubt they pitied themselves a long time and complained to one another of their plight before they really cried to God for deliverance . Maybe , as the church , they tried many times to negotiate with the enemy . It is peculiar that the same nations that led them into idolatry were the same nations that would persecute them . Even though Israel's sins were great , God's mercy was greater . He heard their cry . How did God answer the cry ?

God sent first a prophet to reprove with a message before He sent an angel with a message of deliverance . This message of reproof contained a list of great de-

liverances Israel had experienced by God's hand , as well as reminding them of His promises . God reminded Israel of the fact that He had said , “ . . . I am the Lord your God ; fear not the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell : but ye have not obeyed my voice . ” ( Judges 6:10 ) The Israelites had been afflicted enough by the hand of God through the enemy ; now , He gives them a sharp rebuke through His prophet . It is a good sign when God scolds us through His ministers because His rebukes often are forerunners of His mercy . These rebukes make us so ashamed and disgusted with ourselves . We could not be satisfied without a few stripes when we feel to rightly deserve so many . The prophet must come before the angel ; the angel must come before the deliverance . We find a parallel case in the New Testament . The prophet , John , was sent before the angel to prepare the way of the Lord . The angel was sent to both Mary and her espoused husband before the Deliverer , Jesus , came . We find another parallel in our own experience . We sin . We are turned over to Satan and his host for a siege of persecutions . After severe afflictions God sends a prophet , or minister , to us . We are chided into deep humiliation as a result of this minister's message . All this properly prepares us to realize that deliverance must come “ By grace through faith , and that not of ourselves , it is the gift of God . ”

We read in Psalms 17:13 , “ . . . Deliver my soul from the wicked which is thy sword . ” We read in the writings of Isaiah , “ O Assyrian , the rod

of mine anger , and the staff in their hand is my indignation .” ( Isaiah 10 : 5 ) We read from the pen of David , “ Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee : the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain .” ( Psalms 76:10 ) We read in our own experience that even the wrath of enemies upon us is a blessing in disguise . We read in our own experience that pleas to enemies to be easy on us , is all in vain ; yet prayer to God will get results . Negotiations with our enemies are in vain because they are in the hands of God . God raised them up . He only can put them down . We read in our experience that cries to God only will be any help to us . Should we be successful in negotiating with our enemies it would be our willingness to reject the truth and accept error . This always bring us into deeper trouble because we are caught in their net . We read in our experience that God has so ruled the actions of the wicked that we have never suffered in vain a stroke from their hand . We read in our experience that All things work together for good to them that love God , to them who are the called according to His purpose . How good it is to know that whether it be the persecution of the enemy , or the persecution by the hand of brethren , our problems are to be solved by God . No use pleading to others , God holds the reins ! The sword of the Lord is effective when he uses the wicked as His sword in both humbling the Lord ’s people and making proud the enemy . The Lord ’s sword is used for both delivering His people in a unit , and confusing and scattering the enemy .

An angel appeared with a message of deliverance after the fore-runner , the prophet , had accomplished his bidding . This angel did not appear to all Israel but only to Gideon , the son of Joash of the tribe of Manasseh . When the angel appeared , Gideon was threshing “ Wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites .” Yes , in spite of the malice of the enemies , the Lord makes secret provisions for His own people . Even though they had gone through the terrible siege of the enemy , Israel yet had a little wheat and a little wine . This was being hidden from the enemy . Even in the midst of the greatest turmoil in the church there is someone threshing wheat by the winepress . Some bread and some drink is provided for the Lord ’s people even when they are greatly distressed . It is provided in secret places , hidden from the enemy . This angel must have been the Lord of angels . The first words spoken to Gideon by the angel was , “ The Lord is with thee , thou mighty man of valour .” ( See Judges 6:12 ) The Lord ’s presence brings joy finally to the afflicted . Who else but Jesus , the mighty Saviour , could be mighty , bold , and courageous ? The presence of the Lord makes all the difference ! God chose the weak to confound the mighty . Gideon said , “ If the Lord be with us , why then is all this befallen us ? . . . but now the Lord hath forsaken us , and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites .” The Lord appeared to Gideon only . The Lord did not appear to the people but to the leader of the people whom God had chosen . The Lord had before appeared to Moses , not

Israel . Gideon could not suppose himself to be above his brethren , or exempt . Gideon speaks for the whole of Israel , as Jesus speaks in behalf of His brethren . Gideon could not feel to enjoy the praise of his own state as long as his brethren suffered .

God's ways are not man's ways . His choice is of the little and poor , whereas man's choice would be of the great and rich . Gideon said , " Behold , my family is poor in Manasseh , and I am the least in my father's house . " None have ever been raised by the Lord but those who have been cast down in their estimation of themselves . If one does not feel little before the Lord appears , he certainly will feel little after the appearance . The Lord manifests His greatness in mercy through men who are weak in themselves . Gideon asked for a sign . He must be sure that this unreasonable message came from God . His faith must be strengthened by greater evidences than mere words . How strange these words seemed to him ! How could these things be true ? He seeks to have surer ground for an abiding faith . Gideon is minded that such a messenger certainly deserves a present . Such wonderful and marvelous words deserved tribute to the speaker . Gideon asks the angel to tarry until he could bring a present and set it before the angel . The angel promised . Yes , Gideon must be by himself for awhile to meditate alone as he prepares a kid and unleavened bread for this wonderful guest . The record is silent upon the thoughts of Gideon while preparing the feast . The strange

words the angel had said must have kept Gideon's mind employed . Such questions as : How could I , who am so little and poor , be called a man of valour ? How can it be that I am to deliver Israel by smiting the Midianites " As one man , " must have flooded his mind . Gideon was poor but he could give meat and bread to one who brought such wonderful message !

It was Gideon's intention to prepare a dinner , yet God had ordained that it should be a sacrifice . Gideon brought cakes , flesh , and broth to eat ; yet God had ordained that the broth be poured out and the remainder to be used as a sacrifice . The angel gave specific and peculiar orders , yet Gideon followed these specific instructions without hesitation or questioning . The cakes and flesh were laid upon the rock as ordered . The angel touched the flesh , not the rock , with his staff . Fire immediately came out of the rock and consumed both flesh and cakes . What a sign ! Moses had before touched a rock that brought forth water ; now an angel brings fire out of a rock with a touch of his staff . The angel's words were strangely wonderful , but not so wonderful as this ! The faith of Gideon must have been increased greatly as this rock became an altar before his eyes . The same power that brought fire out of a stone could raise courage and power out of the doubting heart of Gideon . He that consumed flesh and cake with fire could consume Midian with Gideon's little faith . It is so wonderful what God can do to strengthen the faith of those who pray , " Help thou mine unbelief . " The

angel's commission had been completed and he disappeared. When Gideon's doubts had subsided, his fear increased. He who was said to be mighty in valour, now quaked and trembled at the sight and miraculous workings of an angel. God comforted him by saying, "Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die." (Judges 6:23)

The Lord further instructed Gideon to destroy the altar of Baal and erect an altar to God on the same rock that emitted fire. Gideon must first destroy the god of idolatry before destroying the idolaters. Baal's altar must be ruined before the erection of an altar to God. They cannot stand together. The true God is not satisfied with just a change of consecrating Baal's altar to use in worshiping God. The altar must be destroyed. A new altar must be erected. It is not enough for a false church to be consecrated to the worship of God, but the false must be destroyed and a new church erected. All of the traditions and superstitions of man which are not according to "Thus saith the Lord," must be put down and abandoned before the Lord will deliver from the enemy. All alliances with the enemy must come down. There is no agreement between the temple of idols and the temple of God.

God proved to Gideon that He was the God of fire, earth, water, and all. He would have Israel to know that it was not their might that saved them. Gideon only had 32,000 men yet God said that was too many. Those who were fearful and afraid were to be excused. This surely does not mean to convey

fearful and afraid of God, but fearful and afraid of their enemies. 22,000 men were in that group. Many would be in the army as long as they are not confronted with the prospects of war; but let a war come and the majority would be afraid and would leave. There were only 10,000 courageous men left. God said that is "Too many." Many are called but few are chosen. God tested them. What a peculiar test! "Every one that lapped water with his tongue as a dog lappeth" should be chosen. Every one that bowed down to drink were dismissed. Those who stood lapping water from their hands must have displayed their devotion to their leader. Those who bowed to drink showed their concern for their own gratification. They were more interested in their drink than performing their duty as a good soldier. No doubt they were accustomed to bowing down. They may have been some of those Israelites who had bowed to the image of Baal that were sent home. Only 300 of the 10,000 were left in the army. Read the 7th chapter of Judges, beginning with verse 9, to see how that God works even in the hearts, minds, and tongues of the enemies to cause a name to be feared. God prepared a dream in the mind of one Midianite, and the interpretation of that dream in the mouth of another, so that the name, Gideon, would be feared. You will find how that Gideon had been stripped of all his army with exception of 300 men, but was encouraged when it was made known to him that his name was so greatly feared by the enemy. Even though this encouragement came

from the enemy Gideon worshiped God. To hear of himself as a barley cake did not disturb him when he learned that it would break the tents of Midian. It matters not how small we be just so victory is gained. Gideon knew the victory was already won when he was convinced that God dealt with both the Midianites and Israelites. The victory was certain even though it had not been manifest to Israel, but to its leader.

Gideon was no longer in doubt but boldly kept on in accord with God's directions. Even though he had been told that Midian was already delivered, he must persevere in order that the manifestation of this deliverance be complete.

We might have expected Gideon to charge these 300 men to whet their swords, sharpen their spears, and fit their armour. Did he so charge them? NO! He gives orders for pitchers, lights, and trumpets. There is no need for anything other than noise and light to confound this host. Of course the name Gideon would scare them. Gideon divided them into three companies and gave them charge, "Look on me and do likewise." What a good charge! The leader would set the pattern and others would do as he did. He did not give them the charge before he supplied them properly. First, Gideon, "Put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers." (Judges 7:16) Undoubtedly this trumpet had a certain sound. Trumpets were used to call soldiers together and was an alarm of war. Paul said, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare

himself to the battle?" (1 Cor. 14:8) Since priests were accustomed to use trumpets in their day for the battles of the Lord, I am convinced, that these trumpets represent the gift of the ministry placed in the hands of the ministers by their leader, Jesus Christ. See Joshua 6th chapter for proof of this use of trumpets. The Gospel has a certain sound. It sounds of love, grace, and mercy to sensible sinners. When the trumpet is rightly blown it breaks the pitcher which is of clay. It blasts the goodness of man as it magnifies the grace of God. It will put the enemy to flight. Man is made of clay just as the pitcher. The man must be broken before the light of truth will shine. The lamp is not the light, neither will it give light until lighted by the Spirit. The lamp is a figure of profession. There is no real light in the profession until our leader comes from within the camp. Jesus must make a fresh appearance to us before our sermons will do any good. When Jesus appears we can blow the trumpet, break the pitcher, let the light shine, and shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." We are not to look to man for life, righteousness, or salvation. This must be experienced as a gracious favor of God bestowed upon hell deserving sinners.

David said to the Philistines, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defiled." (1 Sam. 17:45) David had the better sword. He could have properly said, The sword of the Lord and of David.

Spiritual swords will be victorious over all else . The name of the Lord and Saviour , Jesus Christ , is the weapon of weapons . That is all we need . In Exodus 16:3 , we read : “ The Lord shall fight for you , and ye shall hold your peace .” No use for us to engage in a hot war with our enemies , for our God is the God of battles . We do not have to conduct ourselves in order that the enemy may fear or dread us , because God does this in his own way . We quote Deuteronomy 11:25 , “ There shall no man be able to stand before you : for the Lord your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon . . .” We call your attention to Exodus 23:27 , “ I will send my fear before thee , and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come ; and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee .” It was just as true this day as it was before , that our God shall fight for us : “ In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet , resort ye thither unto us : for our God shall fight for us .” ( Nehemiah 4 : 20 ) The trumpet is placed into hands as Gideon placed trumpets into hands that had been dipped in water . Yes , undoubtedly these were clean hands into which Gideon placed the trumpets . These hands of the 300 were clean enough to hold water for drinking . Water is a symbol of cleansing . This cleansing must be the work of God . What God hath cleansed we are not to call common or unclean .

When we cry , “ The sword of the Lord and of Gideon ,” it gives a certain sound . It sounds only for the work of God . It is a certain sound . If

there be any declaration which tends to give credit to the works of the creature to merit salvation either in time or beyond time , it gives an uncertain sound , and cannot be the cry , certain sound , and cannot be the cry , “ The sword of the Lord and of Gideon .” May God bless us to blow the trumpet that has been placed in our hands , break the pitchers of clay , and shine forth that radiant light ; all of which will gather true Israelites and put the enemy to flight .

E . J . Lambert

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## SOUL AND SPIRIT

■ n esteemed friend and constant reader of the Signs , in Indiana , has understood us to hold that the spirit of the man is the part of the man that is , or must be , born again , and requests us to define or explain the difference between soul and the spirit of man .

From a sense of utter inability to analyze , the nature of man , we are compelled to decline the task of making clear to the understanding of others what we do not ourself understand . But we wish to correct his wrong impression , that we hold that any part of what constitutes us men or women is born of the spirit of God . We do not understand our Lord to say that some part or parts of man must be born again . But he said to Nicodemus , “ Except a man ,” ( not a part of a man , a soul , or spirit , or flesh , or bone , or blood , or head , or foot of a man , but except a man , one

who has already been born of the flesh, and is flesh,) "be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." All the elementary parts essential to our earthy nature are born of the flesh, and are flesh, so called by our Lord, and all alike in all mankind.

It requires but one birth to produce them all; hence Jesus says, and his words ought to settle the matter, and forever silence all speculation on the subject, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It is not possible that any birth can bring forth a nature different from that of the parents of which it is born; so nothing that is godly, incorruptible, or in that sense spiritual, can possibly be born of the flesh. Those to whom power is given to become the sons of God, "are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God." — John i. 13. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." — 1 Peter i. 23. Neither is there anything carnal, earthly or corruptible born of the spirit of God. An incorruptible seed cannot produce or generate a corruptible production; and in the new birth, by which the children of God, as such, are brought into manifestation, we are expressly told they are not born of flesh or blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, nor of corruptible seed, but that they are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Is it not presumptuous then to say, in direct contradiction of what our God has said, that any part or element of our flesh, which Christ says is born of the

flesh, and is flesh, is, notwithstanding what he has so expressly said, born of the Spirit, and is spirit?

As natural men, we have all the elements of an earthly nature, including soul, body and spirit; and these are all born of the flesh, and are flesh, in the sense in which Christ and his apostles have so declared them to be. Our earthly spirit is the spirit of the flesh and of the world: but the spirit which is begotten in us of God is pure and holy, and is called spirit in distinction from all that is born of the flesh, or that is flesh. Adam is the Father of our earthly spirit, but God is the Father of our heaven-born spirit. This distinction is clearly made in Hebrews xii. 9: "We have had fathers of our flesh, which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits?" Our life which is born of the flesh is Adam, with all his corruption and mortality; but that life in us which is born of God is Christ in us the hope of glory, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light. Every manifest child of God is the subject of two distinct births: first his fleshly birth, which is after or according to the flesh, or the earthy Adam; but the production of the second birth is after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. The one is called the spirit of the world, of the flesh, of bondage, of error, &c; but the other is called the spirit of God, of Christ, of truth, of adoption, of life and immortality. As many as are led by this spirit of God, they are the sons of God; but if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. If

we are born of the Spirit , we have in the spiritual birth received the spirit of God , which spirit raised up Jesus from the dead ; and as the production of this new birth liveth and abideth forever , so it abides in us ; and we are assured , this being the case , that He that raised up Christ from the dead , shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us . — Rom . viii . 11 . We are not told that it has quickened our mortal body , either in its whole or in its parts ; but just as surely as we have this spirit in us , shall the creature which is now held in bondage and mortality be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God .

By this spirit , which we receive in the new birth , our persons , redeemed from the earth , are sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise , which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession , unto the praise of his ( God 's ) glory . — Eph . i . 13 , 14 . Our body , soul and spirit , which are born of the flesh , were involved in sin and death , and required to be redeemed and washed in the precious blood of Christ ; but that spiritual , eternal life , which was with the Father , and hid in God , being pure and holy , did not need to be redeemed , washed nor cleansed ; ; and this life is that which is manifested in us by the new birth , being born , not of flesh , but of the Spirit — not of man , but of God — not of corruptible seed , but of incorruptible , by the word of God , which liveth and abideth forever . By this spiritual life , which is born of God , the sons of Adam , redeemed by the blood of

Christ , are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise , which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption ( or final deliverance ) of the purchased ( or redeemed ) possession , to the praise of the glory of God . This earnest , therefore , to all who have in their new birth received that Holy Spirit of promise , is a sure and certain pledge of the final resurrection and change of our vile body from natural to spiritual , from mortal to immortal , and from corruptible to incorruptible ; because the creature itself , which was made subject to vanity , and whose earnest expectation ( subsequently to the new birth ) waiteth for the manifestation of the children of God . They who are counted worthy of that world of which Christ spake to the Sadducees , ( Luke xx . 33 , ) and of this resurrection from the dead , are the children of God , being the children of the resurrection . Begotten unto this resurrection by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ; for as he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father , and quickened by the Spirit , so “ If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you , he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you . ” If this spirit now dwells in us , it so dwells in us by implantation , that is , by the new birth ; for his spirit can only be born of God , it cannot be born of the flesh ; and this spirit is the earnest given , that as it quickened and brought from the dead the crucified body of our Lord , it shall also quicken and raise up from the dead all those in whom it now dwells .

In conclusion , permit the inquiry , Is it not better for the saints to examine whether this quickening Spirit indeed dwells in us , than to indulge in vain speculations and uncalled for disputations , which engendered strife and bitterness ? If it dwells in us , will not its blessed indwelling be manifest by its fruits , which are these : love , joy , peace , long - suffering , gentleness , goodness , faith , meekness , temperance , and things against which there is no law ?

( Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe  
October 1 , 1979 .)

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## PRAYER UNDER OPPRESSION

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Preached at " Galeed " , Brighton  
on Sunday morning  
October 17th , 1926

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*" O Lord , I am oppressed ; undertake for me " ( Isaiah 38:14 ) .*

**M**ost of you will remember that these words were penned by Hezekiah after he had recovered from that sickness which appeared to be unto death , and yet was not unto death , but for the glory of God . It was to the glory of God in showing forth the mighty power and kindness of God toward him in particular , and to the church of God in leaving upon record this song of thanksgiving , confession , and praise ; so that the utterances of his heart have been to the comfort and help of others in all ages of time . To think that the King

of Judah , a man remarkable for the deliverance from his enemies afforded him , one who was raised up of God to bring about a restoration of true worship ; that such a one , when the hand of death was laid upon him apparently , should utter such an expression as this : " O Lord , I am oppressed ; undertake for me " . The Lord is no respecter of persons , neither is death ; and when the hand of death comes upon a person , whether prepared or unprepared , it is a solemn matter . Well might the hymn - writer say ,

*" Prepare me , gracious God ,  
To stand before Thy face ;  
Thy Spirit must the work perform ,  
For it all of grace ."*

Wherever the Lord has a purpose of mercy toward any person , we believe that He will be with him in the hour and article of death ; and though there may be this oppression of spirit that was upon Hezekiah , yet there will be a breath of prayer , and a humble dependence upon the God of all grace . And so we believe it was with our departed friend , Paul . Though he was one who did not say much relative to his exercises , yet we have every reason to believe there was a humble dependence upon the God of all grace , and that he was looking for the mercy of God in Jesus Christ . And that kept him cleaving to the ministry of the gospel and enabled him to walk consistently with the measure of his profession , before an ungodly world and those with whom he came in contact . Undoubtedly there was the fear of God in his heart , which was

*" An unctuous light to all that 's right ,  
A bar to all that 's wrong ."*

He may have known more of this text than he expressed. It is our mercy if we know anything of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, in reconciling us to God: that it is only in the dying and doing of the Lord Jesus. No man ever entered heaven upon his own righteousness; it is purely upon the justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus, that is, His spotless obedience and the shedding of His precious blood, that any poor soul is justified, and has an abundant entrance into His kingdom. Yet it is a mercy when the grace of God so operates upon us that we show forth in our conversation a life, a practice, that is worthy the profession of the Name of Jehovah Jesus.

But to the words before us. We would speak of a few of the oppressions that come upon those who are exercised unto godliness; because this oppression of which Hezekiah speaks, is not just an ordinary oppression of spirit that a worldly man may have. It was something that pressed thus oppressed, by a sense of their lack of knowledge of Jesus Christ. What I find more generally amongst us is, that there is not this oppression because of the lack of the knowledge of the things of Christ. It is healthy sign if you are oppressed at times because you cannot get near Him, to touch the hem of His garment, or because you cannot behold the Lamb of God with the eye of living faith. I may say this is my greatest oppression; I have not a greater oppression than this — my spiritual ignorance of the precious things of Christ. You may know them in your judgement, you may hold them as truths; but to know the reality of them in your heart, to feel

the powerful beams of God's love shining into your heart through the things of Christ, is an experience that I often lack, and one that I often desire. But, blessed by God, I trust it is an experience that I am not altogether a stranger to; and yet I am often oppressed because of the lack of this communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Now, are you oppressed because of the lack of this communion? For if you fear the Lord you cannot patch up an inglorious peace, you cannot make up a sort of experience, and then call it communion; you want the real manifestation of God's love to you to inspire in your heart to be bound to Him, for there to be a flowing together; for your heart to be bound to Him, and for your to have some blessed hope that you are bound up in the bundle of everlasting life with Him. Well, if you are oppressed by reason of your lack of communion and fellowship with the Lord Jesus, you will pray for it, and you will not put anything in the place of it. The world may sometimes occupy your mind, your heart, and your attention; but often you will be burdened in spirit, there will be an aching void which the world cannot fill, and there will be, too, an earnest anxiety to be right in the sight of God. Do you know something of these oppressions?

Then again, there will be this oppression, which some of us groan under with the apostle Paul. That living principle of sin within the soul, which even grace itself does not eradicate, made the great apostle of the Gentiles groan under a sense of it desiring deliverance from it: "O wretched man that I am! who shall

deliver me from the body of this death?" I mean the old man of sin, the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; is it not oppression? Do you not feel sometime overwhelmed with a sense of it? This carnal mind meets you at every turn. When you would look into the Scriptures or go aside to pray, or when you would hold communion with the people of God, how often this old man of sin will oppose it vigorously! And this becomes an oppression, so that we cry out under it, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But the Lord sometimes puts forth His power within us, and subdues it, by the superabundance of His grace.

Then there are many oppressions. The various trials that we come into form oppressions. David was the subject of crushing trials throughout his life; and what an oppression this was to him! You will remember the time when he was driven from this throne by the unnatural rebellion of Absalom, who sought his life; and how he crossed over the stream, and went up Mount Olivet bare-headed and bare-footed, under this great oppression. There was this with David's trouble at that time — he could see his sin in it. And if you can see your sin in the trouble, it does not make it any less an oppression; sometimes it adds to it, when we see our own folly as being the procuring cause of our troubles. And cannot we, my hearers, in many of our troubles, find that our sin lies at the very root of them, that we have sown to the flesh, and of the flesh we have reaped corruption? So in David's case, when Shimei cursed him.

When one wanted to take his head, David said, "Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him", and how anxious he was that the ark of God should not be dragged into the mire, into what he himself feared he was going into! Now there were cares that lay underneath all that, and the language of David's heart would be bitterly expressed by this word, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me". And so with the people of God. You come into some trouble, and at first you think you will be able to bear it; in fact you know that you must bear it; but by-and-by it becomes so grievous that you begin to inquire of the Lord respecting it, and then the Lord shows you the worm at the root. He shows you that some besetting sin or some unwary action of yours has been the procuring cause of this trouble that has been laid at your door. Now this will bring an oppression; and in your oppression you will cry to the Lord to undertake for you. But as you see your sin to be the cause of your misery, one of the first things will be to seek release from the guilt of sin, and the pardoning love and mercy of God to be made known. As soon as you are brought there, it will not be long before the Lord commands deliverance for you; or He may give you such support and strength under the trouble that you acknowledge that even such a trouble as that is made into a blessing by the goodness and grace of God.

Take Job's case. There was a man who feared God and eschewed evil, there was not a man like him in the East, and yet Satan was suffered to take away all that he had, even his

health ; but he must not touch his life. Now how graciously Job carried himself , by the grace of God , under his oppression ! He was able to say , “ The Lord gave , and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the Name of the Lord . ” But he did not continue all the time of his trial in that blessed state , in submission to the will of God . There were times in which he cursed the very day of his birth in the bitterness of his spirit ; but he could not curse God . Sometimes he was able to say this , “ Though He slay me , yet will I trust in Him ” . There is something about Job ’ s troubles that is really beautiful , as you behold the grace of God in him , strengthening and supporting him , and enabling him to bow with submission to the holy will of God . I do not believe there is a sweeter place under heaven , than in grievous trials to prostrate ourselves before the mercy - seat of Christ , confessing that He has a right to do with us and with ours as seemeth good in His sight . Those of us who have passed this way know it is one the sweetest place under heaven .

*“ Then wait , my soul , submissive wait ,  
Prostrate before His awful seat ;  
And midst the terrors of His rod ,  
Trust in a wise and gracious God . ”*

The Psalmist knew this when he was dumb and opened not his mouth , saying , “ Because Thou didst it . ” O to have a due sense of the hand of God as being in our oppressions or our afflictions ! so that our hands are upon our mouths , and there is some humble trust in our hearts that after all the Lord will be better to us than our fears , and infinitely better than our deserts .

There is an oppression that may

not be attended with any particular sin . Sin is mixed with all we do ; but the Lord sometimes lays a trouble upon a person when it is for his spiritual good , and for the magnifying of His great Name , and that He might endear Himself to him a greater measure than He had heretofore . As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ , some of us prove this ; that when the Lord would make Himself known to us , as He did the three disciples on the mount of transfiguration , He brought a cloud over them , and “ they feared as they entered into the cloud ” ; and then they heard a voice out of the cloud , saying “ This is My beloved Son , hear ye Him ” . And if only the Lord Jesus Christ makes Himself known in an oppression or an affliction , a bereavement , or a temptation , and endears Himself to the heart , then what spiritual profit there is , and what peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby !

“ O Lord , I am oppressed . ” It seems as though Hezekiah here was shut up to himself and to his own particular troubles . And I believe that sometimes the Lord ’ s people are brought into that solitary condition that they can only look upon themselves and their own troubles , and look alone to the Lord for deliverance from them . I mean this ; if troubles do not weigh upon us particularly , we can often enter into other people ’ s troubles , but sometimes we have such troubles that swallow up those of others . And then we need the Lord to undertake for us in some special manner .

Then the people of God are sometimes oppressed relative to the Church of God. If your heart is right in the things of God, you will be concerned in the prosperity of Zion. When Zion is under a cloud, or under the hidings of God's face, or the withholding of His power, it will be an oppression upon your heart. And that oppression will make you cry to the Lord in secret, not merely complaining publicly that the Lord withholds power from the ministry, and so on. That will not be the sum and substance of your complaint, but oftentimes you will complain in secret before the Lord, and tell Him how oppressed you are by reason of what you feel yourself to be, and by reason of the absence of what you desire to see, that is, the goings forth of the Lord in His sanctuary. This may not be applicable to you here as a people, for the Lord has dealt very kindly and mercifully with you in bringing some into the fellowship of the gospel in an open and manifest way, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and giving a testimony of their hope in Jesus Christ. Therefore you have reason to bless and praise God for the opening of His hand, for the prosperity given. But then there are churches where those who are truly spiritual often grieve over the afflictions of Joseph, because the Lord's hand seems to be shortened. He withholds power from ministry. The ministry may be quite correct as regards the truth, but there may be a withholding of power and this is often an oppression to those who have the cause and interest of truth at heart. O what an oppression it is, when a soul is ready to exclaim with the Psalmist, " Will

He be favourable no more? Will He never look down upon me as an individual with the smilings of His grace? Will He never look down upon Zion to the ingathering of precious souls, and to the building up of His church and people?" These are oppressions that some have to carry upon their hearts, and their desire is that the Lord would undertake for them.

Now it is only the Lord Jesus who can really undertake for a person who is under these oppressions. With regard to sin it is only in His having undertaken the whole of the liabilities of His Church and people, that they can ever be purged or pardoned. There would be no salvation of any one individual, had it not been for the wondrous love of God in giving His only-begotten Son, and for the grace of Christ in coming into this world to suffer, the Just for the unjust, to bring sinner to God. So He undertook everything in the matter of justifying those poor sinners who were given to Him in eternity past by the Father; and He redeemed them from the Fall by becoming sin for them, took away their sin and guilt, and by His spotless righteousness, imputed to them righteousness wherewith they can stand before the judgment-seat. And the Holy Ghost, He undertakes to make salvation known, and to witness with the blood of Christ; and as He has undertaken to gather every sinner from the four quarters of the earth who is redeemed with the blood of Christ, and to call such into fellowship of the gospel: so He will have His witnesses, and He will cause the word to go forth with sovereign power and energy to this end.

May the Lord add His blessings for His Name's sake .

Caleb Sawyer

This article sent to us by Bro . W.R. Pullig  
Editors

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL

**T**he sixteenth annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing , with Hopewell Church , Winnsboro , Texas , beginning on Friday , July 27th , 28th and 29th .

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 .

Elder Jimmy Hamrick , Pastor  
John Hamrick , Clerk

PIG RIVER ASSOCIATION

**T**he Pig River Association is scheduled to convene , the Lord willing , the first Sunday in August and Friday and Saturday before , August 3 , 4 & 5 . Town Creek Church is to host the meetings on their church grounds .

Those coming from the south ,

go highway 220 North about five miles above Bassett Fork , Va . , and turn left on route 605 and go approximately 2 1/2 or 3 miles to church . Those coming from the north turn right on 605 . Route 605 is road toward Henry - look for Henry sign .

Jamie E . Cooper , Assoc . Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1990

Dale Haygood , TX .....	2.00
Whitney Mobley , NC .....	5.00
In memorial to Mr. Melvin Smith , SD	
From his children .....	20.00
Bert H. Knox , WA .....	10.00
Mrs . Armedia Taylor , LA ....	2.00
Alvis Beacham , NC .....	7.00
Mrs . Julia T. Sowers , VA ...	2.00
Mrs . J.D. Neely , AR .....	1.00
Raymond Clayton , KY .....	7.00
Mrs. Florence D. Maxey , VA ...	5.00
W.R. Pullig , LA .....	2.00
Clarence M. Kearns , NC ....	2.00
William R. Adcox , AR .....	2.00
Mrs . Pearl A. Law , VA .....	5.00
Lawrence W. Myers , VA .....	2.00
Mrs . Elma M. Burnett , TN ...	2.00
Mrs . E. J. Barnes , OR .....	5.00
Mrs . Lois E. Cloud , AZ ....	10.00
Miss Reidy Pickral , VA .....	50.00
Mrs . Betty Nutter , MD .....	2.00
Mrs . Berdie Hall , NC .....	2.00
Mrs . Ruth Turner , VA .....	7.00
Jackie B. Ferguson , VA .....	2.00
Kenith Hollandsworth , VA ....	2.00
O.P. Murphy , TX .....	100.00
Ollie C. Gauldin , NC .....	2.00
Eld. Tomas Solomon , VA ....	2.00
Mrs. Connie M. Page , NC .....	5.00
Mrs . E. Thompson , NC ....	20.00

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 OBITUARIES
 

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## LILA COTHRAN CRABTREE

It pleased God to call Sister Lila Crabtree from our midst November 23, 1989. She united with the Durham Church July 19, 1925 and was a faithful member until the Lord, in His appointed time, saw fit to call her from us. Sister Lila had no children. She was a woman of humility and peace, with a deep abiding faith in God. She attended her place of worship as long as she was able, but for many years was in poor health and unable to meet with her brethren. A graveside service was conducted for her at Eno Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery by Elder Burch Wray. Elder Cleo Robertson offered prayer. "It is not death to close the eye long dimmed with tears, and awake in glorious repose to spend eternal years." Written by request of the Durham Church in conference.

Novaline Stewart  
Assistant Clerk

## SISTER PEARLINE MARDIS

Sister Pearline Mardis the daughter of the late Brother Ezell and sister Cassil Musgraw. She was born Oct. 12th, 1909, departed this life Jan. 17th, 1989. Making her stay here 80 years, 3 months and 5 days. She was

married to George Mardis March 16th, 1929 who preceded her in death a few years.

To this union was born 4 sons and two daughters Gerald Mardis, Orlando, Florida; James Mardis, Vincennes, Indiana; Eugene Mardis, Greenville, Miss.; Keith Mardis, Vincennes, Indiana. Two daughters Irmogene Cain, Bastrop, La.; Brenda Braxton, Bastrop, La. One sister Geneva Pettis, Bastrop, La.; three brothers Mark Musgraw, Bastrop, La.; Jake Musgraw, Bastrop, La.; George Musgraw, Bastrop, La. Sister Mardis joined Concord Primitive Baptist Church Sept. 12th, 1954 and was baptized by Elder John Lee Smith. She was a faithful and devoted member, always filling her seat when she was able to go and many times when she was not able to go. She was at the meeting a few days before the Lord called her home. We at Concord Church miss her but we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral service was at Galden Funeral Home Chapel in Bastrop, La. by her pastor and writer Jan. 19th, 1989 assisted by Mr. Jim Taylor. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Christ Church Cemetery in Bastrop, La. beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, When our vile bodies shall arise in the glorified image of our Lord and Saviour, Where we will be like Him and praise Him forever more, Where there will be no more pain nor sorrow no more death but all will be Peace, Love, and Joy while the eternal ages roll on and on. May the Lord bless and comfort all of her children,

brothers and sister and all that loved her as only He can do .

Written by her pastor ,  
Elder George W . Jones

### LORA HUTCHINS REEVES

**S**ister Lora Reeves died February 9 , 1989 , after many years of illness . On August 16 , 1941 she was united with the Durham Church where she and her late husband , Willie , faithfully attended until her health failed and she could no longer go to meetings .

Though Sister Lora did not talk very much , in her walk through the years she proved to be an humble , peace - loving person who loved the Lord and her brethren .

She had no children to mourn .

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Cleo Robertson and she was laid to rest to await the glorious resurrection .

Written by request of the Durham Church in conference .

Novaline Stewart  
Assistant Clerk

### SISTER IRENE MCKINNEY SETLIFF

**W**ith sadness in my heart , I will attempt to write a few words in memory of my dear beloved friend , Sister Irene McKinney Setliff , who died Thursday , February 1st , 1990 at her home in the Mayfield community where she had spent most of

her life .

Born July 25th , 1911 , she was the daughter of the late Elder Sam M. McKinney and Sister Lena Dix McKinney . She was married September 14th , 1929 to C . Gordon Setliff who preceded her in death August , 1980 . The Lord blessed them with fifty one years together . She was formerly employed by Dan River , Inc . ; a former partner of Setliff and Company of Reidsville , Eden and Madison ; a music teacher who gave private piano lessons and one who loved music and wrote some of her own . Her poem was printed in the March Signs . She was a member of Happy Home Extension Home - makers . She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church September 12th , 1982 and was baptised October 12th by her beloved pastor Elder David Spangler . She was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace and grace alone . She loved the church , sisters , brethren and friends and attended her church on Sunday before she died on Thursday . She enjoyed the fellowship of having friends and church members in her home .

Survivors include one daughter , Gloria S . Pegram of Reidsville , one son , Charlie G . Setliff , Jr . of Pelham , five sisters , Muriel Strader , Connie Page and Kathleen Powell all of Ruffin , Mossie Walsh and Viola Hill both of Danville , Va . , five grandchildren and four great - grandchildren .

Her funeral was conducted from Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Kenneth Key and Haywood Wray . She was laid to rest , by the side of her husband , in the church

cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers , there to await the glorious resurrection .

She is greatly missed by her family and friends . May we who mourn be reconciled to God 's will , knowing He never makes a mistake . Written by one who loved her and misses her so very much .

It is requested that a copy of this memorial be made available to the family members and that one be submitted for publication in the Signs of the Times .

Sister Lucy H . Davis

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#### ELDER JOHN CLOVIS TOWNLEY

It is with sadness we feel to make the attempt of writing an obituary of our dear pastor . Who passed from this life December 31 , 1989 in St. Vincent Infirmary in Little Rock , Arkansas . After a long illness at the age of 71 . Born May 22 , 1918 . He joined Pilgrim Rest Church October 15 , 1955 , and was baptized by Elder J. T. Everett . Elder Townley was ordained as Deacon and served Pilgrim Rest Church from Oct . , 1960 until the First Sunday in May , 1970 . He preached his first sermon , and was ordained as Elder 5th Sunday in August 28 , 1971 . He loved the doctrine of the Old Baptist . He served several churches and was Moderator of South Arkansas Association , and did a lot of visiting other meetings and Associations . He stood for the hard doctrine , and preached it and lived it . And gave God all the praise . He was the son of Wiley Townley and Isabell O'Mary

Townley , both were members of Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church .

He is survived by his wife , Frances Rhodes Townley of the home . Two daughters , Mrs . Mary Neal , Benton , Ark . ; Mrs . Barbara Fish , Dewitt , Ark . One sister , Pauline Norris of Fordcyce , Ark . Two brothers , Troy Townley of Oxford , Alabama ; Doyle Townley of Maysville , Oklahoma . Three grandchildren , three great - grandchildren , two step grandchildren , five step great - grandchildren .

Funeral service was held at Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church on Wednesday January 3 , 1990 at 2 p . m . by Elder Loyd Wall and Elder Paul Danial . Burial was in Chapel Hill Cemetery near Sparkman , Arkansas by Benton Funeral Home . He will be missed by all that knew him and loved him . This was written by request of the church March 31 , 1990 . Written by one who loved and cared for him . He 's gone home , but not forgotten .

His Wife ,  
Frances Townley

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#### 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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# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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## POEM

This poem was written on May 28, 1990 in Louisville, Ky. We had been traveling for twenty-two days and would leave the next morning for home. We had a most enjoyable trip and feel we visited the many places in Spirit as well as in body. I humbly dedicate this writing to all who went with us and to any others who have witnessed the wonders of God's Creation and given Him all praise and honor.

*We have seen the Kansas plain  
Spread out by Thine own hand  
and know Thou gavest it for gain  
Because of Thy love for man.*

*We saw the gaping Canyons  
With walls treacherous and steep  
and beheld Thy beauties in its depths  
Painted by Thy hand, Grace the colors  
keep.*

*We saw the mighty rivers  
Rushing down to the sea  
and know Thou art the giver  
Waters from mountain's side set free.*

*We saw many cattle spread  
Among the rocks and rills  
and know that Thou hast said  
" Mine are the cattle of a thousand  
hills."*

*We have seen Thy lovely mountains  
Reaching up to Heavenly heights  
and know Thou hast built them  
To enrich our earthly sights.*

*We've seen the early sunrise  
The dawning of God's new day  
and prayed for Thine own blessings  
As we journeyed on our way.*

*We beheld wild animals grazing  
In valleys lush and green  
and know its of Thy hand amazing  
Their numbers and beauty there is seen.*

*Oh, we have seen the lofty trees  
That through ages large have grown  
and know Thou hast sown the seed  
Thus the Glory is truly Thine alone.*

*We saw the rocks placed in a line  
and in Thy works were amazed  
We know the hands that laid them  
Was not any mans - but truly Thine.*

*We saw the foaming ocean  
As it crashed upon the shore  
and know Thou didst set it in motion  
To move and surge forever more.*

*We looked at dazzling mountain tops  
All covered white with snow  
and know they fulfill Thy plan  
For from such Thy purest waters flow.*

*We walked upon the ice field  
So barren cold and deep  
We know its age of time is real  
And that secret Thou dost keep.*

*We saw a beautiful sunset  
And knew days end had come  
We dwell in lifes fading light as yet  
But long beyond it to reach our home.*

*We saw lakes in utter stillness  
Some locked in frozen ice  
We know these settings were for us  
And thank Thee for blessings without  
price.*

*We beheld the steaming cauldrons  
That express the earthly heat  
and know Thou has control now  
O'er every Satanic challenge we meet.*

*We thank Thee for Thy presence  
As we traveled along the way  
and feel we've seen Thy hand of essence  
Manifest to us from day to day.*

*As we beheld these many beauties  
And feasted on Spiritual food  
No wonder Lord Thou hast said  
" I made it and Behold it is good ".*

*With all praise to Him  
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.*

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 8 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

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 EDITORIAL
 

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*“ Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven .”*



Elder R. H. Campbell

I don't believe that I have ever heard this scripture used as a text for a sermon in the Primitive Baptist Church and I have wondered about this many times . It is one of the most beautiful and inspiring texts that I know of and it is in the fulfillment of this command that God's children receive the greatest joy and comfort in their pilgrimage here on earth . I know that it is a favored text of the religious orders of our day to promote a works system , to earn salvation and the blessings thereof , but that does not mean that this is the true interpretation of the scripture . Many avoid this text because they do not want to be confused with the modern theories of the teachings of the scriptures . These are the words of Jesus and they are to the church in all ages of time and they are profitable for doctrine , for reproof , for correction , for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect , thoroughly furnished unto all good works . They are found in Jesus sermon on the mount as he taught his disciples the gospel that he was sent into the world to proclaim and indeed is the basis upon which our love and fellowship for our brethren is based . When this commandment is being fulfilled among the saints of God all is peace

and harmony and they experience joy beyond compare as they travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow . If it was not for this light shining unto all that are in the house and their glorifying God for this light their journey here in time would be a dark and lonely experience . The light dispels the darkness and brings gladness to all that are in the household of faith .

Jesus began his sermon by telling his disciples that , the poor in spirit , the mourners , the meek , the pure in heart , the peacemakers and those who are persecuted for his sake are blessed characters . These are conditions that do not cause the individual to feel to be in a desirable position , or one that they would strive for and certainly not a blessed condition . By worldly standards , characters in these conditions are lightly esteemed among men and yet Jesus admonished them to rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great was their reward in heaven . These are the people who Jesus told they were the light of the world and the salt of the earth and all because of their being blessed characters , not in order to receive this blessed status . This is completely contrary to the worldly appraisal of the situation and the fleshly interpretation of the scripture quoted above by the majority of the theologians in the world today .

Mankind has always advocated a doctrine which supports a worldly religion based on natural causes and effects , and the natural mans ability to voluntarily believe the truth , and by responding to the law of commandments earn a place in the heavenly kingdom , and therefore

enjoy the benefits based on their merits . They quote scriptures to support their beliefs but it is by applying all scriptures to all people that they err , for all scripture are given by inspiration and are to the man of God . Because they quote , mis - quote and wrongly apply the scriptures in their effort to support a works system does not mean that they do, and certainly does not mean that the prophecies of the scripture are of private interpretation to be subject to the will of men regardless of popular acceptance .

Jesus was teaching his disciples who were blessed characters already , and that blessing included their ability to discern the truth and to rightly divide the word of truth . That blessing also included the light and the ability to let it so shine that it would indeed give light to all that are of the household of faith that they may glorify their Father in heaven . In their journey through life many times the road gets dark and dreary and the heirs of grace tend to become discouraged as they see so much confusion and pursuit of the worldly pleasures and necessities of life all around them . Their heart seeks and desires better things and yet they feel so alone and it seems the darkness will consume them . Then they meet a brother who seeks the same things that they do , and no one could convince them that the world does not light up for they can now see clearly and the darkness and loneliness is gone . In this life the joy of their salvation is in experiencing the love and the fellowship that they share with their brethren as they come together in peace and bask

in the light that shines forth in the faces and the countenances of those whom the spirit blesses to commune together in the beauties of their salvation . When one begins to relate their experience and tell of God 's dealing with them , as he led them into an understanding of the truth , nothing can better describe their bearing than a light shining forth from a heart that has been instructed in the beauties of Zion . David wrote , " out of Zion , the perfection of beauty , God hath shined ." This is surely a Godly radiance that shines forth , not a carnal flickering of the natural man .

Surely this light is the fruit of the spirit that dwell within the heart of all the saints of God . This is declared so many times and in so many ways by the writers of both the old and new testament . The apostle Paul wrote much to the churches and especially in his letters to Timothy and Titus , who he called his own sons in the faith , regarding this light and how it would make itself manifest in the household of faith and the reason for it . He admonished all to let their walk and their conversation be such as becometh saints and not to be conformed to the world and the vanity and lusts of it . He wrote to the church at Rome , " I beseech ye therefore , brethren , by the mercies of God , that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice , holy , acceptable unto God , which is your reasonable service ." This was addressed to the children of God who had the spirit dwelling in them and that is what enabled them to perform this as their reasonable service which is declaring this as the reason for the gift of

the spirit in letting their light so shine. It was given to them individually, but it was given for the benefit of the church, as Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." This is the reason it is given and they glorify God because they realize it is a gift from Him.

These gifts are not given to the world at large but to a blessed people and they are for a specific purpose which is to light their path and to dispel the darkness of the world. All can remember in their experience in the church, precious saints of whom, just the memory brings to mind this light shining forth from a pure heart. They were such a joy to be with as you beheld the work of grace in their lives; surely they were like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth their fruit in their season: their leaf also shall not wither: and whatsoever they do shall prosper. David said this of the blessedness of those whose delight is in the law of the Lord and whose meditation is of heavenly things day and night. Their prospering did not appear unto them but it did to all the household of faith just as the light shines out not in, and as long as their is one alive who was blessed to bask in that light they will never be forgotten. Their whole life was devoted to their church and their whole desire was to serve her in any way that they could; they never considered it work, it was a labor of love which they enjoyed doing as much as their brethren enjoyed sharing in this light

that shined forth from the heart.

I have been blessed to know many of these precious saints in the thirty-seven years that I have been going among the Primitive Baptist and rejoiced greatly in the lovely fellowship that I have experienced in their company. I have seen many shining that have since been called to their heavenly home and they are sadly missed. There will be others but there will never be one to take their place, each is a special gift to the Church a beautiful gift that causes all who behold it to glorify their Father which is in heaven.

Surely this is the lesson that is being taught in this text and it is beautiful and comforting to see it unfolding before our eyes. In the eyes of those blessed saints they are, poor in spirit, mourning, meek and hungering and thirsting after righteousness; before God they are blessed characters who are the light of the world and the salt of the earth; unto their brethren they are lights shining forth in a world of darkness and they strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees and bring joy and peace to all the household of faith in a world of turmoil and confusion.

In bonds of love,  
Elder Richard H. Campbell

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PSALM 2 : 11

*Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.*

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*CORRESPONDENCE*

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Mrs . G . B . McAdams  
102 Eastwood Dr .  
Columbus , Miss , 39702

Dear Sir :

I am not a member, but I enjoy the good writing in the Signs of the Times . My grandfather was an Elder , William Dorris . Ordained to the ministry in 1901 . He was a kind , loving , humble and faithful father , husband and friend . He was highly esteemed by those who knew him .

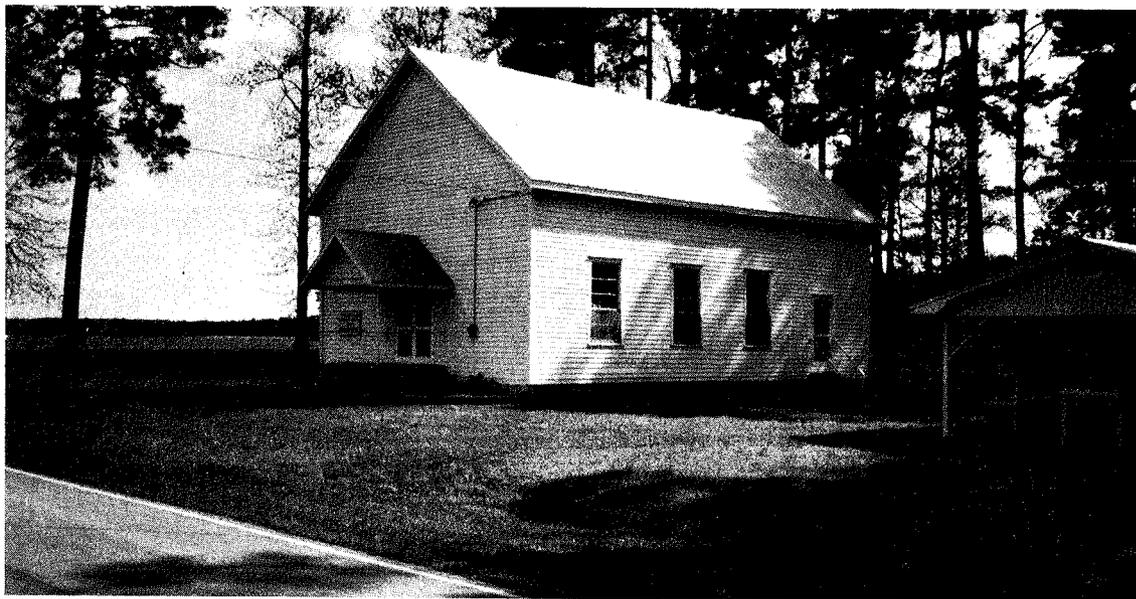
He died in his fifties due to injuries received in a run away horse and wagon . I was only a year old . I wish I could have known him and heard him preach .

Elder W . D . Griffin was named ( Dorris ) taken from my grand - father's name a dear beloved brother himself , a pastor of my mother and father Gidie & Ruth Blalock's church , "Bathel" near Steens , Miss . and Milport , Ala . for 25 years , before going north to pastor Welch Tract Church . He and Mrs. Griffin was like part of our family we loved them dearly .

Sincerely yours ,  
Mrs . Edna McAdams

---

## CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



### GOOSE CREEK ISLAND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

I am enclosing photo of our church Goose Creek Island located in Pamlico , County at Low - land , N . C .

The church records as I have , show it was founded in 1823 , but Hassells history give it 1803 . The present building was built in 1898 .

Our meetings are fourth Sundays 11:00 a . m . and Sat . night before at 7:00 p . m . every quarter , Feb . , May , Aug . - Nov . communion and feet washing every quarter .

Our present pastor Elder Oliver Allen .

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*VOICES OF THE PAST*


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“he being dead yet speaketh”

### THE HEAVEN SENT BREAKFAST

**M**r. H.L. Hastings, of Boston, says in his “Ebenezers,” that on the afternoon of Christmas Day, 1866, he went into an humble chapel on Lowell Street and found a physician delivering a brief address in reference to the gracious providences of God, and his guiding hand as seen in the affairs of life. He spoke in substance as follows:

“Once in my visits about the city, I stepped into a store and commenced to talk upon the truths of revelation; and the conversation presently turned upon the faithfulness of God in providing for his people. And the merchant said, ‘In the city of Portland there resided some years ago a rope maker named H—. He was regarded as being in prosperous circumstances, and doing a comfortable business. In the year 1812, the ‘embargo’ which was laid upon exports ruined his business: he could not sell his ropes, and finally fell into straitened circumstances.

‘He had a wife, a frail and feeble woman, who had been afflicted with pulmonary disease for 25 years; and he also had several children. One cold, snowy, winter’s night their last morsel of food was consumed; he had no means to obtain more, and the children went supperless to bed. The man was not a Christian, and was in great distress. The woman was a child of God and knew there

was a hiding place for tossed and troubled souls before the throne of grace. The husband retired to rest with the children, and the feeble wife remained to pray, and plead the promises of God who feeds the hungry from his bounteous hand.

‘The night wore away while she continued in earnest supplication; and about two o’clock something seemed to bid her to go to the door; and she opened it. The snow was drifting and the storm howling without, but in the entry there stood a large basket. Unable to lift it, she dragged it within the door as best she could; and uncovering it, beheld bread, beef, potatoes, butter, ham, and a variety of other articles of food — an abundant supply for the pressing and present wants.

‘For all these things she thanked and praised God; and having done so proceeded to prepare a breakfast for the family: boiling some potatoes, cooking meat, and placing them with the butter and bread, upon the table.

‘When all was done, she called for husband and bade him come and see the breakfast the Lord had provided for them. But he, ignorant of God’s wondrous workings, supposed that hunger and trouble had made her insane, and begged her to be quiet; and said he certainly would get some food in the morning. But she insisted that he should come and see the food the Lord had provided for them. At length the odor of the cooking breakfast reached his nostrils, and he came out, and saw with grateful wonder the food which the Lord had given to feed his suffering family. The children were awaken-

ed , and the heaven sent breakfast was eaten with keen appetites , and reverent and thankful hearts . But the source of the supply , or the hand by which God had sent it , was yet a mystery . Nothing about the basket gave indication of the place from whence it came ; and they could only give thanks to the giver or every good and perfect gift for such timely aid .

‘ Sometime afterward , someone was looking at the bottom of the basket and discovered on it the trace of two initials , nearly obliterated . At once the man recognized them as the initials of the grocer who lived at the next corner , and concluded the basket came from him . The grocer was a believer in the final salvation of all men , and was not regarded as especially devout ; but it seemed evident that the Lord had used him to convey food to this suffering family .

‘ The rope - maker ’s wife lost no time , but speedily called on the wife of the grocer , saying , ‘ I have come to tell you how the Lord heard my prayers . ’ ‘ Stop ’ , said the grocer ’s wife , ‘ hear my story first . That cold , stormy night , when I lay in the bed with my infant only a few weeks old on my arm , and the winds howling around , someone came and took hold of me , and said , Mr. H— ’s folks are starving , and you have bread enough ; send them some bread . My husband said that it was false , that Mr. H— is better off than we are . He does not need bread . Soon the hand was laid on me again , and the message was repeated . I again urged my husband to go but he refused .

‘ This was done the third time ;

and I entreated my husband to go , but he had no faith in it . I said unto him , You take care of the child , I am going to carry Mr. H— ’s folks some bread . I cannot stay . God will take everything we have if we do not do it .

‘ Seeing that I was determined to go , he offered to go for me ; and took the basket . I told him to put in bread , potatoes and butter , etc . , and he went out in the storm , wading through the deep drifts of snow ; and left the basket in your entry .

‘ The rope - maker ’s wife then told her story about the sore distress , the weary night watch , the agonizing prayer , and the timely answer , which brought comfort to both soul and body in that wild and stormy night . ’ ”

“ And ” , said the merchant who told the story , “ I was one of the children who ate that breakfast which the Lord thus provided . ”

“ And ” , said the physician , “ that merchant is Mr. H— , of this city . ”

This was the physician ’s story as nearly as we can repeat it ; and we have placed it among these records of prevailing prayer in hope that from it some of God ’s poor children may derive comfort in the midst of trial and distress , and be enabled to plant their Ebenezers , or memorials of divine faithfulness , thick amid the shadowy pathways of this weary world , until they shall reach the land where , “ They shall hunger no more , for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them , and lead them unto living fountains of waters . ”

Still God humbles his people , and suffers them to hunger , and feeds them in unknown ways , that

he may make them know that, " man doth not live by bread alone , but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord , doth man live ." ( Deut . 8:3 ) Happy are they who apply these lessons of His providence , and learn more and more perfectly to trust His faithful word .

Sylvester Hassell

( Reprint from " Signs " 1960 . )

## PETER ' S RESTORATION

Preached on Lord ' s Day Evening ,  
April 9th , 1922 , at Brixton Tabernacle

*“ And the Lord turned , and looked upon Peter . And Peter remembered the word of the Lord , how He had said unto Him , Before the cock crow , thou shalt deny Me thrice . And Peter went out , and wept bitterly .” Luke 22 , 61 , & 62 .*

If the Scriptures did not describe the Lord ' s people as having faults , evidencing their truly natural side , some of us would be unable to find much help in them . The falls of God ' s family are not written for our imitation , or to foster a spirit of lightness in us , or in any wise to make us think we may do evil that good may abound , but they are written for the consolation of people like Peter today .

This evening I desire grace to speak upon the restoration of Peter . Before his denial the Lord had intimated to His weak disciple that he

should be recovered out of the snare of the fowler , “ When thou art converted , strengthen thy brethren . ” Here is the divine promise that forgiveness and love should reach his heart and then he would be fitted to help his poor stumbling brethren . Peter had been regenerated before this ; he should be converted , that is , turned from and delivered out of the sad state of backsliding into which he so quickly fell .

What led to Peter ' s restoration ? The Saviour ' s intercession . “ I have prayed for thee , that thy faith fail not . ” “ Holy Father , keep all My people ; keep them . ” Peter , with all his swearing and lying and other sins , gave ample proof as to where he would have gone had it not been for the Saviour ' s all - prevailing prayer for him . Even while he was in the sieve he was kept ; had it not been so , the devil would have sifted him into perdition . Oh ! the mercy that shines here in the Saviour ' s heart towards His sinning people . Peters here tonight , this is the Saviour of the Father ' s sending . What are your thoughts of Him ? All that Peter said and did while in the sieve only illustrates the power of divine keeping , for to what greater depths of evil would Peter have sunk had there been no prayer of Christ for him and no power of God around him ? Mark , Peter ' s cursing and swearing are not fruits of intercession and gracious keeping - decided edly not - such things can only come from a corrupt source , a depraved nature but , to be kept from total and final apostasy with a heart like he then revealed , only proves the more illustriously the effectual interces -

sion of Christ and the power of God around him .

Judas and Peter grievously sinned , the former from love of money , but the latter sinned against light , love and mercy felt . What saved Peter from an awful end like Judas ? Nothing in Peter , we are will persuaded . What was it ? Divine sovereignty put an interceding Christ between Peter and the halter and perdition , and so he was kept from using the one and going to the other . To every fallen and repenting child of God present I would say , “ Your recovery to spiritual peace and fellowship with the Lord will start from the same source as Peter ’s ; the Saviour loves you still ! ”

An act of providence must be considered and an apparently trivial one too . “ The cock crowed , ” and , though this may have been an every morning occurrence , yet this particular morning it occurred in relation to such things that did not happen every morning . All four evangelists tell us of this cock - crowing and it had its part in restoring Peter . The cock - crowing had an effect on Peter Peter ’s mind , and haven ’t you been taught to feel a connection between things apparently trivial and certain things you have done ? “ The cock crew . . . And Peter remembered the word of the Lord , how He had said unto him , Before the cock crow , thou shalt deny Me thrice . ” This event was used by God to stir up Peter ’s mind by way of remembrance .

Has some affliction been sent upon you to stir up your mind , and is it being sanctified to your soul so as to convict you of your sin and so

connect your sin and your affliction ; you own the mercy and love of the rod and say , “ Before I was afflicted , I went astray , even as far as Peter went , but I saw it was in love to my soul that this trial came to me and I pray that it will enable me to learn His statutes in a spiritual way . ” Such a Peter - like character will see something beneath the surface of this cock - crowing . Or it may be the Lord is bringing you through the fiery trial of bereavement . Something of the spirit of idolatry , which is so subtle and so ensnaring , may have carried you away from the Lord and caused you to look more to the creature than to the Creator . He has brought down the idol according to His promise , “ From all your idols will I cleanse you , ” and blessed the solemn stoke to you and now the bereavement speaks to you as the cock - crowing did to Peter . God ’s voice in such circumstances reaches the deepest recesses of the soul and makes room for Himself in your heart and life as not before . You that have passed this way know the bitterness and the bliss of such trials .

It may be that numerous circumstances are , as it were , crowing and pointing out your folly . You had some smooth sailing , friend ; the south wind blew softly and you had some prosperous times , but now the tempestuous wind called Euroclydon has blown your temperal prosperity to pieces . Neither sun nor stars in many days appeared and all hope of being saved from these circumstances is being taken away . In your home , employment or business , things have suddenly taken an opposite turn ; you have toiled hard

with brain and hand to go forward , but the circumstances are so pressing against you that you cannot help going backward and you fear a total wreck of everything dear to flesh and blood. Now, my friend, do not these topsyturvy circumstances , under the blessing of God , speak to you something like this ? “ Do you wonder at your circumstances being as they are ? Can you complain of the hand of God going against you ? Have you not asked for these things by your evil ways ? Have you not neglected the Scriptures , the secret admonitions of conscience , the Lord’s house, the watchfulness over your own spirit ? Has not the mercy seat been infrequently and coldly visited , and far more time spent upon temporal and perishing things than in seeking eternal and spiritual things ? ” Ah ! friend , here is the same thing happening to you as to Peter ; the Lord knows how to make providences speak to you and call your sin to remembrance . Yes , and the day will come when you will bless Him with weeping eyes for those crooks in your lot , those thorns in your way, those wall of hewn stones, for they will be seen by you as the chosen means of love , in preventing you from plunging yourself into more grievous trouble . Trials blessed produce more soul profit than prosperous time unblessed . We must say , “ He hath not dealt with us after our sins ; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities . ” We have to learn what that means , “ He gave them their request ; but sent leanness into their soul . ”

“ And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him . . .

And when he thought thereon , he wept . ” The power of spiritual thought is not with us . We are not sufficient to think spiritually of our selves . Peter was now favoured to think and remember by the unction of the Remembrancer , and now he thought of the word of warning , “ Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you , that he may sift you as wheat . ” Apparently that warning word had previously fallen upon his ear without any effect but , as none of the Lord’s words can fall to the ground , it comes home to Peter now with great power and he feels the importance of it .

We cannot disregard any word of the Lord without evil resulting , and sorrow is sure to follow such conduct . All revealed truth we need ; all is profitable for reproof , for correction , for instruction in righteousness , in addition to doctrine , and , when we walk in our own ways and are not humbled enough to bow to the authority of the Word , we are on the highway to trouble in some form or another , as some of us have found . Then we find the exceeding kindness of the Lord in causing us to remember our evil ways , and our “ doings that were not good ” , and , when He makes memory do its work , we think of our actions with shame and grief and have no small regrets that ever we could act so base a part .

Memory is connected with repentance elsewhere in this Book . “ Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen , and repent . ” Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard , and hold fast and repent . ” The sins of the church are to be remembered as well as the

sins of the individual , and repented of in order to restoration . What a great mercy it is to have our sins set before us in the light of God 's countenance and for Him to charge them home to us and show us the guilt of them ! This is done by His goodness in order to lead us to repentance .

There was also a word of comfort for Peter to think of : " But I have prayed for thee , that thy faith fail not ." The Spirit showed him his own thoughtlessness and then the remembrance the Saviour had of him . " I have prayed for thee " is a great word to have spoken home to a man who has sinned like Peter . To have the mind led to muse on my great sin , on the one hand , in neglecting the word of the Lord and , on the other , to be led to the Saviour 's continued intercession for me that my poor weak faith should not fail , is enough to break any man 's stony heart ; no one can stand out against that . Peter would have been harder than his name signifies if he had not gone out and wept bitterly . May you and I be favoured like that and see if we do not have to find a secret place to weep both tears of shame and tears of joy !

" The Lord turned , and looked upon Peter ." If the Lord had turned His back upon Peter , could Peter have justly complained ? To a tender conscience , departing from God 's ways is sure to bring on fear— fear of the Lord leaving us to reap the full consequences of our sowing to the wind ; the heart smites us with condemnation and we fear He will never show us His face again , never look with mercy again . If ever we have

acted like Peter , sat where he sat , spoke like he spake , and then had a look of love and forgiveness given us , we all know something of the soul melting under the sense of the Lord 's kindness to us . It is thus the Saviour becomes to us something more than a name . His Name , then , is as ointment poured forth and love to Him is then in lively exercise .

All Peters and Davids in heart ( and some of the Lord 's people may be like them in outward falls ) want this look , and they shall have it , for the Spirit did not write this scripture for amusement and certainly not for the elder sons who have never transgressed at any time ; no , He wrote for the comfort and hope of all those who , having sinned like Peter and David , are brought to repentance .

This look separated Peter and that at once . " Peter went out ." Ah ! poor man , erred in going in ! Had we stood at the gate and told him he was acting foolishly in seeking to go in the courtyard , he would have bitterly resented it . Very few indeed can accept wise counsel . When he had got in , it was another matter to get out . The flesh and ignorant zeal can take us into great troubles and disgrace , but neither of them can help us out ; nothing but a look from the God - Man Mediator will ever separate us from the enemies of Christ , but that will . Their fire may be very strong and alluring on a cold night , but a look from Christ sends a stronger fire in the heart and powerfully draws the recipient from the place of denial .

Many of us present tonight have professed to have received the

Saviour's love into our hearts, but the reality of that will be seen by the fruit of separation. We shall be going out from many things and people too; all our life, going out, if this look of divine love has vitally reached us, and the going out is no hardship at all under the sense of love. Peter did not want telling to go out when this love reached him; no, he could not get out fast enough, depend upon that. Neither did he stand and argue about the Saviour being too hard, too strict, too severe — no. All such talk today only shows with certainty where we are. He would have been among the enemies until now had he not felt the power of love; that enjoyed kills all such talk. "He went out." He muffled his head in his cloak and went out and, as he went, he felt the spirit of these words: —

*" Lord, pardon a backslider base  
Returning from the dead,  
Ashamed to show his shameful face,  
Or lift his guilty head."*

*Ah! what a fool have I been made,  
Or rather made myself!  
That mariner's mad part I played,  
That sees, yet strikes the shelf."*

Tears for sin are beyond our power to make, even when we know we ought to be, of all people, the most repentant. How glad we often would be if we could shed one tear over our sin! But Peter found the secret of true repentance. "He wept bitterly." Terribly had he sinned (we equal him in that if we know ourselves;) bitterly he weeps. Ah! do we equal him in that also? Oh that we could manifest the same grief for our falls as he! Plainly we can sin,

plainly we cannot repent; sin hardens, repentance shows a gracious softness. Judas went out, but he went out to get the halter and hang his body, and, as to his soul, he went out to perdition. The solemn fact for us is this, that, without godly repentance and spiritual softness of heart over our sins, we may escape the halter, but we shall not escape perdition, and we shall meet Judas in his and our own place. Some of us here tonight are tried exceedingly on this very point of repentance. We feel that after men have told us that believing is sufficient, they are not telling us the truth, for there is no word more true than this, "repentance toward God" — that first and then — "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." No repentance — no faith.

*" What mean the men that say, believe,  
And let repentance go?  
What comfort can the soul receive  
That never felt its woe?"*

Brethren, Christ and Christ alone can rightly do the thing, and this look of Christ made Peter's eyes overflow with tears. Judas went into endless misery; Peter went into the region of heaven in his feelings, for weeping from such a cause as the manifested love of Christ to him was far from the sorrow that worketh death — sorrow over his acts to be sure — sorrow over his heart.

*" How weak must be this wicked heart,  
Which, boasting much to know,  
Made light of all Thy bitter smart,  
And wantoned with Thy woe!"*

But how surprisingly good his Lord appeared to him now! What a revelation this was to him of the

Saviour's heart!

Thus we have faintly, but I hope truthfully, shown the way the Lord restored Peter. Have I this evening a case present like his? Then let me say to all such, you will find the intercession of Christ to be a most blessed thing. Your heart will one day be led to see that He had His eye and heart upon you perpetually and never ceased to bear up your name and case before His Father, and His intercession, as you will see fuller and deeper yet, is based on the fact that He died for your falls, the original one and all your actual ones personally since you knew Him. You will trace your recovery to His fountain of blood and to His priestly work performed in glory. But you will also find that He resents your conduct greatly and hence He will charge your sin home to you and make you judge your sin and own your sin as David did in the 51st Psalm. Providences may be very trying to you as to others who have fallen and you will see the necessity of them and the kindness of God in them and understand why you have so many broken bones. Bitter cries you will put up that He would hide His face from your sins and blot out all your iniquities.

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation" will be the burden of your oppressed heart and it shall be granted you. That will be by the Lord granting you a look. He will give you a deep sense of His grace in pardoning your great offences, His righteousness in justifying you, His Spirit in renewing a right spirit in you and the exceeding kindness of His grace in Christ Jesus to you. This will separate you from your evil

company and break your heart in true repentance, as the memory of your evil ways and the knowledge of your more evil heart is seen in the light of His love. Thus was Peter restored to a living fellowship and sweet communion with his Lord. He was still kept in the apostolic company and not thrown out as a castaway. The Lord sanctified his fall and made it useful to His disciple and through him to the church of God to the end of time.

"When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," says Christ, for the Saviour knew he would have brethren who should fall like Peter and they would need some strengthening. Who better able to comfort fallen brethren than one who has fallen and been restored himself? By the epistles that Peter wrote after his recovery many have been strengthened. "Kept" is a great word with Peter now, not by his own headiness, zeal or strength, but by "the power of God." Now he felt the glory of the Saviour's prayer, "Holy Father, keep them; keep all My sheep, but keep Peter." If we will hear him, he speaks out of his chastened and forgiven heart to us, "Learn from my sad case in no-wise to trust to yourself or to any arm of flesh, but look only and solely to the power of God safely and honourably to bring you through."

"Faith is precious" he tell us, and he had faith. "We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." That faith was given him from the Father in heaven, and therefore was tried. It was tried in the sieve and failed not. Now he can speak to us tonight and

say, "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire." He is no novice now, for he can speak experimentally of his own trial of faith. It strengthens us to know we are not treading a path contrary to the apostles and saints of God as recorded in the Scriptures. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." The issue will be to make the pure gold shine the brighter unto the praise and honour and glory of Jesus Christ.

The preciousness of Christ to Peter now is more than notion. "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious," and truly he felt that. "Precious in calling me at the first; precious in praying for me while I was in the sieve and precious in atoning for all my sins before my call by grace and all my crimes since I professed to know Him (though I denied all knowledge of Him, which I can never forget). Precious, indeed, in looking upon me on that bitterly cold night (in the courtyard and in my heart) which look warmed my heart and melted my soul and sent me out to weep bitterly. Precious in keeping me to feed His poor sheep and using me and my sad fall for the help and solace of all the brethren who sin and stumble as I did."

Peter knew something of this theme verily, "Watch." "Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, has as much enmity to you as to me; he has his sieve yet, and, should you get in that, you will

display the same evils as I."

"Remember." "I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." He had found out, to his great cost, the sorrow of forgetting the word of warning that the Lord had given him before his fall, hence he seems to want the whole of his first chapter in his second letter to impress upon us the importance of remembering.

He cannot leave us without another word, "Beware, beware!" "Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." That is Peter's last word of caution to the family of God — "Beware!"

May it be granted unto us to profit by these things! We would unite with Peter's ascription of praise, "To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

Earnest Roe

Sent to Signs by  
Bro. W. R. Pullig  
10220 Ridgely Drive  
Baton Rouge, La. 70809

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**PSALM 19 : 7-9**

*The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*

*The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

*The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.*

MARCH, 1939

## PSALMS XLI. 1, 2.

*“ Blessed is he that considereth the poor : the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth : and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies .”*

**R**ecently it was my privilege to hear one of those fellows who are saying lo here and lo there, use this particular Scripture as a basis for his money begging . Of course , as was to be expected , he took quite a bit of cash out of town . But I wondered if he did not leave town as destitute of the knowledge as to who it was under consideration, as when he arrived . Furthermore , I wonder if he was even one of the poor under notice . At least , he did not have the fruit , because one of those who have the fruit will not beg money in the name of doing work for the Lord . But we should never question anything that is said unless we can give something better . I wondered if I knew anything better , and , if so , did I know just what application to make of this Scripture ? As I contemplated the wonderful display of sovereign grace , in the salvation of the dear children of God , I was made to rejoice that I even had , as I hope , a hope in this matchless consideration of the poor . The longer I live and the more I am made to see the corruption of this natural man , the more I am made to see what a high and complete consideration this was . The blessed character under consideration is

none other than Jesus Christ our Savior . We would not speak of him being blessed as the Lord God from heaven , because , as him there would be none to bless him , as he is as old as God the Father , having been from everlasting to everlasting . But as the man Christ Jesus we love to feel that he was blessed of the Father to come in the fulfilling of his will . “ And I have put my words in thy mouth , and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand , that I may plant the heavens , and lay the foundations of the earth , and say unto Zion . Thou art my people .” — Isaiah li . 16 . In speaking of his work on earth , he says that he came not to do his own will , but the will of him that sent him ( John vi . 38 ) , and thus we see that in that sense he had to be blessed to perform the work he was sent to do . In further confirming this he says , Of myself I can do nothing ( John v . 30 ) , and , My Father doeth the work ( John xiv . 10 ) , and , I live by him ( John vi . 57 ) . What about considering the poor ? And who are the poor ? And in what way did Jesus remember them ? And how and to what extent were they poor ? Yes , dear children of God , he has most graciously remembered thee . He beheld you in your sins even before there was any of you . Here is one of the sure things about the covenant of grace : that it was ordered in all things and sure before the world began . Determination is not worth anything unless the determinant has a full knowledge and control of all things that are to transpire in the time that his covenant is to be brought into perfection . Thus , we run into the grand doctrine of predestination

here , as elsewhere when we go to talk or write of the mercy of God. It is not so much a hobby as some of our enemies would have others believe , but it is the backbone of the whole scheme of salvation. To say that this consideration of the poor could come about and there be some power other than God Almighty determining things , certainly is a poor comfort to God's children. This poor that our text has inclosed in it want a sure doctrine . They are so poor that they would not dare leave any part of the salvation of their destitute souls to chance or works . Brethren , I believe here is a good place to say that these poor are not so afraid of making their God the author of sin that they are continually apologizing for his actions . He has done certain things , and will continue to do so , ( and all by determination ) and has set the bounds of all people in the same way . Not only has he considered us while we were dead in sins , but he is at it now . Some people have the idea that he does not remember us when we get in a poor state after regeneration . If such a dose of legalism was true , then our text would have to read that he is blessed when he remembers the rich , or those who are able to work in favor with him . Poor old Job would have been in an awful plight if the Lord had only considered him when he was in good condition . But listen , my dear readers , Job was a very poor man . “ Oh that I knew where I might find him , that I might come even to his seat .” “ Behold , I go forward , but he is not there ; and backward , but I cannot perceive him : on the left hand , where he doth

work , but I cannot behold him : he hideth himself on the right hand , that I cannot see him .” — Job xxiii . 3 , 8 , 9 Do you ever get in this condition , precious brethren ? Ah , yes , more that way than any other way , I hear you lament . If this was the heritage of the children of God what a dismal scene it would be . What would be the outcome of such a condition that you could not find him ? Do you suppose you could ever find him while in this terrible conflict of soul ? O , dear little ones , how poor we mortals are . We do not know where he is . We are continually looking for him whom our soul loveth , but as long as we are looking in our ability to find him he is hid from us . Does God do a good work of hiding from his creatures ? He hid Jesus from Herod , which is a figure of the natural man , and the natural abilities of man have never found him out yet , and never will . But has God forgot to be gracious to poor old Job in the extremity of his case ? Oh no , he considers him , and teaches him of his loving remembrance . Let us look in on the poor destitute fellow and see if we find our own travel , our own hopes and our own deliverances . “ But he knoweth the way that I take : when he hath tried me , I shall come forth as gold .” — Job xxiii . 10 . Ofttimes , dear tried soul , he is hid from you , but he considers you as his sheep and he knows where you are . We cannot consider him , only as he gives us grace to do so , but his love and care of his people are based upon the righteousness of himself . As to who are the poor , we find them spoken of all through the Bible . They are the children of God . They are that

number that cannot be numbered by the enumeration of man. They constitute the bride of Jesus. Will he ever fail to take cognizance of his bride, that was given him in the covenant of redemption? If so, then his agreement is indeed a legal covenant, and will certainly fail, because we are not able, and never can be able, to perform any satisfactory work. They are not chosen for numerical strength or righteousness, but in him before the world began. The number is so definite that men nor devils cannot add to nor subtract from it. (See 2 Samuel xxiii. 5.) To be sure the degree of being poor may vary with God's children. Some of them are dealt with in one way and some in another way, yet all by the Spirit, and for the good of them and his glory. Seemingly, the children he calls to the church are the poorest beings in this world. Everything must be taken away before one is fit for this kingdom. But all the different degrees of being poor are not a variation in God, but a confirmation of his work among his people. Paul, in writing to the church at Ephesus, says, But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Eph. iv. 7.) All of these little ones constitute the bride of Jesus, our Husband. There is not the least question about this poor woman being considered by her Husband. He has already paid all she owed, and I went to say that her debt was so enormous that she could never have made the first payment, or start, towards getting out from the condemnation she was under by reason of transgression.

Her sins were such that she could never have met her Husband in that wretched condition, because he is without sin. But he considered her in the extremity of her case. Oh what love is this! What manner of attention, that he did take notice of this poor and sinful woman. Poor soul, when you are given to meditate upon the goodness and mercy of God, do you not often wonder how it is that you could be remembered and considered? No water to drink that would be thirst-quenching to a poor soul. The pantry empty of that bread of life, but in his consideration of you it was to open a fountain that never shall run dry, but flow in winter and in summer. He gives his chosen ones to eat of that bread that comes down from heaven, and, poor hungry soul, it is from an inexhaustible source. In taking notice of this poor and afflicted people, he laid aside the glory that he had with the Father. Not that he needed it, but that she was lost to him in her sin and degradation and the covenant must be carried out. Look at the world in her giving of alms and see if she administers as does Jesus. No, I dare say not, but it is with an expectation of applause of men, and usually looking for it back. But he lays aside his glory, and even passes by the nature of angels and takes upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. (Phil. ii. 7.) Brethren, this is riches beyond compare, to think that he loved his people in such a wonderful way, veiling himself in flesh, being made like unto his own poor flock. Let us praise his adorable name for considering us enough

to give unto his bride one coat .

*No art of man can weave this robe ,  
Tis of such texture fine ;  
Nor could the wealth of all this globe  
By purchase make it mine .*

*Tis of one piece , and wove throughout ;  
So curious wove that none  
Can dress up in this seamless coat ,  
Till Jesus puts it on .*

“ I give unto them eternal life .”

Yes , he did this for you when you were so poor that you could not think upon his blessed name . He took our sins upon his shoulders and bore them to the cross , putting them away forever . While he had that terrible load on him he was working our that righteousness that we had failed to do . ( See Romans v . 10 . ) I am persuaded that you have been comforted time after time because of his consideration of you . May he give you to continue to rest in such a Man , who has been poor that ye through his poverty might be rich . ( 2 Cor . viii . 9 . ) He will continue to consider your case , poor sinner because

*Grace led my roving feet  
To tread the heavenly road ,  
And new supplies each hour I meet ,  
While pressing on to God .*

And he is even now considering you at the throne of grace and mercy , and will continue to do so until the last one of his poor and afflicted people is safely delivered home . How can he fail in any of his promises to his little ones ? How can he fail to consider them ? Listen , poor soul , you who are so cast down , what a safe and secure fortress you have to

abide in : “ The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble . The Lord will preserve him , and keep him alive .” We have ample proof that he delivered him from , every enemy that assailed him thus verifying the above promise to deliver . Moreover , he preserved him , and kept him alive . Blessed thought that he is now alive , and is our Advocate for evermore , because

*He took our mortal flesh to show  
The wonders of his love ,  
For us he paid his life below ,  
And prays for us above .*

*Father , he cries , forgive their sins ,  
For I myself have died ;  
And then he shows his opened veins ,  
And pleads his wounded side .*

Let us see further as to his mission here on the earth . “ He shall be blessed upon the earth .” Yes , he shall make many rich , and give unto them the keys of the kingdom , and they shall go in and out and find pasture . ( John x . 9 . ) He shall complete the work his Father gave him to do , and even now while you , perhaps , dear reader , are low in spirit , it is a finished work .

*It is finished , oh what pleasure  
Do these charming words afford ,  
Heavenly blessings , without measure ,  
Flow to us from Christ the Lord ;  
It is finished , it is finished ,  
Saints , the dying words record .*

“ And thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies .” Oh what matchless grace is this ! Oh what boundless love , that Jesus , that immaculate One , was sent to consider such poor rebels as we are , and that power was given him to

conquer death , hell and the grave over his enemies . Their will was to do him to death ( they meant it for evil ), but I am so glad to write this wonderful thought , that he came to do his Father 's will , and I hope I believe in a sovereign God to the extent that while he us here doing that , that not for one moment was he turned over to the will of his enemies , because my Book tells me that all of them were gathered together to do whatsoever his hand and counsel determined before to be done ( Acts iv . 28 ) , and any other doctrine than this makes my poor and destitute condition dependent upon chance , or works . " Blessed are the poor in spirit : for their 's is the kingdom of heaven ." Poor sinner , can you get rich ? No , but here is One that has made you so , and inasmuch as your great High Priest was not delivered to the will of his enemies , just so you will not be .

As poor as Paul , yet in hope ,

W.D. Griffin

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*" Every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him ." — 1 John V . 1 .*

**T** here there is love to Jesus , there will be love to those who are his by redemption , his by regeneration , and his by personal possession . The more , too , that we see and the more that we know of the beauty and blessedness of the Lord of life and glory , the more we shall love his image as we behold it visibly marked in his dear people , and the more we shall cleave to them as

being Christ 's with tender affection . It is our dim , scanty , and imperfect knowledge of God the Father in his eternal love , and of the Lord Jesus Christ in his grace and glory , which leaves us so often cold , lifeless , and dead in our affections towards him ; and with the declension of love towards the Head comes on decay of love towards his members . If there were more blessed revelations to our soul of the Person and work , grace and glory , beauty and blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ , it is impossible but that we should more and more warmly and tenderly fall in love with him ; for he is the most glorious object that the eyes of faith can see . He fills heaven with the resplendent beams of his glorious majesty ; and has ravished the hearts of thousands of his dear family upon earth by the manifestations of his bleeding , dying love . So that if we love him not , it is because we know him not . If , then , to those who know him he makes himself precious , it is evident that just in proportion to our personal , spiritual , experimental knowledge of him will be our love to him .

J.C. Philpot

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#### 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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MEETINGS

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**SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION**

**T**he Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Paynes Creek Church the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before. Those coming from the North on Blue Ridge Parkway, go a mile past 151 and turn left on State road #639. Those coming from the south, go a mile past 150 and turn right on State road #639.

All lovers of the truth and ministers of our faith and order are invited.

Elder Amos T. Hash, Moderator

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**ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS  
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST  
ASSOCIATION MEETING**

**T**he next Session convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church. Located off Highway 167 north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take Highway 273 about one half mile to Church.

Session beginning on Saturday before 3rd Sunday in September 15 & 16, 1990, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Frances Townley, Church Clerk

**SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

**T**he Lord willing Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, will have our annual three day fall meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m. Friday, September 28, 1990 continuing through Sunday, September 30, 1990.

Brethren and friends of the OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST are invited to be with us in our annual meeting.

Elder C.C. Morris, Moderator  
Deacon D.G. Connell, Church Clerk  
214-298-8068

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**SOUTH OUACHITA PRIMITIVE  
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

**T**he one hundredth annual session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association is scheduled to convene with New Hope Church beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September 1990 and continuing until noon on that Sunday. New Hope Church is located one mile east of Spearsville, La. which is on La. Hwy. 15 in Union Parish. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are invited to come worship with us.

Call or write me if you need further information or a place to stay.

C.C. Wilbanks

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*CONTRIBUTIONS*

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FOR MAY 1990

Charlie Fox , AR .....	2.00
Jerry P. Cockran , NC .....	7.00
Mrs. Roma Smith , AL .....	7.00
Charles Oates , VA .....	7.00
Mrs. Clemie Bishop , AR .....	7.00
Dan Anders , AL .....	2.00
Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC ....	2.00
Eld. J. T. Austin , PA .....	2.00
Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA ....	12.00
Eld. David Turner , LA .....	7.00
Eld. Malcolm Burhalter, TX....	2.00
R. Vernon Furr , NC .....	4.00
Barney & Melba Sullivan, AR ...	7.00
Eld. Lon D. Moon , AL .....	5.00
In memory mother Mamie Sullivan	
Ms. Sue Quarles , AL .....	25.00
Mrs. Flora Vest , VA .....	2.00
Mrs. H. A. Harlow , TX .....	5.00
S. L. Walker , VA .....	7.00
Mrs. Harold May , AL .....	2.00
Mrs. Faye Cole , NC .....	2.00
Boyd Minter , NC .....	2.00
Margaret Quesenberry, VA ....	2.00
H. R. Toney , MS .....	2.00
Mrs. M. E. Womble , NC ....	2.00
Mrs. Betty Lovitte , NC .....	2.00
J. C. Carroll , NC .....	10.00
William L. Neal , NC .....	12.00

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*OBITUARIES*

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**VESTER CLAYTON DICKERSON**

It is with a feeling of much unworthiness and sadness that I attempt to write a few words in

memory of our dear brother Vester Dickerson .

He was born January 19 , 1912 to Alex and Mattie Cox Dickerson . He was twice married , first to Verdie Gwyn , they had one daughter , Nancy Dickerson Mosley of Reidsville , N. C. Verdie died in 1947 . His second marriage was to Inez Strader Dickerson Feb . 14 , 1948 . To this union was born four children , Wayne Jackson , Charles Clayton and Jerry Penn all of Ruffin , N. C. also Sarah Dickerson Perdue of Reidsville , N. C .

He also had three sisters , two of whom survives him , one brother . Brother Vester asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at her meeting July 24 , 1976 and was baptized along with his wife , Sister Inez on July 31 , 1976 , by their pastor , Elder D. V. Spangler .

Bro. Vester had a stroke June 9 , 1984 and died June 8 , 1989 , and for five years was completely helpless , but his dear wife along with the help of their four wonderful children was able to keep him at home and was well taken care of .

He was a devoted husband and father from beginning to the end. His funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Church by his pastor , Elder Kenneth R. Key , assisted by Elder H. W. Wray . He was buried in the church cemetery .

Written by one who loved him and appreciated him many years .

Coley S. Strader

**ELLEN DALTON DOSS**

**I**t has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst another one of our dear members , Sister Ellen Dalton Doss .

She was born May 1 , 1899 , in Pittsylvania County , the daughter of Booker Dalton and Zolza Love Dalton . She was married to Willie Russell Doss .

Aunt ( Percy ) , as we called her , departed this life February 17 , 1990 , after a very lengthy illness . She was cared for so wonderfully by her family who did all human hands could do for her .

She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church May 24 , 1970 , and was baptized by her Pastor , Elder O.K. Tench , June 28 , 1970 . Due to her health , she was unable to attend her meetings as she desired , but always enjoyed the visits of her Brethren and Friends .

Survivors include one son , Earl Doss , Gretna , Va. ; three daughters , Bertha Walker and Arlene Jones of Danville , Va. , and Jeanette Fowlkes of Ringold , Va. ; two sisters , Rillma Dalton of Lynchburg , Va . and Lois Dodd of Richmond , Va . ; also six grandchildren , ten great - grand - children and eight great - great grandchildren .

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elders Denver Simpson , Marvin Brumfield , and Raymond Goad . Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection .

She will be greatly missed by her family and by her Church . She will

always be in our hearts and minds . May all that mourn our loss be reconciled to God 's will .

Written by request of  
her Family in loving memory ,  
Phyllis Goad

**ANNIE SHORT HEDRICK**

**A**nnie Short Hedrick was born January 30 , 1891 and passed away January 17 , 1990 . She was the daughter of the late James Short and Martha Cox Short . She was married to Ernest A . Hedrick who predeceased her on July 21 , 1975 . They had 11 children , two of which died as babies , Virginia Dare and James Malcom and Henry Bishop who was killed at the age of 25 . The other eight surviving children are Helen Walker , Hazel Brown , Annie Bell Vasser , Vernell Barbour , Mary Newman , Shirley , John and Giles Hedrick . At her death she had 29 grandchildren 47 great grandchild - ren and 17 great - great grandchild - ren . She had five sisters and five brothers . Surviving sisters are Ora Adams , Jeanie Murphy and Lizzie Adams . She had a large family and was loved by each one .

On August 10 , 1958 she united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized on August 27 , 1958 by her Pastor , Elder O.K. Tench .

I have fond memories of Granny . Each time we visited her and Grandpa , the house was always full of friends and family . We were always there for the Holidays and there was

always someone there for all of us cousins to play with .

Granny was in Roman Eagle Nursing Home for the past 7 or 8 years . She never complained about being there . One Mothers 's Day , my mother had her family over for lunch and she went to the Nursing Home to get Granny so she could be with her children . After she had been there for a while , she was ready to go " home " . After having so many strokes which affected her speech , the only communication she had with anyone was holding their hand and smiling at them .

I 've missed going to Granny 's for a long time . She will be greatly missed by all who have been touched by her kind words and the love she gave us all .

Her funeral was held Friday , January 19 , 1990 at Colbert- Moran Funeral Home by Elder O .K. Tench and Mr. Kenneth Durham . She was laid to rest at Green Bay Baptist Church Cemetery beside her dear Husband , Ernest Hedrick .

I feel she is at peace now is not suffering . She will be greatly missed by each of us .

Written by her granddaughter ,  
Francine F . Walker

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#### BROTHER FRED MURPHY AND SISTER FAYE HOGG

**R**ehobeth Church , EIDorado , AR ., mourns the loss of Brother Fred Murphy and Sister Faye Hogg . They had the same natural father and we that sorrow believe , the same heavenly Father .

Sister Faye was born May 4 , 1898 and passed away January 19 , 1990 , making her appointed time here 91 years , 8 months and 15 days .

She was faithful in attending church at home as well as churches near by . Sister Faye believed in a God who does all things well and was totally dependent on Him and His grace as far as salvation is concerned .

She was clerk of Rehobeth Church for many years and performed her duties well . Sister Faye will be missed by those that knew and loved her , as I did .

Brother Fred Murphy was born August 17 , 1903 and left us March 7 , 1990 , making his time here 86 years , 6 months and 20 days .

Brother Fred joined Rehobeth Church in 1951 and was ordained a deacon in March , 1957 . He served faithfully as long as health permitted .

He was a firm believer in salvation by grace and went to many different parts of our country to hear it preached . Brother Fred loved his church at Rehobeth and always helped any way he could to keep things going well .

We went on several trips together , and he showed much love for those of like faith wherever they were . He received much pleasure in talking about the Election , Predes- tination and Foreknowledge of God .

May those who loved this Brother and Sister be turned to Him who does comfort those who mourn .

Elder Graydon Smith

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# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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### POEM

*The cross of Christ inspires my heart,  
To sing redeeming grace;  
Awake, my soul, and bear a part  
In my Redeemer's praise!*

*Oh! who can be compared to him,  
Who died upon the tree?  
This is my dear delightful theme,  
That Jesus died for me.*

*When at the table of the Lord  
We humbly take our place,  
The death of Jesus we record,  
With love and thankfulness.*

*These emblems bring my Lord to view  
Upon the bloody tree;  
My soul believes and feels it true,  
That Jesus died for me.*

*His body broken, nailed and torn,  
And stained with streams of blood;  
His spotless soul was left forlorn,  
Forsaken of his God.*

*'Twas then his Father gave the stroke  
That justice did decree;  
All nature felt the dreadful shock,  
When Jesus died for me.*

*My guilt was on my surety laid,  
And therefore he must die;  
His soul a sacrifice was made  
For such a worm as I.*

*Was ever love so great as this?  
Was ever grace so free?  
This is my glory, joy and bliss,  
That Jesus died for me.*

Primitive

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## EDITORIAL

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*“ And a river went out of Eden to water the garden ; and from thence it was parted , and became into four heads .”*



Elder C. B. Davis , Jr .

**T**he word Eden means in the old tongue — place of pleasure — thus this river springs from the presence of God , truly a place of pleasure . The river is pure in every sense for its purity is the river John sees in Revelation . This river also flows out of a place of pleasure , the throne of God . There is no pollution in these streams for in the beginning of creation there was no man to pollute and surely no one to pollute

the one flowing in the New City — Heaven .

We note that the river of Eden divides ( is parted ) into four heads and this seems unusual for we in nature consider the head of a river the source of its beginning . The source though of this river is God ’s hand and is just as reverse to nature as are His works with man and his nature .

I would now write for your consideration what I feel to see here in essence . I feel these four rivers speak of the four Gospels for the source of the Gospel ’s springs from Christ and the oneness of God . The Gospels began flowing out ( and still do ) from the days of the beginning of Christ ( the Church ) as these rivers flowed out from the beginning of the history of creation and God ’s plan and works .

The names of these rivers ( as all names in Israel ) have a special meaning in the old tongue ( Hebrew ). The first one named is Pison which means an effusion pouring forth and changing . This is typical of the Gospel of Matthew as the first book . He is concerned with the explanation of the birth of Christ and thus is a pouring out of change that would be of eternal effect . He is bringing about an effusion of fulfillment of that in Psalm 46 and the fourth verse “ There is a river , the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God , the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High .”

Matthew deals with the generations of men up to the birth of Christ and of course there is but one generation of Christ and we trust we are of this generation . He also

touches upon the conflicts between Christ and the scribes and Pharises. He brings our attention to the sermon on the mount and the miracles performed by Christ in the beginning of His work on earth.

The mode of prayer is set forth and baptism now comes into the frame of the Church. Christ begins the setting up of the Church and proclaims it is eternal. He encourages John with His proclamation that the poor have the Gospel preached to them and the blind made to see and the deaf made to hear etc.

Matthew admonishes believers to be aware that the servant is not greater than his master and that in all things Christ is first and foremost. This is indeed a pouring forth of change for under the old dispensation the priest was considered as the one to turn to in order that he make an offering for the sins of the people. There are many other thoughts of those things that are new to men but let us move on.

The second river is Gihon, Mark if you please meaning a bursting forth as water in a valley of grace. Mark begins Chap. 1 by writing, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God." We see there a bursting forth of truth that would seem as pure and sweet as waters in a valley of grace.

Mark tells of the choosing of the twelve disciples setting them apart from other men to preach Christ the savior of man. This preaching is to assure God's people that the valley of death and despair hath become a valley of grace and eternal life.

The language of Mark seems in

a sense directed to the gentiles as their comfort because prior to the coming of Christ they had no promise of hope of eternal life. This is now a bursting forth of tender mercy and loving kindness expressed in the works and words of Christ.

Christ taught many times in the parables which could not be understood by the scribe and Pharisees. When they stated they knew not the meanings His reply was "Let he that hath ear to hear, hear." They still did not understand that He was but telling them that the ear of understanding burst forth from Him.

The third river Hiddekel means a loud sound or voice. We can now relate to something in the book of Daniel chap. ten verse four, also chap. twelve verses 5, 6, and 7. We hear of the loud sound or voice telling Daniel that the things he desires to see and know are secrets of God himself. His voice proclaims they will be revealed when it pleases Him to open the book.

Luke (the third gospel) begins his book with the very first verse sounding loud and clear, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of these things which are most surely believed among us" etc. He gives us the fullest account of the birth of Christ and the clearest picture of words in His coming. He also concerns his writings with the experiences of the preaching of the disciples.

We hear as it were through Luke's writing the voice of Christ and His truths coming as a loud wind. We can hear the sound thereof and can see the effects and feel them also

but we cannot see the wind ( spirit ) itself . There is that small still voice that speaks within His people but however small it is loud enough to be effectual .

The road to the cross of sacrifice and death is set forth by Luke . Read now Chap . 9 verse 51 , also Chap . 18 verses 29 through 33 . We see then as Christ knows He must face death the flesh ( the voice thereof ) cries out “ Father remove this cup from me ” ( the cup of the dregs of suffering and death ) . There is yet a greater voice heard and it is the sound of the spirit saying “ Nevertheless not my will , but Thine be done . ”

Christ stands in the hall of law ( in our stead ) before Herod and Pilate and though they find no fault in Him the voices of the world loud and clear say crucify Him , read Chap. 23 verses 23 and 24 . They knew not that the loud sentence of death was but a fulfillment of God ’s will , thus He goes to the cross as a perfect sacrifice for our sins .

The fourth river is Euphrates which means unknown but fruitful . John begins this fourth book with this writing , “ In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God , and the Word was God . ” Read on further through verses 12 and 13 for John reveals those things that were unknown yet are fruitful when they are manifest to the chosen of God . John would say he was not the light ( as yet unknown ) but bare witness of that light ( the fruits thereof .

John also sets forth the doctrine of Christ in a way that would refute the teachings prior to this time by the

Gnostics and Arians who but thought of Christ as a mere man who had no more than experienced a spiritual revelation of souls . We now know that what was unknown by those people would be and is fruitful for us .

The feast of five thousand and five leaves and two fishes would be an unknown ( in nature ) but in the realm of spirit all things are possible and fruitful . We see that after they feasted there were twelve baskets of fragments left . This typifies the twelve disciples teaching and preaching for after we have feasted at the feet of Christ ( set down on the grass of grace ) there is so much more to talk about and rejoice in .

John goes on to state why he has written his book and though there are still unknown with us the reasons are fruitful for they contain the promise of eternal life and a home in the region of bliss .

I would now like to touch upon some points I feel are as streams of purpose in a personal sense . We as mortal beings of a time world find in the first point ( river ) of experience a pouring forth of change . There is a change in conversation , walk , thought and attitude . We don ’t at first understand what is taking place and we begin to look for the source of this stream of grace . We feel even the tears of our weeping would pollute the stream but it is beyond our reach and sight , thus bringing us into the realm of faith and hope .

The second point of experience brings a bursting forth of love and peace that surely exists no where else except in the valley of grace . Now we begin to find comfort in the feeling that He is working within us

unto the promises of His gospel. We find a bursting forth of the sound of salvation each time we have a manifestation of His presence and hear the preaching of the word .

The third point of experience tells us ( that small still voice ) yet loud enough to discern the comforting words “ Thy sins are forgiven .” We now feel in some marvelous way we are standing near the river of life and can hear the murmurs and ripples ( assurance ) that are eternal sounds of His power . We also consider the time we went down into the liquid grave and how we felt we left something there that would bother us no more . We can now rejoice in the sound of the singing of soul when the hymns are sung in meetings . The sound of praise and thanks - giving now prevails loud and clear unto He whose eyes are opened to all things and with whom we have to do .

The fourth point of experience we find is fruitful now and those things previously unknown are being revealed in His own good time . We know we are fruitful only in spirit and that it has come about by He who was unknown to His own — “ ( He came unto His own and they received Him not .) ” These things revealed to us are the only avenues of escape for sins and condemnation under the law . They are in essence the very paths to the climes of glory .

We hope and trust we shall someday understand the unknown and shall see He who was made a ransom for us . That day will bring reality ( the fruitful ) of hope to see all the host of Heaven gathered in praise to He upon the throne . We

appear there without spot , wrinkle , blemish or any such thing to join our voices in the song never sung by men before . John hears this song in the book of Revelation and it is the song of Moses ( the law ) and the lamb ( the savior , the son of God ) .

If you find my dear readers any merit in these thoughts then give Him all praise and honor . If there are mistakes in thought or truth then lay blame to me .

May His name be praised now and forever and may the sound of the river of life be music to our ears even in death .

Elder C . B . Davis , Jr .

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### 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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### PSALM 28 : 7 - 9

*The Lord is my strength and my shield ; my heart trusted in him , and I am helped : therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth ; and with my song will I praise him .*

*The Lord is their strength , and he is the saving strength of his anointed .*

*Save thy people , and bless thine inheritance : feed them also , and lift them up for ever .*

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

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TURN US AGAIN , O GOD

---

Preached at Shaw's Corner , Redhill  
on December 30th , 1952

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*" Turn us again , O God , and cause  
thy face to shine ; and we shall be  
saved . " ( Psalm 80:3 ) .*

**I**n this Psalm we have these words three times repeated. It is no vain repetition. Those are not vain repetitions which express the deep needs of the soul , its crying want. It matters not how often a poor needy sinner uses the same words in his prayers before God when they express the very feelings and desires of his heart. As we just noticed in reading , the Psalmist lays before God the sad condition into which the people had fallen by reason of their sin , their departure from God , and he pleads thus with the Lord , " Give ear , O Shepherd of Israel , thou that leadest Joseph like a flock . " He still addresses the Lord as the Shepherd of Israel , although the sheep have proved themselves to be so wayward , and have brought themselves into such a sad state , being banished at such distance from the Lord. The Psalmist still pleads with the Lord as the Shepherd of Israel . But you remember in the parable of the lost sheep that the fact that the sheep was lost did not cause the shepherd's care for it to cease , but rather the shepherd went after the

lost sheep and sought it until he found it . He did not cease to be its shepherd although it had wandered , and so it is with the people of God . He does not cease to be their Shepherd although , alas , they so wickedly and so often have wandered from him .

"Give ear , O Shepherd of Israel ." In this word there is a looking back to what the Lord had done ; the Lord had done great things for these people in the past . He had , we read in verse 8 , " brought a vine out of Egypt : thou hast cast out the heathen , and planted it . Thou preparedst room before it , and didst cause it to take deep root , and it filled the land . The hills were covered with the shadow of it , and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars . She sent out her boughs unto the sea , and her branches unto the river . " Here he reminds the Lord of the great things that He did for this people in the past , and in one passage in the prophets we read , " look unto the rock whence ye are hewn , and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged . Look unto Abraham your father , and unto Sarah that bare you : for I called him alone , and blessed him , and increased him .

There is a going back still further to the great thing that God did in calling and blessing Abraham , the promise He made to him , and the fulfillment of the promise . God is faithful to every promise that He speaks . Here the Psalmist reminds the Lord in these words of what He had done for His people , what He had been to them , and the Lord takes it well when He is thus re -

minded of what He has been. "Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress." And sometimes a child of God is helped to go before the Lord and remind Him of promises given in the past, of help afforded, deliverances wrought, and there is wonderful comfort in the thought that He is the same. Wonderful comfort there is in that word, "For I am God, and not man," and again, "I am the LORD, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Then the Psalmist goes on, "thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." The Temple lay in ruins at this time. Where was the ark of the covenant? Where was the mercy seat? Where were the cherubims? Yet the Psalmist says, "thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." Although the symbols had been destroyed, yet the thing that was signified could not be destroyed, and God still dwelt on the mercy seat; it was still true of Him, "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come."

"Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." It may be with the soul of the child of God a season of great darkness, he may be assailed by terrific and satanic temptations, may feel nothing but desolation within, guilt and bondage and fear, and atmosphere of gloom, yet the Lord still dwells between the cherubims, it is still true of Him that "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." And the Psalmist goes on, "Before Ephraim and Benjamin and

Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us." Here he appeals to the Lord for a putting forth of His power, "Stir up thy strength." "It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law."

"Stir up thy strength." Here is a feeling of utter weakness, an inability to do anything towards the rectification of the case, an appealing unto the God of almighty power that He will stir up His strength. One says,

*"The work is only fit for God,  
A work of heavenly grace."*

Do you know what it is to feel that all your strength is utter weakness, that you cannot do a thing for yourself, can do nothing towards your own salvation, to feel that you have got into a net and cannot deliver yourself, you are sinking into a pit, a horrible pit and miry clay, and cannot extricate yourself from it, you have no power at all in this matter? "Stir up thy strength, . . . turn us again, O God", turn us again. This petition is well fitted to the lips of a helpless soul, a soul that is so beset by various evils, who is tempted, assailed by Satan, and do what he may only finds his case getting worse and worse. Here is the word well fitted to such a case, "Turn us again, O God." Ephraim said, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned," he could not turn himself. I remember Bunyan in the Pilgrim's Progress, (I think after the pilgrims had wandered into the grounds of Giant Despair and got into sore trouble there, as you all know, and were then brought back into the right

way) speaks of it being easier to get out of the way when you are in it, than it is to get into the way when you are out of it. Ah, it is an easy thing to wander from the Lord, a very easy thing to backslide, and you may do it by imperceptible degrees, you may be gone before you know it, but to bring about restoration is beyond your power. Then it must be, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." You may find yourself in such a condition that you feel unable to repent, believe or pray, you cannot give yourself for one moment a right feeling, or create one good desire. You cannot create in your soul an appetite for the Word of God, or a desire for any spiritual duty, you cannot do it, you are just destitute of everything spiritual and everything spiritual and everything gracious. You have wandered from the Lord, you wander upon the dark mountains and there you are stumbling about, knowing not what to do, knowing not how to return.

"Turn us again, O God." That the Lord caused His servant the Psalmist to pen such words as these, "Turn us again, O God," throughout this Psalm, is a revelation of His own willingness to be thus gracious to a poor soul. The Lord would not have inspired the Psalmist to write these words, and to write them three times if there was no readiness in His heart to do the thing, if He were willing to answer such a request. The very fact that the words are three times repeated in this Psalm is proof of the Lord's willingness. When a poor soul finds itself so entangled, is weary with its wanderings and its fruitless searchings here and there,

the Lord is willing to undertake for it, as we see in the parable that I referred to just now, of the lost sheep. We see in the parable the willingness of the good Shepherd to search out His sheep in the cloudy and dark day; "Turn us again, O God", turn us again. Oh turn us again with repentance, O Lord, grant a fresh spring of repentance in my soul, do cause this heart of mine to be melted in godly sorrow, in true compunction, turn us again O God unto repentance, turn us again to the mercy seat. Lord, I feel so unable to pray; when I try to pray my poor mind is filled with confusion, I seem not to know the way to the mercy seat, turn me again O Lord, in the way of prayer, Quicken me and I will call upon Thy name; draw me, I will run after Thee, let Thy spirit indite true prayer in my heart that I may pour it out to Thee. Lord, I have sunk into a wretched prayerless state and know not how to deliver myself out of it, but thou canst do it, turn us again O God. How we need the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit to turn our souls yet again towards Christ, to bring us where Jonah was brought when he said, "I am cast out of thy sight; yet will I look again unto thy holy temple." Oh to be turned with our faces toward Christ, with our desires towards His holy name, to be enabled to look off from all other things, from everything of self and creatures, to look off unto the Christ of God and seek our all in Him!

"Turn us again, O God." Oh bless me again with a discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ, His person and His grace. "Turn us again, O God." Do you ever feel sometimes

that you have lost everything, everything that you thought you had, everything that you once hoped you had? Do you feel you have lost it all, that you are left completely destitute?

“Turn us again, O God.” Oh, He is able to do it; it is He who taught the Psalmist thus to pray, and He is able to do the thing for which He taught that Psalmist to pray, “Turn us again, O God.” Our hearts are very deceitful, hard and desperately wicked, our hearts are too much for us, but God is greater than our hearts, and I have many a time felt it to be a mercy that God is greater than my heart. The hymn-writer says,

*“I ever into ruin run,  
But Thou art greater than my heart.”*

Oh, He has power, the hearts of men are in His hands, my heart even is in His own hands, and if it be His blessed will He can turn my heart from all its ways, from all its pollution, from all its besetments, He can turn my heart to Himself and grant a fresh spring of repentance, faith and love and godly fear - He can do it.

“Turn us again, O God and cause thy face to shine.” Oh how we need the Lord to turn us again to His Word. We are so sinful by nature, we have such unbelieving, such rebellious and wayward hearts that we weary of the Word of God.

*“My heart by nature is a stone,  
And unconcerned can look upon  
Eternal misery;  
Feels no affection for the Lord,  
Takes no impression from his word,  
But lumpish is and dry.”*

Have you ever been alarmed to find yourself so cold to the Word of God, without even a desire to pick it up and read it? The newspaper has become far more attractive than the Bible, or some other book far more attractive than the Word of God, and you have to force yourself to pick up the Bible and read a chapter as a wearisome task in which you have no delight, and you put down the book without another thought as to what you have been reading. Now, when a soul realizes that this is his condition, and feels something of the awful solemnity of being in such a state, and the peril of it, he cries, Wherever will this lead, where am I drifting to, what will be the issue of these things? Oh what if it means that I am out-living my religion, that all my religion has become withered and is proved to be utterly worthless, what if it means that? These thoughts are terrible solemn, are they not? And when a soul is awakened to perceive that his condition is such as I have been describing, what solemn alarm is felt, and yet do what he may, he cannot rectify the case, cannot impart to his soul a spark of love to the Word of God, cannot raise up in his heart any real and warm desire toward the Word of God.

“Turn us again, O God,” and He only can do it, He can revive in the soul hunger and thirst for the Word of God, and cause the soul as a new-born babe to desire the sincere milk of the Word. It is His work when a soul answers to the description we have in the first Psalm of a godly man, that, “his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.” Oh do you

say, I would that were the case with me? Well, it is His work to do it. It is the fruit of His Spirit's work in the soul if you delight in His Word and rejoice at it more than they who find great spoil, and esteem it more highly than gold and silver, finding it sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. It is His gracious work, He can do it, and He can turn a soul right round from the love of sin and hateful strife, in desire, in affection, in hunger and thirst and longing for His precious word. "Turn us again, O God," to Thy Word.

And do you find that you need the power of God to put in a right attitude to His people? I often think how easy it is for our intercourse with God's people to degenerate into nothing but worldly intercourse, nothing but trivialities, religious trivialities, perhaps but mere trivialities. Oh it can soon degenerate. "Our vines have tender grapes" which can easily be spoiled by the little foxes, and so intercourse with the people of God may become marred, it may for the time being be destroyed, may be as a common thing, nothing better than the intercourse of wordlings. And when this is so, you find sometimes a downright distaste in your heart for the company and discourse of those who are lively in the fear of God, and in whose hearts is kindled the flame of divine love. You shrink from contact with them; it may be that contact with them only throws into relief the wretchedness and destitution of your own condition. "Turn us again, O God." Oh to be united in true living fellowship with the people of God, to be walking with them, finding that as, "in water

face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man," and to find sometimes in intercourse with the people of God a little of that experience that answers to the description given at the opening of the Temple, when the players on instruments and the singers were all as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. Sweet intercourse it is to the people of God when they have such fellowship in worship. "Turn us again, O God," Do revive us in respect of our love to Thy people and our fellowship with them, that our intercourse may be gracious and profitable, that we may be profitable to them and they to us; deliver us from everything which tends to mar that intercourse, from those dreadful inroads of sin and the world and Satan which do so spoil and mar all our intercourse with the true people of God, and with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

"Turn us again, O God" Then with respect to the public worship of God and the private worship too, how our hearts get sadly out of tune, do they not? What a lack there is of that of which the Lord Jesus Christ spoke, when He said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." and that word 'agree' signifies hearts being tuned together in gracious harmony to the same spiritual desires and heavenly affections. It does not mean two people meeting together and saying, 'We will pray about this, that or the other.' That may be said and there may be nothing in it, that may be said and there may be no tuning of their

hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God who put the hearts of His people in tune, and causes them to have fellowship in their desires for the things that God has promised. Well, how we need the Lord to turn our hearts in this, turn our hearts toward the worshipping assemblies of His people, that we shall not become like those who forsake the assembling of themselves together, or who attend intermittently the place of worship, or who attend in a customary manner, but that we may be among those who come together with their hearts big with desire, who come together because they desire to realize the presence of God, whose hearts will be saying, "Be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." Lord, do not leave me to myself in this service, do not leave me to the gaddings of my own wretched heart, do not leave me for my mind to be wandering to the ends of the earth, do draw my heart to Thyself and make me a true worshipper, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord and enquire in His temple.

"Turn us again, O God." How we need Him to turn us in respect to the public worship and the private worship too! I do not know of any consideration that causes so much searching of heart as the consideration of private worship, and the formal part taken in it. Oh what a test of the soul's state is private worship, our private reading and our private prayers! Oh how often there is deadness there when perhaps in our outward activities in our public services there is some appearance of liveliness. We may make a decent

show before others, but what a shameful business it is often in secret! It is like flogging a dead horse to get yourself to pray in secret or to read the Word with any desire or any feeling, with any concern, with any faith.

"Turn us again, O God." Oh, He can do it, He can do it, He can take away the stony heart out of our flesh and give a heart of flesh. He can put in His hand by the hole of the door so that our hearts are moved for Him, and then there is an arising to open to our Beloved, and there will be a going forth in the way of seeking Him in the streets and broad ways of the city.

"Turn us again, O God:" Lord, Thou alone canst do it.

*"Since tis thy work alone,  
And that divinely free,  
Come, Holy Spirit, and make known  
The power of faith in me."*

"And cause thy face to shine." "Lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." Oh how we need that! Do you know what it is for a cloud to be spread over the face of God when He covers Himself with a thick cloud? Oh who can then behold Him? When you pray there is a cloud on the face of God, when you read the Word, a cloud upon His face, you have no sweet sense of His favour, no gracious influence of His love, no intimation of His good will towards you, all seems dark, His face is hidden. "Cause thy face to shine." Oh it is wonderful when reading the Word if the Lord does cause His face to shine, even if it is but for a moment or two. Some word

or other springs into life, as it were, as we read it, and what a fullness is seen in it! How big the word is made and how the soul is enabled to hang upon it! "I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil."

"Cause thy face to shine." And then in prayer, you may feel straitened in your spirit, prayer may seem utterly impossible, and suddenly you are given a view of the throne of grace and the sprinkled blood, of the new and living way to God, of Christ the Mediator and the great High Priest. How that causes you to open your mouth wide in petition. Oh how you are able then to bring large requests, and lay your needy case before the Lord, and implore Him to be gracious unto you. It is the shining of His face, it is the holding out of His golden scepter, an invitation to your soul to make known your requests unto Him.

"Cause thy face to shine." Sometime in His providential dealings with His people His face is hid, dark providences obscure their sky, and they cannot see what the Lord is doing, cannot understand it, cannot tell how good can come out of anything that has happened to them. "Cause thy face to shine," and sometimes the Lord disperses the cloud, manifests His favour in granting some deliverance, some help, some consolation, some word upon which He causes the soul to hope and enables it to rest.

"Cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." Oh that will do it; if the Lord will but lift up upon us the light of His countenance, if He will but speak the word of reconciliation into our poor hearts, that will do

it, "we shall be saved."

"Turn us again, O God, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." Oh, do clouds veil His face? Or does He seem to frown upon you? Are you filled with fears as to whether He will ever be gracious to you again? The Lord help you to come to Him with this plea, "Turn us again, O God, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved." I say, that will do it.

*"Thy shining grace can cheer  
This dungeon where I dwell;  
Tis paradise when thou art here;  
If thou depart, tis hell."*

"We shall be saved," and this salvation is wonderful; to obtain deliverance from the load of guilt and from the awful shame that covers the soul, to have deliverance, to have a clearance of things, to be able to say,

*"I lay me down and sweetly sleep,  
For I have peace with God"*

to say with the apostle, "The Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." Well, may the Lord encourage poor people who may feel their cases to be set forth in these two Psalms that we have had before us this evening, may the Lord enable them to plead with Him in the language of the Psalm, "Turn us again, O God, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved."

May the Lord add His blessing.

John Raven

Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig.

## THE PERFORMER OF ALL THINGS

Preached at Providence Chapel,  
Eden Street, Hampstead Road  
on Lord's Day Morning, July 11th, 1847.

*" I will cry unto God Most High ; unto God that performeth all things for me . He shall send from heaven , and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up . Selah . God shall send forth His mercy and His truth . " ( Psalm 57:2 & 3 ) .*

**F**ew days , I think I may say , pass over my head without bringing trials and exercises in their train . Weak health , dejected spirits ; opposition from without and from within , and , above all , darkness of mind , strong temptations , snares spread for my feet , a daily sense of backsliding and departing from the living God , a continual conflict with the horrid evils of my desperately wicked and depraved nature ; all combine , more or less , to bring a daily exercise into my mind . And yet I would fain hope that these painful things are for my spiritual profit . I would fain hope that by them the Lord is shewing me more and more what I am in myself , and that the things of time and sense are but a shadow which is passing away . I feel , too , the spirit of prayer stirred up by them in my bosom , and my heart's affections more drawn up to centre in the Lord Himself . And would fain hope , too , that these trials and exercises are not only for my own spiritual profit , but that they are mercifully overruled for the good of the people of God among whom I may labour . I am well convinced

both in my judgment and in my conscience that , however my coward flesh may shrink from exercises and trials , an unexercised and untried minister is rather a plague than a profit , a burden more than a benefit to God's tried and tempted family . But what a mercy it is for us , that when we come to the Word of God , we find that the blessed Spirit there sets forth trial , temptation and exercise as the footsteps of the flock , as the path of the redeemed , as the way in which the Lord leads His beloved Church and people .

Above all , what a mercy it is for the Church of God that there is one book especially in the inspired record , I mean , the Book of Psalms , that sets forth so minutely , describes so accurately , and traces out so vividly , the exercises , trials and temptations which the Lord's people have to pass through ; so that therein , as the Lord the Spirit enables , they can read their spiritual features , and have from time to time some testimony from God Himself , that they are walking in a right way , though it be a rugged way , " to a city of habitation . "

The title of our Psalm is worth noticing , as it throws light upon the Psalm itself , and more especially upon the words of our text : " To the chief Musician , Al - taschith , Michtam of David ( which in the margin is , " Destroy not ; a golden psalm " ) , when he fled from Saul in the cave . " Thus , the Psalm was written under peculiar circumstances . It was when David fled from the face of Saul , and hid himself in a cave from his apprehended wrath . And , under the trials

and exercises brought into his mind through the fear of Saul, knowing (or rather fearing) there was but one step between him and death if Saul's angry spear should overtake him, he vented the feelings of his soul in the Psalm before us.

With God's blessing this morning, I shall make no regular divisions; but, to borrow a remark once made by a good man, I shall first "take the text to pieces, and then put it together again." May the Lord enable me to bring forth the mind and meaning of the Spirit in it, that it may be some spiritual food for those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

I. "I will cry unto God Most High." Observe (it is worth observing) what a man of prayer David was! There is an expression of the Psalmist which has often struck my mind; he says, For love they were my enemies, but I give myself unto prayer; it is, I believe, literally, "I prayer," as though he spoke thus, "I am a man of prayer; I am prayer; prayer is so incorporated into my very being; it is so a part and parcel of my spiritual self, that I and prayer are one." And what a mercy it would be for you and me, if we had the same spirit of prayer in us which we find from the Psalms was in David, I mean, as to its intensity, its earnestness, and its frequency. If we have not the same spirit of prayer in our breasts that he had in his, we are dead in a profession altogether. But oh that we had— Oh that I had! let me speak for myself— that fervent, that earnest, that unwearied, that persevering, that importunate, and, I must add, that prevailing spirit of prayer, which

burnt as a holy flame upon the alter of the broken heart of the sweet singer of Israel! Oh what blessed answers should we then from time to time be favoured with!

But observe this, too, — it is worthy of observation — that if David was highly favoured with the spirit of prayer, and blessedly indulged with answers to his prayers, he was led in a very trying path. He had to pass through deep waters, painful and powerful exercises. And it is in the deep waters, in these powerful exercises, that true prayer flourishes. If you would have a tree to spread its branches abroad, and carry up its boughs high to heaven, you must have a soil proportionably deep. And thus would we have prayer in our souls spreading far and wide, and lifting itself up high, there must be the deep soil of trial and exercise for it to spread its strong roots in. But what forced this prayer out of David's bosom? It was being in the cave, where he fled from the face of Saul. It was whilst lodged in that gloomy, desolate and dark abode that he said, "I will cry unto God Most High." What is indispensable before we can use the same words? 1. Before we are cast into the same mould of divine experience we must first have this conviction deeply wrought in and established in our hearts, that there is a God above. For our heart — at least, my heart — is so full of infidelity, atheism, and scepticism, that I need divine demonstration to convince me there is a God at all. I think I am not very far from the word of truth when I say that we need divine faith to credit the very being of God; for the

inspired writer tells us that "without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Heb. 11:6).

2. But again. We need also to believe that God has power to deliver us out of the evils felt and feared. For, if we doubt about His power, our prayers will fall short; there will be an inherent weakness in them; they will be like an arrow shot from a broken bow, or when the string snaps as the arrow flies forth. So if, when prayer is aimed upward, there is some doubt in our minds, the string of our bow is broken in twain, and the arrow of prayer fall short upon the ground. 3. But again. There must a persuasion (and this is the hardest part to get) that God has not only the power, but the will also. Not merely ability to deliver, but inclination.

Now when we get these three things wrought with divine power in our conscience; 1. that there is a God that hears prayer; 2. that there is a God who is able to save to the uttermost all who call upon His name; and 3. that He has a heart touched by sympathy, compassion, loving-kindness and tender mercy, and is therefore willing to give everything that our heart is moved to request at His hand; then the arrow of prayer falls not short; it is aimed at a certain mark, and enters into the mark at which it is aimed.

But there is something to notice in the word "Most High," which I must also enter into, as I promised to take the text to pieces. "I will cry unto God Most High." It is as though he was surrounded with difficulties, and, like a swimmer attempting to

swim through a mighty flood, but fearful lest every wave might drown him the overwhelming gulph, he casts his eyes upwards "unto God Most High"; as though of Him, and Him alone, he would fix his look. Thus we read: "The Lord sitteth upon the waterflood" (Psa. 29:10); He "dwelleth between the cherubims" (Psa. 99:1). And the prophet Isaiah in vision saw "the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up," exalted above all the poor things (I can call them no other) that engross our minds; and "lifted up," that the eyes of waiting sinners might look unto Him from "the end of the earth" (Isa. 6:1).

But in the word, "Most High," there is also something, to my mind, very expressive. It is to "God Most High" that prayers go up from broken hearts in all parts of the world where the Lord has a quickened people. "Unto God Most High" every eye is pointed, every heart is fixed, and every breath of living prayer flows. Jesus sits in glory as "God Most High," hearing the sighs and cries of His broken-hearted family, where they dwell in the utmost corners of the earth; and He is not only sitting on high to hear their cries, but also to bestow upon them the blessings which He sees suitable to their case and state. Now, when shall we thus come "unto God Most High"? When we are pleased and satisfied in self? when the world smiles? when all things are easy without and within? when we are in circumstances for which our own wisdom, strength and righteousness are amply sufficient? We may, under such circumstances, appease

our conscience by prayer, or rather its form; but there is no cry "unto God Most High." Before there is a real, spiritual cry raised up, we must be brought to that spot: "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul" (Psa. 142:4). Here all the saints of old were brought; Job upon his dunghill, Hezekiah upon his bed, Hannah by the temple gate. All were hopeless, helpless, houseless, refugeless, before they cried unto "God Most High." And we must be equally refugeless and houseless before we can utter the same cry, or our prayers find entrance into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. II. "Unto God that performeth all things for me." Did not David, then, expect to receive something from God? What a mockery to pray unto Him, and not want to receive anything from His hand! It is an insult to man to go as though we had some favour to obtain from him; and when our business is asked, not to know the errand for which we came. And in a much higher sense spiritually, it is an insult and mockery to the Majesty of heaven, to go upon the bended knees, with lowly face or uplifted hands, to ask for what we neither know nor care about, or for which we have no earnest desire, and do not need, deeply need, the blessing for which we pretend — for it is a pretence — to beseech God to bestow.

"Unto God that performeth all things for me." If God did not perform something for us; nay, more, if God did not perform all things for us, it would be a mockery, a delusion to pray to Him at all. "The Hope of Israel" would then be to us a dumb idol, like Ashtaroth or Baal,

who could not hear the cries of his lancet — cutting worshippers, because he was hunting or asleep, and needed to be awakened. But the God of Israel is not like these dumb idols, these dunghill gods, the work of men's hands, the figments of superstition and ignorance; but the eternal Jehovah, who ever lives to hear and answer the prayers that His people offer up.

"That performeth all things for me." What! all things? May I, then, go to God and ask Him for all things? No; there must be some limitation — God's revealed will. I might ask, for instance, to be perfect in the flesh! Has God promised it? I might ask for the conversion of the whole world! Has God promised that? I might ask for health, for strength, for riches, for prosperity, for freedom from trial and exercise, for a smooth and pleasant path! Has God promised that? No. Though God "performeth all things" for His praying family, it is only those things which He has promised in His inspired record. There is the limit. It is indeed a limit; but how wide, how great, how extensive I might almost say, how boundless the limit (if not a contradiction in terms) that God has put to what He has promised to give to them that ask Him! But this is not all; there is another limit still, and that is, our present wants. There are a great many things you may, in words, ask the Lord to give, and yet you may not feel your need of them! Is that honesty? is that sincerity? is that uprightness? is that godly fear? is that the work of the Spirit upon the heart? I say, no.

Then there are two limitations:

first , what the Lord is pleased especially to lay upon our consciences ; and secondly , what the Lord has promised in His revealed Word to give to those that ask Him . Carry this into your experience . The children of God are all exercised , but differently exercised ; and , therefore though they are brought from time to time to cry unto God to “ perform all things ” for them , they do not all , and at all times , go to a throne of grace with the same or similar petitions ; yet all , as the Lord works in their conscience , “ cry unto God Most High , unto God that performeth all things : for them . For instance ,

1 . There may be some here whose chief desire is that the Lord would manifest the pardon of sin to their conscience . Have not these a full warrant to go “ unto God Most High , unto God that performeth all things ” for them , with this petition ? Is sin their burden ? Does guilt lie with weight and power upon their heart ? Are the terrors of the Almighty within , and fear , lest death and hell should swallow them up ? Has God promised “ to pardon the sins of those whom He reserves ? Is forgiveness of sins revealed in the everlasting gospel of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ? Then are they warranted — nay , more , they are enabled ; nay , more they are encouraged — without and within — without by God ’s testimony , within by the Spirit ’s intercession — to go with these desires that the Lord would manifest His pardoning love to their souls .

2 . Others , again , may have backslidden from God . “ Oh , sure-

ly ,” replies someone , “ these must be very awful characters ! ” “ Thou art the man ! ” Hast thou never backslidden from God ? The Lord in mercy may have kept thee from backsliding openly , or bringing a reproach upon His cause ; but backslidings are not limited to open sins . Are there no heart idolatries ? no eye adulteries ? no departing from the living God ? no hewing out cisterns , broken cisterns , that hold no water ? no cleaving to the world ? no delighting in the things of time and sense ? no hugging in thy bosom that huge , that deformed , that ugly idol , more ugly than the hand of Hindoo ever framed — thyself , that monster self , which thou so lovest , admirest , and almost adorest ? Feel this , and thou wilt feel soon in thy conscience that thou art a backslider ; for self , that ugly monster , will be perpetually drawing away thine eyes and affections from the living God to centre in that worthless and abominable idol . Now , when we feel , deeply and daily feel , our inward idolatries , backslidings , adulteries , and departings from the living God , has not the Lord given a gracious promise that these backslidings shall be healed ? He says , “ I will heal their backsliding ; I will love them freely ” ( Hosea 14:4 ) . Does not the Lord give a gracious invitation to His poor backsliding children ? He says , “ Turn , O backsliding children , saith the Lord , for I am married unto you ” ( Jer. 3:14 ) . How the Lord sets forth the espousals of their souls unto Himself , though they have departed from Him and gone after idols ! Now God can “ perform all things ” ; He can heal their back-

slidings , and love the backslider freely ; drop a sense of forgiveness into his conscience , and manifest restoring mercy and love to his soul .

3 . There may be others of the Lord 's family who are suffering under powerful temptations . There is some temptation which has taken you , continually haunting and entangling your thoughts , creeping in upon your affections ; and as the crafty spider twines its slimy thread round the fly , so there is some snare twining its slimy thread round your heart . You are as helpless in the temptation as the poor fly is helpless in the web of the cruel spider . But has not the Lord declared : “ There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man : but God is faithful , who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape , that ye may be able to bear it ” ? ( 1 Cor. 10:13 ) . If , then , we feel we are in a temptation , and that none but the Lord can deliver us out of the temptation , have we not a warrant to cry unto Him ? Does not the Lord sometimes — I know from personal experience He does — bring us with sighs , cries , and earnest desires that He would break the temptation to pieces , and deliver our souls out of the snare of the fowler ?

4 . But you may feel , deeply feel , the power of sin . Who knows it ? who knows it ? No man can know it but the man exercised with temptations . He knows it ; but even he cannot fully know the power of sin . Sin is like a powder magazine ; it lies still and harmless till temptation comes ; but one electric spark of temptation , if

God does not quench the train , will set the whole magazine on fire . A look , a word , a thought , an injection of Satan — these electric sparks can in a moment kindle all these combustibles into a flame . Thus we find , deeply find , the mighty power of sin , and yet , though it makes us groan and sigh and lament before the Lord , we feel we have no power over this monster . But the Lord has said , “ Sin shall not have dominion over you ; for ye are not under the law , but under grace ” ( Rom. 6:14 ) . And He has said also , “ The elder shall serve the younger ” ( Rom. 9:12 ) . These are two certain things that God will perform , and which He does perform for those that come to Him for deliverance in good earnest .

5 . Or , you may be longing after some sweet manifestation of your interest in Christ . This conviction lies very deeply lodged in your soul , that your profession of Christ , however numerous the years may be that are passed away , all avails nothing without an interest in Christ , and a manifestation of that interest to your soul . And this perhaps lies as a canker at the very root of all your fears , gnaws as a worm at the very heart of the bud , as if it would eat up all your hope , because you have not the sweet testimonies of God 's mercy to your soul , and that clear sense of your interest in Christ that your heart is longing to enjoy . Doubts therefore , and fears , and despondency all make such solemn head because you have not that in your bosom which you can hold forth as an answer to the accusations of Satan . Now , has not the Lord promised to shed abroad His love in

the seeking heart , and reveal His mercy and truth to the waiting soul ?

Time will not suffice , and it might not be profitable to run through the various things that a living soul may be exercised with . But this I say , whatever be your peculiar trials , exercises , or sorrows , here is the warrant in God 's Word , that you should " cry unto God Most High , unto God that performeth all things " for those that are His . Nay , I will add another word ; it will not be a matter of choice whether you will go unto God or not ; you will go under compulsion , and yet not under compulsion , for you will go under the sweet drawings of the Spirit ; you will go under the peculiar power that we feel , but cannot describe , a power that carries and bears us along to a throne of mercy , and brings us there to pour out our complaints and desires into the ear of God that performeth all things for us .

III. " He shall send from heaven , and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up . " David , I intimated , was at this time lying under a peculiar trial ; the Psalm was penned when he fled from Saul and hid himself in the cave , perhaps hourly expecting that Saul would overtake him and thrust his spear into his heart . Now , under these feelings he cried " unto God Most High , unto God that performeth all things " for him , to " send from heaven , and save him from the reproach of him that would swallow him up . "

We may not be under precisely similar circumstances , though I believe if we fear God , and are honest and faithful in our day and

generation , we shall have those ( professors and profane ) who will thirst for our life 's blood , as Saul for David 's . But I say , we may not be under his peculiar trial . I shall waive that therefore , and point out three things , of which we may justly say that they are such as threaten to swallow up God 's children .

1 . Look at the power of sin . Is not that a mighty whirlpool , an all-devouring gulph , that has swallowed up thousands , and sometimes seems as though it would swallow us up too ? And is there not " a reproach " in sin ? And is it not this reproach brought upon the cause of God by sin that the Lord 's people dread as well as sin itself ?

2 . But again . Is not Satan continually on the watch to swallow up God 's people ? What but body and soul can satiate his infernal maw ? But that one , after a profession of many years , should be swallowed up by Satan ; would not this bring a reproach upon the name and cause of God with which he has been connected ?

3 . And is not despair another vortex , an insatiable whirlpool , which has swallowed up thousands ? And are there not moments , many moments perhaps with us , when we may fear lest that whirlpool should swallow us up too ? Are you sure that when you come to die you will have a peaceful end ? Do not doubt and fear sometimes work in your mind lest at that solemn moment despair might swallow you up ? Are you altogether delivered from the fear of death ?

Has not death swallowed up his thousands ? and must not death swallow up you and me ? And if we

do not die with a sweet testimony in our conscience, and blessed manifestation to the Lord's people around us, will there not be some "reproach" in it? And is not hell, too, an awful whirlpool that has swallowed up millions? And are there no fears in our minds ever working, when Satan is tempting and harassing us, lest hell should swallow up our guilty souls?

Well, if you are free from these fears it is your mercy. But then you cannot enter into the experience of David in this Psalm, nor can you say with a feeling heart, "He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up." But, on the other hand, if there are these fears working from time to time in your minds, and you tremble lest these things should swallow you up, and by swallowing you up cast a reproach on your profession, and perhaps add bitterness to the draught, then you will be able to join earnestly in the words "He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up."

You may observe here that David spoke with some degree of confidence. Perhaps you and I cannot always feel the same confidence. No; we are not blessed with as strong faith as he was, and we are not exercised with as strong trials as he was exercised with. Our blessings and our faith fall short of his blessings and of his faith, because our exercises and trials fall short of his; for these two things will always be proportionate. We may not be able always to believe (though there are times, blessed times, sweet

seasons, when faith springs up and actually believes) that the Lord will do this or that, nor speak with the language of confidence. All the Lord's people cannot use these words of David, nor can any of them at all times; but they all can turn it into the language of prayer, and say, "Send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up." Look into your conscience; take a review (it will take but a few moments) of the things which your mind is more or less daily exercised with - I mean, spiritual things. Have you feared lest you should be swallowed up by them? "Yes, yes," is the reply from some troubled heart; "I do fear lest the things you have mentioned, or some of them, should swallow me up." Whence, then, do you expect your relief? where are you looking "to be saved from the reproach to him that would swallow you up"? To self or to God? To man or to your Maker? To the creature or to the Creator? If you are looking to self, you are wrong, altogether wrong; you are deceiving yourself; there is no help there. But if you are looking to God - and to Him you must look, and you will look, and you will look, too, if He is working with power in your heart - this I well know, is the feeling of your soul: "God must send from heaven a word into my soul, to save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up;" for everything short of what God sends down from heaven leaves me where it finds me - unsatisfied, dejected, unbelieving. It does not bring out of that which I am labouring under, but leaves me (vile creature that I am!) a

prey to sin , Satan and self ; but one word from the living God dropped into my soul , one smile from His most lovely countenance , sent from heaven with divine power into my heart , will save me , amply save me , eternally save me , “ from the reproach of him that would swallow me up ! ” Are these your feelings ? I am sure they are from my own , if , indeed , I know anything of those exercises that living souls are experimentally acquainted with .

IV. But what did he expect “ from heaven ? ” A vision in the sky ? a dream by night ? an audible voice ? some wonderful appearance ? a light beyond the rays of the sun ? No ; these would not reach his case . Here was his malady , at the heart . He wanted something , not addressed to the outward eye , nor audible to the outward ear ; but something that would drop into the very depth of his bosom and touch the whole inward malady under which he was suffering . Therefore , he adds : “ God shall send forth His mercy and truth ; ” not dreams , not visions , not ecstasies , not trances , but “ God shall send forth His mercy into the conscience , shedding abroad His love in the soul , manifesting His pardoning favour within , that God “ saves from the reproach of him that would swallow us up . ” Ministers may come and endeavour to soothe you , and often by their soothing make more mischief that they mend : “ Oh , no doubt , if you are exercised with these things , you are a child of God ; ” as though a man could be satisfied with exercises , and because he is hungering and thirsting after the Lord , could be

contented with his famine and his drought . No ; these things do not touch the secret malady , do not go far enough , nor deep enough , nor come with divine power as from the mouth of the Lord Himself . All short of this leaves the poor patient afflicted , desolate , and dejected , and does not remove that under which his soul labours . But mercy , sweet mercy , sent from heaven , and dropped from above into his spirit , applied to his conscience , revealed to his heart , and brought warm into his very soul by the Spirit of God , that saves him from the reproach of every enemy that would swallow him up . For if he can lean , confidently lean upon the arms of mercy , what can man do , what can Satan do , what can sin do , what can death do , what can hell itself do to hurt him ? If the mercy of God is upon his side , revealed to his heart , and sent from heaven into his soul , who or what shall swallow him up ?

But he adds , “ And His truth . ” Not lies , not errors , not falsehoods ; these cannot save the soul from the “ reproach of him that would swallow it up . ” Hypocrisies , vanities , delusions , putting pillows under armholes , plastering walls with untempered mortar , canting and whining people into religion ; these cannot heal a wounded conscience , nor pour the balm of Gilead into bleeding hearts , Nothing can do this but truth , the truth of God , the “ truth as it is in Jesus . ” And mercy and truth are never separated ; for we read that “ mercy and truth have met together ; righteousness and peace have kissed each other ” ( Psa. 85:10 ) . Wherever God sends

for His mercy , He sends forth His truth ; and wherever He sends forth His truth , He sends forth His mercy . And it is God 's truth alone , that can make us free ; for " ye shall know the truth , and the truth shall make you free " ( John 8:32 ) . I have taken my text to pieces , as I promised , so far as the Lord has enabled me . Now let me put it together again , and present it before your minds as one complete whole , It may , with God 's blessing , then , leave a more distinct and clear impression .

Under what circumstances were these words poured forth ? When David was in the cave . You and I may be spiritually where David was literally , in a cave — the cave of your own bosom . Aye , we may be in the midst of busy London , in the streets of the city , in bustling Cheapside , and yet be in a cave ; a very hermit , surrounded by trade and bustle , or even walking in the very haunts of men . Yes , a man may still have a cave in his bosom , and into that cave he may retreat as the hermit into his hollow cell , the cave of his own thoughts ; his own distressed and dejected mind , his own deep and solemn reflections and exercises upon eternal things . We may flee into this cave , the cave of a man 's own bosom , as David fled into the cave from Saul . Every outward opposition and internal temptation will be sure to drive a living saint into the cave of his own bosom ; and there he will seek to hide himself from the face of man , and commune with his own heart and God upon his bed .

Now when David was in the cave , where you and I may be sometimes ,

nothing could satisfy him . He might read the Scriptures , but those unapplied could not comfort him . He was compelled , therefore , to pour out his heart " unto God Most High , " who he knew was able to deliver him . He was convinced that the Lord , to whom he cried in the lonely cave , could perform all things for him ; that there was not a spiritual desire in his bosom , not an exercise under which he laboured , not a sorrow that wrung forth the scalding tear , for which God had not an ear to hear , and which He was not able to perform for him .

And does not the history of David prove this to be true ? Can a single promise be found that God made to him which He did not perform in His own time and way ?

But though the anointing oil had touched the brow of David , here he was in the cave , with only a step between him and death , full of anxious care , listening to the footsteps of Saul . Yet still , at the very last point , God performs His word , and shews Himself faithful to the promise which He had given him , and sets him upon the royal throne . But while in the cave , at the gloomiest hour , when all things seemed about to fail , and after being hunted up and down , as he says , " like a partridge upon the mountains , " yet in his greatest extremity he cried unto God , the strength of his heart , even " unto God that performeth all things for him ; " and he felt sweetly persuaded in his own soul that He would save him . He could not tell when , how , or where ; but he felt assured that God would " send from heaven , and save him

from the reproach of him that would swallow him up;" and that the way in which He would accomplish it was by sending forth His "mercy and truth."

Can you find any of these exercises, any of these trials, or any of this confidence going on within? If you can, you have some testimony in the conscience that the Lord is at work with your soul. You may be very low, very dejected, and very cast down; and you will be, more or less, if the Lord is leading you about and dealing with your conscience; but the same "God of all grace," who heard the cry of David, brought him out of the lowly cave, and set him upon the throne of Israel, is able and willing to bring your soul and mine out the gloomy cave in which we may often dwell, and set us upon a throne of glory. "He lifteth the beggar from the dunghill, that He may set him among princes, and make him to inherit the throne of glory."

May God who "performeth all things," in mercy perform this for us us?

J. C. Philpot

Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig.

## MEETINGS

### CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North East Church, Onslow County, Jacksonville, NC on October 13-14, 1990. All who be-

lieve and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located off US Highway 17 North of Jacksonville on Piney Green Road. Those coming from the North on US 17 turn left and those coming from the South turn right on Pumpkin Center Road which is opposite the Moore Buick Dealership. Travel one mile to Piney Green Road, go straight through the intersection and the Church is approximately another two miles on the left.

Gene Lupton  
Association Clerk

### STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist will be held with Canaan Church the fifth Saturday and Sunday of September 29 & 30, 1990.

We invite all who have a mind to come, and meet with us.

Elder J. R. Williams, Pastor  
Mozelle B. Lacey, Clerk

### WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church (Greensboro Church will be the host), the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in September 1990 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

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CONTRIBUTIONS

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FOR JUNE 1990

Smith Walton , VA .....	10.00
Buford E. Thompson , VA ....	2.00
Mrs. Ira L. Bell , VA .....	5.00
Mrs. Etta J. Humpheys, VA ....	2.00
E. R. Graves , AL .....	5.00
Mrs. Olive Hastings , MD ...	10.00
Mrs. A. R. Patterson , LA ....	7.00
Walter F. Griffith , NC .....	2.00
Mrs. Odell Anderson , LA ....	2.00
Mrs. Fannie D. Wiles , VA ...	5.00
W. E. Mitchell , VA .....	2.00
Wiley S. Taylor , AL .....	2.00
Mrs. T. J. Pittman , TX .....	7.00
Mrs. G. B. McAdams , MS ...	2.00

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OBITUARIES

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OCIE BELL DALTON

**O**cie Bell Dalton was born Nov. 15 , 1899 , the daughter of the late Albert Lee and Rose Dalton . She passed away August 11 , 1989 .

While Aunt Ocie was still a young woman her mother passed away and left several small children . She elected to stay at home and help her Papa with her brothers and sisters upbringing . There she lived until they were all grown and gone from home . Although she was never married , her brothers , sisters , nieces and nephews loved her very much . She is survived by three brothers , Ira , Lester and Swaney Dalton and three sisters , Ethel and Jennie Brumfield and Alice Dalton .

She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church in Sept . 9 , 1962 . She attended church faithfully as long as she was able and was a firm believer .

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on Aug . 13 , 1989 by Elder O. K. Tench . She was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery .

Written by her niece ,  
Atha Dalton Bailey

---

THEODORE SILAS McGUIRE

**W**e the members of Sandy Level Church of the Pig River Association are deeply saddened to report the death of our precious Brother Theodore Silas McGuire .

Brother McGuire was born April 27 , 1912 . Passed away May 1 st , 1990 . Preceded in death by his wife . Survived by 4 daughters , 2 sons , 12 grandchildren 1 sister , 2 brothers .

United with Sandy Level Church Oct . 16th , 1988 and was baptised the same day . Brother McGuire was in poor health , but supported and attended the meetings regular . He loved and trusted in God and prayed for the day to come when God would call him home to be with his wife . Brother McGuire will be sadly missed .

*We shall sleep but not forever ,  
We shall rest beneath the trees  
We shall wake to live forever  
In the land where Jesus is .*

Gone but not forgotten by the ones who knew and loved him .

Written in love and fellowship ,  
Elder Denver Simpson , Mod .  
Elder Clarence Stone , Ass . Mod .  
Odessa Brown , Clerk

# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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### HYMN 1078

*Baptist Hymn Book*

*Beebe's Collection*

*Joseph made known to his brethren.*

*Gen. XLV 3, 4.*

*When Joseph his brethren beheld  
Afflicted, and trembling with fear,  
His heart with compassion was fill'd,  
From weeping he could not forbear.  
A while his behavior was rough,  
To bring their past sins to their mind:  
But when they were humbled enough,  
He hastened to show himself kind.*

*How little they thought it was he,  
Whom they had ill-treated and sold!  
How great their confusion must be,  
As soon as his name he had told!  
"I'm Joseph, your brother," he said,  
"And still to my heart you are dear;  
You sold me, and thought I was dead,  
But God, for your sakes, sent me here."*

*Though greatly distressed before,  
When charged with purloining the cup,  
They now were confounded much more,  
Not one of them durst to look up.  
"Can Joseph, whom we would have slain,  
Forgive us the evil we did?  
And will he our household maintain?  
O, this is a brother indeed!"*

*Thus dragg'd by my conscience, I came  
And laden with guilt, to the Lord,  
Surrounded with terror and shame,  
Unable to utter a word.  
At first he look'd stern and severe,  
What anguish then pierced my heart!  
Expecting each moment to hear  
The sentence "Thou cursed, depart!"*

*But, oh! what surprise when he spoke,  
What tenderness beam 'd in his face;  
My heart then to pieces was broke,  
O'erwhelmed and confounded by grace  
" Poor sinner, I know thee full well,  
By thee I was sold and was slain;  
I died to redeem thee from hell,  
And raise thee in glory to reign.*

*By Newton .*

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Mamie Conner Walton	
Una Rowland Willis	

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## EDITORIAL

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### MATTHEW 16 : 15-17 .

*" 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 ."*



ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

**W**e find in the above scripture a declaration by Christ himself why Peter knew whom he was and why he didn't answer as some others mentioned in ver. 14 . This knowledge or wisdom if given from above , was the only way for Peter to know Christ in his day or for anyone else to know him in any age . Today we hear so often the creature has in himself this power to know God . In every age or place there isn 't a possibility of this wisdom coming any other way than revelation , and this wisdom of God in revealing His Son is just to his people . We read to know God is life eternal , then to the elect family , just to those ordained to eternal life , just to those that will behold Him in His glory will know him in this world or the beautiful city to come .

In John chap . 10 Ver . 14 , " I am the good shepherd , and know my sheep , and am known of mine ." Tell me how a shepherd , naturally speaking , could care for a flock of sheep if he didn 't know how many he had , where they were or what they looked like . For God to know them he would have to know all about them , their desires , habits , faults etc . If the above scripture is true and we know it is , if we are his , which we have a hope of , we also know Him as he knows us . It says known of mine , which will give his people to know , his wisdom was present from the foundation of the world until the world is no more . To know His power to save all that call on His name , and

all His shall call on him in their hour of need when all other sources fail . They shall know He is faithful to the end , never to leave or forsake , as so often so called friends would do . Knowing also HE has finished the work His Father gave Him to do . They know without a doubt , for it is revealed unto thee from heaven also , that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ . We know that He who has promised to come some day for His bride , is coming to carry His people home . For we know all shall awake in His likeness . Lastly might we add our just conviction , Rom . chap . 8 ver . 28 , “ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God , to them who are the called according to his purpose .” Yet we read we know nothing as we ought , but we long to know , if not already , GOD IN HIS GLORY . Amen .

Tearfully submitted ,  
Elder J . R . Williams

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*CORRESPONDENCE*

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Monticello , Ga .  
July 9 , 1990

Dear Elder and Sister Key :

**S**o much has happened since we were in touch . It seems the world spins ever faster , the years pass with their shares of joy and sorrow . Some of both is given us in this life but as we grow older , ripening for harvest , afflictions in -

crease , weaning us from this world , dimming its glory and making us a little more able to say , whatever comes , Thy will be done , David said “ Let him do with me as he will .” Whatever is , is right , this is of comfort to me for I know we see only the nearest link of the chain while God seeth the end thereof . His will is done ; may He grant us reconciliation and strength to walk the path set before us . Reuben 's death was a shock to me , although I knew he was ill . So many happy times we have been made welcome in their good home . We loved him and Ben dearly and know what a loss they are to the church , the family , their brethren and friends . We are all poorer for their deaths and I shall miss them while I live . The Lord be with us all who felt our loss . My husband is now in The Retreat Nursing Home in Monticello . I spend the days with him and surely miss him when I came home . He sleeps most of the time . Tomorrow , July 10 , will be the 66th anniversary of our wedding in 1924 that is a long road of years to walk down together . A great blessing — yet yesterday 's bread does not feed us today . May we tread the way to tomorrow with a reconciled heart .

Elder Key , the Lord grant you strength ; we do believe that when God gives work to do , He gives also strength to accomplish it .

In an humble hope ,  
Florence Gibson

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 10 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE .

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 ARTICLES
 

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**MAMIE WALTON'S EXPERIENCE**

April 15 , 1963

**I** am writing of an experience of my life; In growing up I was like other girls , I enjoyed going to parties and dances and was far from living right . I became so concerned about myself that I carried the testament with me to read every chance I had , I felt to be such a sinner and wondered if there was any forgiveness for one like me. This house I now live had a double porch at the front . I dreamed of being on the top porch or portico as it was called and was choking to death on the blackest violent substance in my mouth I kept trying to spit and keep it off my clothes and get it out of my throat and the railing on the porch giving away until I knew I was bound to fall. I began begging for mercy for a poor sinner , and something took hold of me. I went for sometime and wouldn't tell it to anyone. At the age of 20 , I dreamed of a speckled bird. The prettiest bird I ever seen in a clear stream of water filled with the prettiest little rocks or pebbles this bird would peck these pebbles and look around I can 't express my feelings as I should about the speckle bird . I was away teaching school when I had this dream . I could hardly wait to get home to my Dad and Mother and talk with them . When I told them my Daddy said that is a good dream and the speckled bird represents the church . He got the

Bible to read it to me. I didn't feel fit to be in the church , but had a desire to talk with my Daddy and Mother more and more about spiritual things . My Daddy could remember what he read and was deep in scripture . I went to church as often as I could not only the Primitive Baptist, I went to other churches but there wasn't anything for me I would feel condemned. I became so burdened and felt to be the chief of sinners . I asked to be shown in some way that I could be reconciled . Elder Cole appeared in a dream with a white robe on and the words were spoken to me , listen to him preaching salvation is of the Lord , and I began singing when the combat is ended He'll carry you above. These words are in the 4th verse " When Shall I See Jesus ." I want to tell another dream there was something like a cloud came down on me and I was smothering and felt like I would have to die , if I didn't ask for mercy. And I asked the Lord to have mercy on me and the cloud was lifted . I felt like I knew my redeemer lives and could praise His holy name for a while . So much of my time I am in darkness and have my doubts and fears . I went to the Salem Church in September 1925 , and asked for a home , was received and baptized that meeting by Elder S.L. Moran . I have tried to write some of the things I have experienced and believed because they are not of anything I have done . I hope and trust that this has been the leading of a holy spirit and a gift from God , the way his little ones travel . My prayer has been to God that he will lead me in the path of righteousness for his name sake and

will give me strength and wisdom for the steps that are ahead of me, since my dear Husband was taken home June 24, 1961. I hope my children when they read this will not think I have written this as a boastful attempt, it is the belief of your Dad and Mother. My life is a struggle I go mourning and groaning from day to day trying to do the best I can, and the steps I take will be directed in the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life and each of us can say not our will but thine be done. God is too good to be unkind. May his richest blessings go with each of my children the rest of their days.

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VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

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November 1943

**PROVERBS 26:21 .**

*As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife .*

**T**hese pithy proverbs are rich in nutriment and are applicable to our every day life as citizens of the world, but it is to God's people that they are written. The fact of the business is that the primary object of writing the Scriptures was that the church be instructed and comforted. Nothing else matters. Nothing else is needed. These proverbs are not sayings that Solomon learned as a man of the world and passed on to us, although many of them are applicable and true when considered in their natural or literal place, and no doubt, he could and did agree that they were true in some sense,

even to a man of the world. Personally, I am persuaded that these proverbs are given to the church individually and collectively and that they are true in the church and that, when given spiritual sight, we may see those pictured that the proverbs measure for us. It is not for us to judge but only to measure. We are not given to judge but the ministry, especially, is given to measure what God has judged. To notice our text briefly we find a rich field to look into. God takes the simple things and instructs the simple, but confounds the wise. This wisdom that is confounded is not that from above. It is the wisdom that belongs to carnality with which all of us are filled when not purged by the Spirit. The "coals" spoken of in our text means charcoal and was used extensively in the country of the Jews. The "burning coals" are the glowing hot charcoal after it has flamed and burned out. Sometimes a great fire is started and much damage is done, but our experience teaches us that after a fire has flamed up and burned the fuel that it comes in contact with, that undisturbed, it will soon die out. In the verse preceding our text it is said, "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out." So where no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth. If we were guided in our actions towards one another by love and that wisdom from above, we could see the timely rebuke that Solomon is handing us. In our carelessness, forgetfulness, slothfulness, weakness and jealousy many fires have been started. Many flames that are started among the Lord's people are vehement ( S . S . 8:6 ) and leave

many little children of God seared by its devastating power . We so many times say things that start a fire , things that perhaps at any other time we would not think of saying . Oft - times it would soon go out , but the Lord's people have always had fuel-gatherers and talebearers among them . A little fire in itself soon goes out . It may do a little damage and I would beg the people of God to be careful that they do not start any fires . May we be given grace , love and wisdom in our dealings with one another that we carefully guard against bringing up things that will start a fire . It may be true that our brother does not eat meat , if he does not it is because he thinks it wrong . I wonder if we are guided by love when we undertake to make him eat it . It is better to let a fire burn out when once it is started than it is to keep adding fuel to it . To keep a fire burning we must have somebody to keep bringin fuel in contact with it . If not what happens ? It goes out . Moreover , it goes out by itself . The fire burns , we dread it , it is devastating , but it goes out if let alone . It is the fuel- gatherer that keeps the fire going . Some people delight in a fire . Some even start them to see the destruction . It is the same way in regard to strife . Strife and fire are close kin . Some start them , some add to them after they are started . Each party is guilty and , in natural life subject to prosecution . It is so in the church and many times there should be an execution of the laws of Zion that her lawgiver has given her . Contending for the doctrine , order and practice of the church is necessary , but to be contentious about it is something that never is regarded

very highly . We are commanded to contend earnestly but never fanatically . Those in the history of the church that have contended earnestly for the faith have been leaders in the constructive phase of the work . The contentious or fanatical leaders have been destructive . They have had several combats and won many victories , but to a poor , thirsty , hungry soul they have given many thorns , thistles and stones . They have gloried in the flames that they have caused by adding fuel , they have fed the fire , but not the children of God ; they have exerted much strength and used much time to keep the strife going ; they have put their construction on their brother's actions and words even though they know nothing of him or his motives ; instead of trying to ease strife they feel that the future of the church has been given into their hands , and that they must keep it going in order for the church to survive . Not many fuel-gatherers live long in the memories of God's humble poor ; not many reformers ever have a favorable place in the history of the church ; not many that fight everything and everybody are ever known long as true soldiers of the cross . It is the quiet , peaceable , earnest soldier that proves the most capable when the going gets the roughest . He , perhaps , is not a perfect soldier ; he may have some ideas that his commander - in - chief would not approve ; he could be wrong about some things but his general conduct , as a soldier , is to build up , to console , to preach Jesus as the way , the truth and the life . May God , who gives us all courage , faith and zeal , send us forth ( not to start fires ,

not to gather fuel, but) to build up, to encourage, to console.

W.D. Griffin

### THE VALUE OF COMMENTARIES

**T**emptation, prayer, and meditation," says Luther, "make a minister." These, too, we may add, make the only true Commentary upon the Word of God. By temptation and conflict, the experience of the Bible saints is entered into and realized; by prayer, and in answer to it, its spiritual meaning is opened up; and by meditation it is turned into sweet and solid nutriment. The heavenly wisdom, the unspeakable majesty and beauty, the divine savour, the richness and fulness, the certainty and faithfulness, the suitability and blessedness that are stamped upon the Scripture — these prints of the hand of God can only be felt and recognized as the Holy Spirit shines upon the sacred page. He is the only true Commentator, for He alone can reach and melt the heart; and He is the only true Preacher, because He alone can seal the truth upon the soul.

But giving these scriptural positions the fullest weight, and we do so from our very heart and conscience, may not something still be said on the other side of the question? Because the Spirit of God is the only Teacher, are we to set our face decidedly against all human learning, all commentaries of every kind and everything written by the pen of man? Does the Lord never sanctify to His own use, to His own honour

and glory and to His people's good, natural or acquired abilities? We did not learn the English language by grace, and yet we preach in English. So it is impossible to say how far God may not use natural abilities in the ministry of the gospel. Gold, silver, and brass, blue, and purple, and scarlet, fine linen, and goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, badgers' skins and shittim wood (Exod. 35: 57) were all freely given to the tabernacle in the wilderness, were all accepted and sanctified by the blood sprinkled upon them (Heb. 9: 21), by the anointing oil sprinkled upon them (Heb. 9: 21), by the anointing oil (Exod. 30: 25-), and the divine Shechinah that filled the sanctuary.

Apply this view of the case to commentaries - such as of Dr. Gill, written by a man possessed not only of great learning and abilities, but of grace and divine teaching, and well instructed into the truth of God. May there not be something edifying and instructive, something establishing and profitable in the remarks made by him upon the Scriptures? Because ministers without a conscience may pillage from this fund, and pass off the Doctor's explanations as their own, it does not make the remarks themselves less valuable. A stolen sovereign is good gold still, though the pickpocket has filched it, and spent it as if earned by honest labour. In this, as in most other circumstances, it is not fair to argue against the use of a thing from its abuse.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 119 : 27 .

*Make me to understand the way of thy precepts : so shall I talk of thy wondrous works .*

## LAWFUL STRIFE

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Preached on Lord's Day Morning,  
December 27th, 1840  
at Trinity Chapel, Alfred St., Leicester

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*And if a man also strive for  
masteries, yet is he not crowned,  
except he strive lawfully." ( 2 Tim.  
2 : 5 ).*

**T**he Holy Ghost appears to have made much use of figures and illustrations in the Word of God ; and I believe we may find more or less of this mode of instruction from Genesis to Revelation. For instance, immediately after the fall, the Lord made use of a visible figure, when He made coats of skins, and clothed in them our first parents. What was this but a visible sign of the garment of imputed righteousness, in which alone they could stand accepted before Him, connected with Christ's sacrifice, as the skin of the sacrificed animal was with its poured-out blood? So after the flood, the Lord set His bow in the cloud, that, spanning earth and heaven, it might be a visible sign of His covenanted mercy from generation to generation. When we come a little lower down to the period when the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt that they might be to Him a peculiar people, He still chose the same visible mode of instruction by type and figure. The

paschal lamb, the blood sprinkled on the lintel and the two sideposts, the ark of the covenant, the whole train of sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies, with all the furniture of the tabernacle, were all so many speaking figures, whereby spiritual instruction was communicated to those who had eyes to look through the type of the thing typified.

So when we come down to the times of the prophets, types and figures were still employed. Jeremiah is sent down to the potter's house to learn God's absolute sovereignty ( Jer. 18 ); was commanded to wear a linen girdle, and then hide it in a hole of the rock by the river Euphrates, to show how the Lord would mar the pride of Judah ( Jer. 13 : 1 & 2 ), and was shown the two baskets of figs, to teach him the difference between the precious and the vile ( Jer. 24 ). So Isaiah walked barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder upon Egypt and Ethiopia ( Isaiah 20 : 3 ); and Ezekiel was commanded to take a tile and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem, and lay siege against it ( Ezek. 4 : 1 & 2 ). When we come to the New Testament, we find the Lord making great use of this mode of instruction. All His parables were so many speaking figures, under which spiritual wisdom was couched. The sower going forth to sow, the woman hiding the leaven in three measures of meal, the man finding a pearl of great price, the net cast into the sea, the door, the shepherd, the vine to which He compares Himself — what are all these but natural figures, which the Lord employs to convey spiritual instructions? Indeed, so

apt and so beautiful are some of these figures , that it has been a question with some whether God had not in the original creation of all things , a special view to spiritual truths . For instance , when He created the sheep , whether He had not a special eye to the elect ; when He created the vine , whether He had not a spiritual reference to Christ and His members . They thus look upon all outward creation as a type and figure of the new creation. But I think there is one consideration which shows this view is not founded on truth . We find the apostle Paul employing figures not only altogether of man 's invention , but even such as contain in themselves much evil . For instance , in four different places he has borrowed an illustration from the public games of the Greeks , which , like all large and promiscuous assemblies , were doubtless accompanied with much evil . Thus we find him speaking ( 1 Cor. 9 : 24 , 25 & 26 ) — “ Know ye not that they which run in a race run all , but one receiveth the prize ? So run that ye may obtain . And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things . Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown , but we an incorruptible . I therefore so run , not as uncertainly ; so fight I , not as one that beateth the air . ” The figure here is clearly drawn from the foot race and the boxing match in use among the Greeks at their public games . So again ( Heb . 12 : 1 ) he says , “ Wherefore , seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses ( alluding to the multitude of spectators that surrounds the runners for the prize , as a

cloud ) , let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us ( as the racers threw aside all useless incumbrances ) , and let us run with patience the race that is set before us . ” So speaking of his own experience ( Phil . 3 : 13 & 14 ) he says , “ Brethren , I count myself not to have apprehended , but this one thing I do , forgetting those things which are behind , and reaching fourth unto those things which are before , I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus . ” Here he clearly alludes to the runner in the foot race , who never thinks of the ground over which he has passed , in his eagerness to press forward and carry off the prize .

The fourth place where the same apostle borrows the figure of these public games , is the verse from which I intend , with God 's help and blessings , to deliver a few thoughts this morning . “ And if a man also strive for masteries , yet he is not crowned , except he strive lawfully . ”

In order to enter into the spiritual meaning of this text , I must detain you for a few minutes with the natural explanation of it. The Holy Ghost has chosen by the mouth of Paul to convey spiritual instruction under this natural figure ; we must therefore break through this shell to get at the kernel , for unless we have a clear view of the figure itself , we shall have a confused idea of its spiritual signification .

The apostle then , as I have already shown , borrows a figure here from the public games in his time , where there were prizes given to those who obtained the victory in

one of these five contests , the chariot, and the foot race, wrestling, boxing, and a combat made up of the two last . The “ man that strives for masteries,” means he who wrestles or otherwise contends for victory , the prize being a crown of leaves , which was given publicly to the victor . Now there were certain rules and conditions laid down before - hand , which were to be rigidly observed by all the candidates for the prize , and if any one of these what we may call “ rules of the game” were broken by a candidate , then though he came in foremost , yet he lost the prize , because “ he had not striven lawfully,” that is, had not complied with the rules . To borrow a comparison from the horseraces of this country ( a practice I condemn though I use the figure to throw a light upon the text) if a horse runs the wrong side of the post , or carries less weight than the rule of the race requires , he loses the prize , though he comes in the first .

Having thus far opened up the natural meaning of the figure , we will now proceed to the spiritual instruction conveyed by it . We gather from it, then, that in spiritual things, there is a striving lawfully , and a striving unlawfully ; and that the prize is not necessarily given to him who wins the race , if he has not complied with certain rules laid down .

I think then we may say there are three distinct ways of striving .

- 1 . There is an unlawful striving after unlawful objects .
- 2 . An unlawful striving after lawful objects .
- 3 . A lawful striving after lawful

objects .

Of these three kinds of striving two are wrong and one is right . To strive unlawfully after unlawful objects is clearly wrong . To strive unlawfully after lawful objects deprives a man of the prize , and is therefore wrong too . To strive lawfully after lawful objects is the only strife that the Lord crowns , and therefore the only strife that is right .

1 . But as what is right is often more clearly shown by holding up what is wrong , I shall attempt to describe first what it is to strive unlawfully after unlawful objects .

1 . To strive then after the pre-eminence , to be a Diotrephes in a church ( 3 John 9 ) , is an unlawful striving after an unlawful object . There is to be no superiority or pre-eminence amongst the followers of Christ . “ All ye are brethren ,” said Jesus to His disciples ( Matt. 23 : 8 ) ; “ the greatest in the kingdom of heaven is he who is most like a child” ( Matt. 18 : 4 ) . “ The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them , and they that are great exercise authority upon them . But it shall not be so among you ; but whosoever will be chief among you , let him be your servant” ( Matt. 20 : 25 , 26 & 27 ) . Pre-eminence among brethren is an unlawful object , and must therefore be always unlawfully striven after .

2 . All strife about vain and idle questions is unlawful strife . “ Of these things ,” says Paul , “ put them in remembrance , charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit , but to the subverting of the hearers” ( 2 Tim. 2 : 14 ) . So he speaks about those who

“dote about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds” (1 Tim. 6 : 4 & 5). When men of this cavilling, contentious spirit arise in churches, woe to their peace.

3. To seek after a form of godliness, whilst secretly denying the power thereof, or to have a name to live when dead in sin, is an unlawful striving after an unlawful object. To strive to be a whited sepulchre, a painted hypocrite, a deceiver of the churches, is awful striving indeed.

4. To strive after fleshly holiness and creature perfection is an unlawful strife. God never designed that the flesh should be holy. In His discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus laid it down at the very entrance in the Divine life, that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” thus establishing an eternal and unalterable distinction between them. “I know that in me,” says Paul, “that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing.” “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other” (Gal. 5 : 17). All attempts, therefore, to improve or sanctify the flesh are bidding “the leopard change his spots, and washing the Ethiopian white.”

5. Again, all attempts to please God by anything that we ourselves can do, is an unlawful striving after an unlawful object. He cannot be so pleased. The corrupt fountain of our heart is continually pouring forth its polluted streams, and therefore all that comes out of it is polluted.

Nothing short of perfect purity can please a perfectly pure God; and as no thought, word or deed has passed from us by nature which is not defiled, it cannot please God. But how many think that their prayers or their tears or their good actions are acceptable to Him!

6. All attempt to keep the law in its strict requirements is an unlawful striving. That is, it is not done as God would have it done. Jesus, and He alone of all the sons of men, kept the law; and he who would go about to establish his own righteousness, to the neglect or contempt of Christ’s righteousness, strives unlawfully.

7. To strive to convert the world, and to turn goats into sheep, to seek to overthrow the eternal lines of distinction between the elect and the reprobate, and frustrate Jehovah’s sovereign decrees of judgement and mercy, is an unlawful strife after an unlawful object. To break down the barriers of the Church and the world, and reduce to mere nullities the distinguishing doctrines of grace, is indeed to strive contrary to every rule in the Word of God.

8. To seek to find an easier and smoother path than the strait gate and the narrow way; to come into the fold, but not through the door of regeneration, as the Porter opens it; to be aiming at any other salvation than an experimental acquaintance with Christ and the power of His resurrection; to set up human talents, and creature religion, as sufficient with or without the Holy Ghost’s heavenly teachings; to strive after natural faith, hope, repentance and love — all are so

many branches of unlawful striving after unlawful objects. By unlawful is meant, as I said before, not that which is not in strict accordance with the moral law, or the ten commandments, or any branch of the Mosaic law. The words "lawful" and "unlawful" in the text have no reference whatever to the law properly so-called. The words "lawfully" and "unlawfully" mean a complying, or a not complying, with certain rules and conditions laid down in God's Word. These laws and rules are not legal, old covenant rules, but gospel, new covenant conditions. Mistake me not. I do not here mean conditions to be performed by the creature, but certain rules, according to which the Holy Ghost works. "We are the clay, and He the Potter;" but the heavenly Potter works according to certain rules; and could it be possible for a vessel to be made contrary to these rules, it would not be a vessel of honour meet for the Master's use. I wish to explain myself clearly, for directly a man begins to talk about rules and conditions, there are plenty of persons so ignorant or so prejudiced, that they will be sure to make him an offender for a word. Remember this then, that by the word rules, laws, or conditions, I mean certain modes laid down in God's Word, according to which the Holy Spirit acts, when He works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

All the striving then of carnal, unregenerate professors is an unlawful striving after one or more unlawful objects.

Being destitute of heavenly teaching, lawful objects, that is, such objects as are set before the

eyes of the elect, are never striven after by them. God has never enlightened them into the depths of the fall, nor brought His holy law into their conscience in its depth and spirituality. The fountains of the great deep in their heart were never broken up, nor their secret corruptions laid bare. Sin is a burden under which they never groaned, unbelief never grieved and plagued them, the utter alienation of their heart from God was never so discovered to them as to convince them of their helplessness and hopelessness. Isaiah's experience was never theirs, when he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Their comeliness was never turned into corruption like Daniel's, nor did they ever abhor themselves in dust and ashes, like Job. Had this work been wrought with Divine power on their consciences, had the law been inwardly applied, it would effectually have cut them off from all unlawful striving.

Nor on the other hand did the Holy Spirit ever set before the eyes of their mind the gospel of the grace of God. No carnal professor, whether Calvinist or Arminian, ever had a spiritual knowledge of law or gospel. Had he experimentally known the law, it would have cut him off from unlawful striving. Had he known experimentally the gospel, it would have cut him off from unlawful objects. Thus they never had any inward taste of the sweetness of the gospel. The outward scheme and theory they might perfectly understand, and discuss it most exactly and learnedly; but inward power, the heavenly

sweetness, the Divine application of it they had never the least acquaintance with. Their heads may be at Mount Zion, but their hearts are at Mount Sinai.

These unlawful strivers after unlawful objects are never crowned. They may indeed seem to arrive first at the goal, and we well know how an unburdened professor outstrips in zeal, activity, and outward religion, the poor heavily-laden, panting child of God. But he is not crowned. He had carried no weight. He has run the wrong side of the post. He has won the race and lost the prize. We hear the great Judge at the last day, in reply to all his declarations of his having prophesied in His name, cast out devils, and done many mighty works, refuse the crown of eternal life with this awful sentence, "Depart from Me, I never knew you.

I shall have occasion to show, as I proceed with my subject, that the Judge of quick and dead gives the lawful victor two crowns, a crown here and a crown hereafter: the crown of His love and approbation in the conscience on earth, and the crown of eternal glory in heaven. The unlawful striver after unlawful objects has neither of these crowns bestowed upon him, for the one is but the foretaste and the sure forerunner of the other. He has therefore no secret crown of Divine approbation set on his heart. God never smiled into his soul, nor sanctioned with a Divine manifestation in his conscience his words and works. Professors of every degree may have bepraised him, but the sealing of the Spirit, the heavenly diadem of God's own putting on, was never felt

nor known.

God's children themselves are often entangled in this freewill strife, especially in younger days, before the Lord has purged away their filth by the Spirit of judgement and the Spirit of burning. We find this much in the case of the disciples, whilst their Lord was with them, before they were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Though quickened into spiritual life, they were continually striving after pre-eminence, each wishing to be greatest. Thus the sons of Zebedee, fearful of their own persuasive powers, must needs employ the voluble tongue of a woman, that powerful weapon which so few men can withstand, to induce their Master to seat them on His left hand and His right hand in His kingdom. So, on another occasion, the same two disciples would have had fire come down from heaven to consume the Samaritans, when they would not receive Christ ( Luke 9 : 54 ). Thus we in our youthful religious days were striving after many unlawful objects. Holiness in the flesh, to please God by our own exertions, to make ourselves religious, and understand the doctrines of grace by reading all sorts of religious books, to please professors, conciliate the world, avoid the cross, shun the imputation of uncharitableness, soften down carnal relations, and keep up old acquaintances, — who of us has never thus striven after these unlawful objects? But we could never get the Searcher of hearts to put on our consciences the crown of His approbation. We strove for the mastery, but were never crowned because we strove unlaw-

fully .

II . But now I come to another kind of striving , which is unlawful strife after lawful objects . The strife we have just been describing was unlawful strife after unlawful objects , in that the things aimed at and sought after were as contrary to the rules of the Word of God as the mode of striving to obtain them . In the strife that we are about to consider now , the objects aimed at are lawful and good , but they are sought after in an unlawful , wrong way .

I repeat again , that lawful and unlawful here do not mean, and have nothing to do with the law properly so called , but signify a compliance or a noncompliance on the part of the striver with certain rules , which God has laid down in His Word . What those rules are we shall see before long .

There are then certain lawful objects , set forth in the Word of God , as the things to be aimed at by every one who runs the race set before him by the Holy Spirit . These lawful objects are the blessings which God has blessed His Church with in Jesus Christ . Who sits at the end of the race to award the prize ? What says Paul ? “ Let us run with patience the race set before us , looking unto Jesus , the Author and Finisher of our faith ” ( Heb . 12 : 1 & 2 ) . Now to whom can the runners in a race look but to him who sits at the goal ? They leave the spectators behind , and with outstretched necks look forward to the Judge of the prize . He is “ the Author of their faith , ” giving them power to run , and “ the Finisher , ” by crowning it with His approbation .

To “ win Christ , ” then , is the object set before the soul that runs the heavenly race . “ That I may win Christ , ” says Paul ( Phil . 3 : 8 ) . But what is it to win Christ ? Why to have Him in our hearts as the hope of glory , to embrace Him in our arms of faith and affection , and to be able to say feelingly , “ My Beloved is mine , and I am His . ” Again , pardon of sin , manifestations of mercy , visitations of God the Father ’s presence and love , the Spirit of adoption enabling the soul to cry , “ Abba , Father , ” applications of Christ ’s atoning blood , and gracious discoveries of His glorious righteousness , these are lawful objects for the living family to strive after . Lawful , not because the law , strictly so called , speaks of them , for the law never did testify of them either outwardly or inwardly , but because the believer ’s rule , the glorious gospel of the grace of God , sets forth these blessings as the portion of the people of God in the New Testament . Now none but a living soul ever panted and longed after these spiritual blessings . Hypocrites and reprobates may desire heaven to escape hell , as Balaam desired to die the death of the righteous . But I never can believe that any but a living soul desired an eternal heaven . Pardon of sin a reprobate may desire , to escape the gnawing of the worm that dieth not , and the fire that is not quenched ; but I feel fully persuaded that not one dead in sin longed and panted with intense breathings and burning desires after the manifestations of the pure love of an all- pure God .

No natural man , no , not the

highest doctrinal professor , ever poured out his soul after the blessed overshadowings of the Holy Ghost . It was never his daily longing , nor midnight cry . Such a blessing he has neither a heart to ask , nor a heart to receive .

But in His gracious dealings with His own children , the Lord usually sets before them certain blessings , of which He makes them feel their deep need , and after which He kindles in their soul intense desires . I well remember how ardently not quite fourteen years ago my soul longed after the knowledge of God . It came upon me in the depths of affliction , unsought , and abode with me for weeks at times night and day . O what a spirit of grace and supplication I then had after the internal knowledge of God in Christ !

But there is an unlawful striving in quickened souls after these lawful objects .

Now God has laid down in His Word of Truth three solemn rules , laws you may call them if you like , which constitute lawful striving .

1 . The Holy Ghost must begin , carry on , and finish the inward work of grace .

2 . The soul must be brought under His Divine teachings to be thoroughly stripped and emptied of all creature - wisdom , strength , help , hope and righteousness .

3 . The glory of the Triune God must be the end and motive of all .

And departure from these three rules of striving make a man strive unlawfully .

Now in early days with us we are often striving after lawful objects , but our manner of striving after them

is not in compliance with these three rules , and therefore we strive unlawfully . We are not stripped nor laid low in a day . It is often the work of time . I can speak well from experience here . I was not stripped , nor brought down for several years after as I trust , the Lord quickened my soul , though from the first I was led to strive more or less after lawful objects , and could not do without an internal religion . But thorough soul poverty had not laid hold of me , shame and confusion of face had not covered me . I had not then felt what a vile monster of iniquity I was , nor loathed and abhorred myself in dust and ashes . Man 's utter helplessness was to me more a doctrine than a truth ; I was not acquainted with the mighty , overwhelming power of sin , nor had the ploughshare of temptation turned up the deep corruptions of my heart . I therefore strove unlawfully . When I fell , as I fell continually , I had some secret reserve in self , some prayers , or repentance , or hopes , or resolutions to help me out of the ditch . Have we not all been more or less here ? We had a legal spirit secretly influencing us , and there was a kind of dead hope that if we lived holy lives , believed the promises , looked , as we thought looking then was , to Christ , and kept perseveringly on , we should get the object of our desires . And though we never got a step forward in the matter , there was a dim struggling after progressive sanctification , and seeking the blessings of the gospel by the works of the law . Now what was the result of all this unlawful striving ? Did God ever crown it with

His gracious smiles and heavenly approbation? We know that He never did. When is the crown put on? "In the day of the espousals, and in the day of the gladness of heart" (Cant. 3:11). And there can be no espousals, no manifested betrothing of the soul unto Christ in lovingkindness, in mercies, and in faithfulness, until we are dead to the law, our first husband. Then the crown is put upon the heart. God is a jealous God, and will not give His glory to another. Our own striving shall never procure us the looks of His love. Now this denial of the crown to all their ardent desires and earnest striving sadly puzzles and bewilders the seeking soul. Nay, he is almost ready to quarrel with God, and accuse Him of unfaithfulness, because He will not smile, and speak peace and pardon. Jeremiah was here, when with intemperate complaint he cried aloud, "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? Wilt Thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?" (Jer. 15:18). But we cannot learn religion as we learn arithmetic; we cannot take the slate and copy out the rule and work the sum. God's teachings are of a very different nature, intended to baffle and confound all the pride and wisdom of the creature. Nor can we hasten God's work. His teachings are not hasty teachings for the most part, but line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little. I cannot stand in your experience; you cannot stand in mine. Neither of us know one jot more nor one jot less than the Holy Ghost has written upon our heart.

We do not learn religion in a day. The way from Egypt to Canaan was but a few days' journey, but the Lord chose to lead His people about in the wilderness, amid fiery flying serpents, drought and famine, for forty years. And why, but "to humble them, and prove them, and know what was in their heart?" This was one part of the lesson; and the other was that "He might make them know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Deut. 8:2 & 3). And thus we have to learn by painful experience the inutility of all creature striving, and to be brought down into the state where all exertions fail.

III. But we come now to the only striving which the Lord crowns — a lawful striving after lawful objects.

Of the other two kinds of striving, the first was chiefly the striving of reprobates; therefore not crowned. The second was the striving of quickened souls, but not crowned because they strove not according to the gospel rules.

But now we are dealing with characters brought down to penury and utter insolvency, in the state described in the parable of the two servants, "when they had nothing to pay." What Hart calls "Perfect poverty" —

*"Tis perfect poverty alone  
That sets the soul at large;  
Whilst we can call one mite our own,  
We have no full discharge."*

To bring this about is the work of the law. The gospel does not reduce the soul to beggary. It only steps in as a friend to pay the debt when all one's

own money is gone . The law draws all the money out of the pocket by crying , “ Do , do ! Work , work ! ” But when all is gone , the law can do no more . The law then has done its office . The law puts a burden on , which burden is carried until the heart is brought down with labour , and the soul falls down , and there is none to help ( Ps . 107:12 ) . As Paul says , “ I was alive without the law once , but when the commandment came , sin revived , and I died . ” By this death the soul becomes dead to the law , as Paul says again , “ Know ye not , brethren ( for I speak to them that know the law ) , how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth ? ” ( Rom . 7:1 ) . When then he dies under the law , he dies to the law , and the law ceases to have dominion over him . All striving therefore of the elect under the law end sooner or later in death to the law . Now I appeal to your consciences , whether God ever crowned your legal striving . What has the law done for you ? What can the law do for you , but to bring its curse in your heart , lay guilt on your conscience , and stir up slavish fear in your mind ? To strive lawfully , then , is not to strive after the law , but after certain rules laid down in the gospel . Well , then , they are called laws , as the Holy Ghost uses the word when He says , “ I will put My laws into their hearts , and write them in their minds . ” Now we will begin with the first rule , which is this , that the Holy Spirit must work in us all the power , wisdom grace , faith , strength , and life , that we strive with . This work the apostle call a law in Rom . 8:2 : “ The law of the Spirit of life in Christ

Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death . ” “ When He the Spirit of truth is come , He will guide you into all truth . ” Now whilst striving in our own strength , the power and reality of the Spirit ’ s teachings were little known . We could not lie passive , as helpless as the potter ’ s clay . All creature strength was not gone ; some little store was left .

The second rule of lawful striving is , that the runners in the race should have no strength . “ He giveth power to the faint , and to them that have no might He increased strength . ” When we were without strength , Christ died for the ungodly . ” “ Without Me , ” said Jesus , “ ye can do nothing . ” The Lord opened His ministry by setting forth His covenant character to the poor and needy . “ The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me , because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor . He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted , to preach deliverance to the captives , to set at liberty them that are bruised . ” So He said , “ Blessed are ye that mourn , for ye shall be comforted . ” All the blessings of the gospel are promised to the poor in spirit , the outcasts of Israel . But who makes them poor ? The Lord , surely , according to the word , “ The Lord maketh poor , and maketh rich . ” A man may indeed , after a form , make himself poor by wearing rags , and assuming the garb of poverty . I have read of a man who , from some whim or kind of madness went about the country dressed and living as a common beggar . He had abundance of property , but he chose to dress in rags , and live on alms . Such a man was not really poor , as

his apparent poverty was but a mask and a cheat. So spiritually, he that makes himself poor is not one of God's poor; and he infringes just as much upon the work of the Spirit, and is as much guilty of presumption and hypocrisy as if he made himself rich. And a child of God who strives to make himself poor strives unlawfully, for he acts against the rule, that all we are and have, all we know and feel aright, must be the whole and sole work of the blessed Spirit. A man that makes himself poor by throwing away outward pride, and putting on outward humility, never passes in his soul through the feelings that God exercises His children with. The living family are stripped unwillingly; they cannot believe the Lord is leading them in the right way. Despondency, unbelief, rebellion, infidelity work up in their heart against His teachings. Their former enjoyments, and what they thought communion, are taken away, and they feel, as Isaiah speaks, left as "a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill" (30:17). The word beacon is in the margin, "a tree bereft of branches." And thus they stand bereft of all their spreading boughs of religion, a leafless trunk stripped of flowers and fruit, naked and bare. Perhaps some of you here never were in this spot—never lost all your religion and stood before God without a grain, like the tall, leafless, branchless mast on the top of the hill. "O no," say you, "I have been very far, but was never driven into the spot yet." We read (Ezek. 17:24) that "the Lord dries up the green tree, and makes the dry tree to flourish." Then

you must be dried up, for you are a green tree still, before you can flourish in the courts of the Lord. And perhaps when you get to have no religion it will be the very time for the Lord to give you some of His. We are "to buy of Him gold tried in the fire." Now if we were to look into the fire, where the gold was being tried, what should we see? why, a crucible, that is a kind of earthen pot, with scum, and dross, and foam, bubbling and boiling. O where is the gold? Out of sight, at the bottom of the vessel, covered with scum and foam. So it is with the soul that is in the furnace. Faith, hope, and love are all hid at the bottom of the heart, and the scum and dross of unbelief, despondency, and rebellion are alone seen. But when the refiner removes the scum with his rod, then the pure gold shines forth. Now whilst passing through this experience, you are striving lawfully, for you are fulfilling the second rule of the Christian strife. You are a poor needy outcast, who can do nothing. You now are where Paul was, "Though I be nothing" (2 Cor. 12:11).

And this enables you to comply with the third rule of lawful strife—to give God all the glory. Surely you can take no glory to self, when self has been proved, and found wanting. Then if the Lord has made you poor, in order to make you rich, naked that He may clothe you, and beggar that He may relieve you, a bankrupt that He may pay all your debts, an insolvent that He may take you out of jail with flying colours in the face of your creditors, and has brought you down to the gates of hell to lift you up

to the door of heaven then surely you must give Him all the glory . He has solemnly declared that “ no flesh shall glory in His presence ,” and “ he that glorieth , let him glory in the Lord .” But what is so staggering to nature and reason is the way that He brings about this taking to Himself the glory . No man in his senses would walk in his way . But God does not act according to our senses , but “ according to the counsel of His own will .”

Thus we never strive lawfully we cease to strive naturally . Then the Holy Spirit begins to strive within with groanings which cannot be uttered . No pretty prayers to tickle rotten professors ; no cut and dried sentences with texts nicely assorted and fitted in like the squares of a chess-board , no flowers of eloquence to please those who are all for word and hate power . But the real striving is all inward work , sighing , crying , and groaning to the Lord . “ Oh !” say you , “ I will tell you what I call striving . It is to go to chapel three times on the Lord ’s day , attend prayer meetings , pray privately seven times regularly every day .” Ah , my friend , this is striving after the flesh . The only striving that God acknowledges is the striving of the Spirit ; and the Spirit never strives effectually till the flesh has ceased to strive .

Now the inward striving of the Spirit are a fulfilling of the experience Paul describes , 2 Cor . 12 : 9 & 10 . “ When I am weak ,” he says , “ then am I strong .” Why so ? Because “ the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness .” Then if I am saved , I am saved as a vile

wretch , a monster of iniquity , by rich , by free , sovereign , distinguishing grace . Not a drop of heavenly favour can reach my heart by my own exertions . I might as well think of taking up the Atlantic Ocean in the hollow of my hand , as bring down into my soul a drop of God ’s love , or a single smile of His countenance . I may sigh , cry , groan , long , and pant after the shedding abroad of His love , but I cannot bring down one grain or atom of it within . Then if felt , must not we give to God all the glory ?

Now these lawful strivers after lawful objects are crowned , and they only . This crown is two - fold - a crown here and a crown hereafter , a crown of grace set on the heart below , and a crown of glory set on the head above . Thus Paul says , “ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness , which the Lord , the righteousness Judge , shall give me at that day ; and not to me only , but unto all them also that love His appearing ” ( 2 Tim . 4:8 ) . This crown below is the crown spoken of in Ezek . 16 : 12 , “ I put a beautiful crown on thine head ,” and which the Church laments to have lost , “ The crown is put on the heart when the Lord smiles approbation and acceptance in the Son of His love . As David speaks ( Psalm 103:4

“ Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies .” Now this inward crown is never set on the heart of any but a beggar that has been on the dunghill . “ He raiseth up the poor out of the dust , and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill to set them among princes , and make them inherit the throne of

glory .” This beggar is one who is begging for a manifested interest in God ’s great salvation , clothed in rags and sitting in dust and ashes on the dunghill of his own corruptions . He and he only is raised up in his soul to sit among princes ; the priests and kings , the royal generation , who are invariably crowned with Divine favour below , and inherit the throne of glory above .

Now of this internal crowning I believe there are different degrees . There are no degrees in glory , but there certainly are degrees of grace . There are no pious eminent saints above close to the throne , whilst the thief on the cross and Mary Magdalene stand at the door as having been such great sinners . But below there are degrees of manifested favour ; there are babes , young men , and fathers . Whenever then you have been enabled by faith to rest on Christ ’s blood and righteousness , whenever a drop of God ’s favour has flowed into your soul , whenever peace has been felt and known , and a solemn sense of God ’s goodness and mercy through the blood of the Lamb has been tasted ; whenever in the depths of soul poverty and helplessness , help and strength have been found to cast your burden on the Lord , then and there you have been crowned as a lawful striver . “ O ,” say some , “ we must have full assurance , and there is no faith without it .” I believe that all true faith has a measure of assurance in it , but who can say how full it shall be ? The leper who merely cried , “ If Thou wilt , Thou canst make me clean ,” had faith , and so had the woman who pressed through the throng to touch

Jesus ’ garment , and so had the Cannanitish woman who sought but for a crumb from the children ’s table . This was a venturing faith , a faith of necessity , a faith working up and out of trials and burdens . This faith the Lord crowns as His own work , for He never crowns anything else . He crowns not our striving but His own , not our work but the work of Jesus Christ . Have you then never felt a little of this soul-melting work ? “ Aye ,” say you , “ but it did not last long , and has been but rarely felt .” But where is it said how long it is to last , or how often to be felt ? To have had the crown on but once , and that but for a few moments , is to have been crowned . You complain that you have lost these sweet feelings . But how could you have lost what you never had ? You are saying , “ The crown has fallen from my head .” Then it must have been there . And I will tell you another thing , that if the crown was ever set on your heart , the rim of it has left its mark behind , and upon that spot where it has left its impression you are longing to have it again set on . See then to it that you are striving lawfully . Have you run yourself out of breath yet ? are your arms withered , your legs and back broken ? Then will the Lord Himself bear you , as on eagles ’ wings , to the end of the race , and lay you at the feet of the Judge , where you will learn that “ the race is not to the swift , nor the battle to the strong ,” but that “ God has mercy on whom He will have mercy , and whom He will He hardeneth .”

J . C . Philpot

( Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig . )

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**MEETINGS**


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**EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION**

**G**od willing the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene at Tarboro Church in Tarboro, North Carolina on the first Sunday and Saturday before in October. The church is located on the corner of St. James St. and Albermarle Avenue, two blocks west of Main St. There is a railroad track that runs directly beside the church and is parallel with Albermarle Ave.

We invite all brethren, ministers and friends, who are given a mind, to come and worship with us.

M. W. Lupton  
Association Clerk

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**HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE  
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

**T**he One Hundredth Sixth Annual Session of The Hopewell Primitive Baptist Association will convene with Pleasant Ridge Church in Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1990, and continue for three days. From Tuscaloosa take U. S. 43 North to Alabama 171. Follow Alabama 171 for approximately 18 miles and watch for signs to church which is about 2 1/2 miles off Alabama 171. For further information call or write me.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

James L. Howell  
Clerk (205) 556-5157

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**UNION PRIMITIVE  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

August 5, 1990

**A**s per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God Union Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed the 5th day of August 1990 at 2:00 p.m. at Union Church for the purpose of examination of this gift brother William Midkiff, and if found qualified be ordained to the full work and service of deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to set in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Elder Amos Hash. Elder Raymond Goad was elected moderator and Burnell Williams to serve as clerk. Brother Silas Payne acting as spokesman for the church delivered brother William Midkiff to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in the 3rd chap. of Timothy and 6th chap. of Acts by Elder Carl Terry. Examinations followed by Elders Amos Hash and Clarence Stone. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of the candidate they proceeded with the laying on of hands

and prayer was offered by Elder Denver Simpson . The charge was delivered to Brother Midkiff by Elder J . R . Williams . He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon .

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 Deacon William Midkiff . Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone .

Elder Raymond Goad , Mod .  
Deacon Burnell Williams , Clerk

**Elders present :**

Denver Simpson  
J . R . Williams  
Amos I . Hash  
Clarence D . Stone  
Carl E . Terry  
Thomas Solomon  
Marvin Brumfield  
Raymond Goad

**Deacons Present :**

Burnell B . Williams  
Silas Payne  
D . S . Houston  
H . Clay Brown  
Nelson Bryant  
Edgar S . Horsley  
H . D . Ingram  
Harvey Wood  
Oscar Pickral  
Homie C . Dalton

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*CONTRIBUTIONS*

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**FOR JULY 1990**

Mrs . Mary Stanfield , VA	.....	2.00
Alvin Agee , VA	.....	7.00
Ova C . Lester , VA	.....	2.00
Mrs . Carl C . Bryant , LA	.....	2.00
H . M . Pullig , LA	.....	2.00
Woodrow Abshire , VA	.....	7.00
Jesse H . Towler , VA	.....	2.00
Mrs . Ina Hendrix , TN	.....	2.00
A . S . Blalock , NC	.....	2.00
Richard S . Blalock , NC	.....	2.00
Julian L . Ray , NC	.....	2.00
Warren Neal , IL	.....	10.00
Mrs . Tom Strickland , AL	....	2.00
Eld . Gerald Shipman , TX	....	2.00
Mrs . Frances Jarvis , MD	....	2.00
Mrs . Julia Ada , MD	.....	2.00
Mrs . Ida Taylor , MD	.....	10.00
Mrs . B . T . Hollandsworth , VA	... 3.00	
Mrs . Jessie S . Lambert , NC	... 2.00	
Mrs . French Hogan , VA	.....	2.00
Mrs . Annie A . Lawrence , VA	... 2.00	
Alan McDaniel , VA	.....	2.00
Mrs . H . C . Houchins , VA	....	2.00
Hassell Hale , VA	.....	7.00
Mrs . Rosa H . Troutt , NC	....	2.00
Oscar Pickral , VA	.....	27.00
Homie C . Dalton , VA	.....	7.00
Mr . & Mrs . C . N . Barron , LA	....	2.00
Harold T . Clayton , NC	.....	2.00
Mrs . Lessie Tilley , NC	.....	5.00

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**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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*PSALM 133 : 1 .*

*BEHOLD , how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

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 OBITUARIES
 

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## MINNIE E. GAMBRILL

**A** dear sister in Christ, Minnie E. Gambrill, aged 93, died of heart failure on April 6, 1990 after an eight year confinement at the Salisbury, Maryland Nursing Home.

Sister Minnie and her two sisters were baptized on the same day by the late Elder Harold Bennett about 45 years ago. For many years, until it closed, she was a member and clerk of the Rewastico Old School Baptist Church. She attended her church faithfully as long as she was physically able to do so, sometimes in a wheel chair.

By nature, Sister Minnie was a reserved, modest person of few words. These lines from that beautiful hymn by Watts seem to reflect her quiet spirit:

*“ God is in heaven, but man below;  
Be short our tunes; our words be few;  
A sacred reverence checks our songs,  
And praise sits silent on our tongues.”*

Those who knew her well, knew that her whole trust was in the Lord.

A few years ago a friend, while visiting her in the Nursing Home, asked Sister Minnie what her favorite hymn was. She immediately replied, “When Joseph his brethren beheld.” Being unfamiliar with those beginning lines, the friend made a search and located this hymn in an early collection of hymns by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. It has since

been a source of enjoyment to her friends.

Funeral services for Sister Minnie were conducted on April 10 in the Holloway Funeral Home by a dear friend, Howard Gordy. In his remarks Mr. Gordy related that in his many visits over the years with Sister Minnie at the nursing home, he had never once heard her murmur or complain about anything. What was manifested was the faithful love for her God and her family.

Sister Minnie's husband, Robert Allen Gambrill, died in 1967. She is survived by a loving family — a son, Robert A. Gambrill II and his wife, Betty of Wichita, Kansas; a grandson and a granddaughter, a great-granddaughter, three nieces and two nephews.

Interment was in the Mardela Cemetery not far from the family homestead. Submitted with love and at the request of her son  
Frances P. Parish

See Sister Gambrill's favorite hymn on the first page.

## MAMIE CONNER WALTON

**O**n March 9, 1990, it pleased our heavenly Father to call from our midst a dear Mother, Sister and friend Mamie Conner Walton. Making her stay on earth ninety years, six months and seven days.

She was born September 2, 1899 in Floyd County to Brother George Ben and Sister Wilmeuth Jane Conner. On December 21, 1921, she was married to Alonza C. Walton. To this union was born seven children, Elwin O. Walton,

Portsmouth, Va., Percy A. Walton, Vandalia, Ohio, Anna Lee Conner, Check, Va., Mary Janney, Pilot, Va., John L. Walton, Goodview, Va., Ezra L. Walton, Lynchburg, Va., Jean Rorrer, Afton, Va.

She is survived by her seven children, sixteen grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren and two sisters Bessie Craighead, Salem, Va., and Virgie Jamison, Boones Mill, Va.

She was preceded in death by her husband of forty years and two son-in-laws.

She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. We are made to rejoice in this because she had a hope in our all wise, powerful, loving and merciful God.

Our Mother and Sister was received into the fellowship of Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head The River) in September 1925 was baptized that meeting by Elder S. L. Moran. She loved her church and was faithful to attend the meetings there and other places as long as she was able.

A beautiful funeral service was held at Salem Primitive Baptist Church on March 12, 1990 by her pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Lane Carter and Elder W. T. Conner.

Her body was laid to rest by her husband under a mound of beautiful flowers in the Wilson Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord. She is greatly missed by her family brethren and friends but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Humbly Submitted by daughter  
and Sister in Christ I hope,  
Anna Lee Conner

## UNA ROWLAND WILLIS

It is with sweet memories that I attempt to write the obituary of Sister Una Rowland Willis. For as long as I can remember her; she took care of the sick and elderly. And she was so kind and gentle with them.

Sister Una was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism, October 12, 1952. She loved her church and brethren. Sister Una loved her pastor and always when she spoke of him, she had a twinkle in her eye and a sweet smile on her face.

Sister Una was born November 3, 1910, a daughter of the late Robert and Nannie Simpson Rowland. She was the widow of Guy Thomas Willis. Her survivors are a son Virgil G. Willis of Gretna, three brothers, Douglas Rowland of Danville, Laughton Rowland and Lawrence Rowland of Gretna; two sisters, Nannie Midkiff and Belle Pickral of Gretna; one grandchild and one great-grandchild.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor Elder O. K. Tench at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park to await the coming of our Lord and Savior. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Written in love and hope,  
Carol R. Pickral

Elder O. K. Tench - Moderator  
Oscar D. Pickral - Clerk

# Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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### PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

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

**T**he absolute predestination of all things.

**E**ternal, unconditional election.

**T**he total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

**T**hat the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

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

**T**he final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

**T**he resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

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

**T**hat there is no connection between church and state.

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 Tom B. Strickland

EDITORIAL

*“ But now , O Lord , thou art our father ; we are the clay , and thou our potter ; and we all are the work of thy hand . ( Isaiah 64-8 ) .*



Elder Kenneth R. Key

Isaiah is speaking of those who through the new birth come to know their heavenly father. Jesus told Nicodemus

“ except a man be born again , he can not see the kingdom of God . That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit .” The two scriptures above are to be considered as we think of the work of the Lord with his people .

Let us consider the potter . A potter takes a lump of clay and places it on the potters wheel . As the wheel turns his hand is always upon the clay and he has complete control

of it . He molds the clay as he wishes it to be . The Lord being our potter is molding his people as he would have them to be and they would not ask why hast thou made me thus . It is God who is at the helm and reigning over his people . “ O Lord , I know that the way of man is not in himself : it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps .” Jer . 10:24 . “ For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure .” Phil . 2:13 . Then Paul could say , it is by the grace of God that I am what I am . He was suffered of the Lord to go his own way . He went to a school and was highly educated and preached for some 14 years the works of man and verily thought he was doing the work of God . Then one day it pleased the Lord to show him a more excellent way . Paul fell immediately to the ground and looked up and said , Lord what will you have me to do . From that time forward and for the rest of his life he preached , we are saved by grace and not by works , lest any man should boast . Before thou people he confessed I come not with excellency of speech of mans wisdom , but in demonstration of the power of God .

The Lord is ever with his people even before the new birth , He has loved them even before the foundation of the world . When yet dead in trespasses and sin he loved them .

It is manifest to his people through the new birth that God is their father and they are his children . This is the work of the Father and if then his children , heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ . Nothing can destroy them or separate them from his love . What they do or what

they do not do has no effect on their eternal salvation. The greatest desire of God's children is that they can follow in the footsteps of their Lord. The apostle Paul who was a chosen vessel confessed that what he would not do, those things he did, those things he would do, those things he did. Then he explains that if I do those things I would not, then it is not I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me. We can all relate to the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan that buffets us. I am glad satan's bounds are set, he can go so far and no further. Christ said that, that is within you, is greater than that, that is in the world.

We find comfort that our heavenly father is the potter and our way is not our own because the carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be, one being enmity against the other. We can be confident of this very thing that he who has begun a work in our heart will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. As the potter, he has hold of us and will not let us go. As long as we live the wheel will continue to turn until he has made us a fit subject of his grace and will one day carry us to a better world.

This will not be attained by any works that we have done but solely and completely by the work of our savior. Christ came to this world not to do his own will but the will of the father who sent him. That was to save his children from their sins. He came not to save the whole world, the whole adamic race, but to save those the father had given him in a covenant of grace before the world was. When he had finished his work,

we hear him praying to the Father, saying, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine. Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world. I pray that thou shouldest not take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

I believe this prayer is for all those who shall believe on the Lord. All whose names were recorded in the Lambs book of life. When the Lord shall open this book and the roll is called, there will be no absentee's all will be there to hear him say, come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

I hope I have set forth above some of the things that are most surely believed among God's people.

May we never forget it is in the Lord that we live, move and have our being. We are helpless and have no power except it be given from above. Not even a sparrow can fall without HIM. The scripture doesn't say as we often hear it quoted, without his notice, but without HIM.

He is our all in all, our Prophet, Priest and King and only hope of eternal life.

Humbly submitted,  
Elder Kenneth R. Key

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 ARTICLES
 

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My dear ones ,

**T**he dear Lord willing , I would tell you of the dream of one man , Elder C . B . Davis , Jr . , to see some of the many wonders or handiwork on this earth of the God of heaven and earth . We see so many things every day that are the wonders of God — I fear many I take so for granted that I seldom thank God for them . In our part of the country we see many varieties of trees , hills , rivers , streams , caverns , the ocean to the east and the mountains to the west .

We 've heard of the Grand Canyon , wide plains , deserts , Rockies , the mighty Mississippi , a salt lake , fields of ice . Elder Davis wanted to go see these wonders , wanted to take his family , friends and brethren . The dear Lord blessed 27 people to begin a trip on May 7th across these States and into Canada and He blessed them all to return safely home . May He give me words to tell you something of the joy we felt in seeing many beautiful creations .

The bus we traveled on was our home for 23 days , it was very comfortable , it had large , wide windows which enabled us to see much terrain as we went . The driver was very courteous and competent and the hostess , his wife , was most pleasant . We sang the songs of Zion every day , Elder Davis offered prayer , read scripture and spoke often as he was moved to do so .

You 've heard of St . Louis being the Gateway to the west . We visited Gateway Arch , tallest monument in the country , overlooking the Mississippi River . This Arch has an elevator which carries people up to the top center where there is an outlook ( 630 feet high ) to see the city , the river and surrounding area for 30 miles .

We travel on toward our second night of rest in Topeka , Kansas . We look at the landscape , talk and sing . Elder Davis spoke telling us of the messages in some of the songs we sing . He spoke of Newton . Newton was captain on a slave ship . He was a man having no concern for his salvation or interest whatsoever in God . On a certain day Newton had 109 black men and women chained in the hold of the ship . There came a storm , he chained himself to the mast to prevent being thrown overboard . Water spilled onto the ship . Newton found himself on his knees begging God not to allow those blacks to be lost . The ship began to break up , a piece of board floated across his leg , and he prayed again . The sea began to calm , the blacks were saved . Newton wrote the words " Amazing Grace . " There are six more verses in the original that most of us have never heard .

Another writer , Fawcett , was a minister of Particular Baptists as they were called in that day . Only two churches were recognized : Catholic and Episcopal . The Baptists were not allowed to gain attention . Fawcett was pastor of a small church in the country and he was such a blessed speaker many appreciated him and he was asked

by a church in London to come be their pastor, telling him he would be paid a sizeable salary. Thinking of his wife and children having a better life, he decided to move. On the day he was to move people came with carts, etc. to help him. They loaded everything except his trunk containing his hymn books and things necessary for the performing of his duties. When he went back into the house he was touched in such a way that he told the people not to move the trunk. He goes out and tells the people to unload the wagon. He set down the words "Blest Be The Tie That Binds Our Hearts In Christian Love."

Another noted Baptist in England, never married, a recluse in a sense, evidently lived to himself, and he moved into a basement apartment of one room. He had no money and got behind in rent for two months. The landlord told him unless he paid the rent one month in advance, he would be evicted that day. He had his clothes already bundled. As he saw the landlord coming up the street a knock came at the door and the caller said: "Mr. Watts, I heard you preach last Sunday and so I stopped by to give you (money)." A month in advance and he had two guinea left! He sat down and wrote the words "There Is A House Not Made With Hands."

Kansas is a fascinating State for one who loves to watch the sky—the sky ever changes, yet it is ever the same. As I look across the green flat land I see the sky come down to meet the field in any direction I turn. The grass looks to be three to four inches high and the wind is so strong

it blows that grass into waves. Only a few trees are seen and occasionally few small houses which appear to be about a quarter mile from the road. The rocks in our area look solid; not these here in Kansas, they look to be in layers and upon close examination we even found shell.

We sing more on the long driving days. "A Sovereign Protector I Have," "There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood," etc. Sovereign Protector. Little ones, wouldn't you be afraid to go anyplace if your God were not the God of the universe, if He had not made all that is in the world, if He were not yet ruling among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth? I would. The more I see the bigger, in my eyes, is the one God of heaven and earth. I love to see His handiwork and hear His name. His handiwork is everywhere. If you are on your sickbed, the love and kindness of one to you is His handiwork.

Driving into Colorado the terrain begins to change. One can still see far distances but more long hills, and see mountains in front of us. Exclamations by a Brother who sees a snow-covered mountain far ahead. And a red road! The sand mixture used to form the hardtop gives the road a definite red color.

At Colorado Springs we visited the Air Force Academy which occupies 18,000 acres. The scenery is beautiful; Pike's Peake, seen earlier by the Brother, is magnificent and a background. Just before the sun sets we visited Garden of the Gods. I saw huge rock formations only surpassed by larger ones. The colors were outstanding, some

appeared as light sand , some a reddish color ; the green of the growth and trees and the backdrop of Pike 's Peake with snow truly made breathtaking views. One little Sister , well known for her ready manner of expressing her thoughts , was so moved by the scenes here that she was unable to speak for some time and tears filled her eyes. I learned later that this Garden contained 1350 acres and the reddish rocks were indeed red sandstone rock formations believed to be over 300 million years old and sculptured through time by erosion .

The next day devotion began with the singing of " Rock Of Ages " and reading Isaiah 32 . I really think our awe of the land , mountains and rock began in this State . After a long day of exclaiming and pointing Elder Davis read 23rd Psalm and spoke so beautifully . The day is ending , darkness almost upon us but our driver wants us to see Four Corners ; we hear weathermen speak often of Four Corners . We turn off the road for a short distance and see not iron pins but iron plaques denoting the corners of four States : Colorado , Utah , Arizona and New Mexico . We " walk " the four States in five minutes , back on the bus and into Arizona for the night .

Arizona . The Grand Canyon state . We travel through mountains and desert . The mountains have little growth — a cedar type tree approximately two feet tall . Traveling through Navajo Indian Reservation we see the mud mounds where Indians cook bread . The sun is shining and warm and we see a mountain ahead with much snow .

The Little Colorado River was almost dry when we crossed it .

Grand Canyon . Entering the area we see large trees that look like pine to me , with red looking trunks ; I learn they are pinyon and ponderosa pine . We stop at several lookout points to get out and see the Canyon. The Colorado River which runs through the Canyon to the Gulf of California looks small , it is so far below us . The Canyon is 277 miles long , over a mile deep and the width runs from 600 feet to 17 miles ! Many formations such as limestone , shale and sandstone steppes , cliffs , mesas and buttes are seen . The many shades of pink / orange , sand and earth tones are beautiful . Upon viewing this Grand Canyon from one point the little ones broke out singing " How Great Thou Art ."

Out of the Canyon and driving toward Nevada we see mountains again , almost no growth , but scattered about are groups of rock , three or four together , ranging in size of a bucket to that of an automobile .

Elder Davis told of seeing an eagle flying toward the east . He read Deu . 32 : 11 . Eagles are unique in many ways . Eagles hath parents to see after them . An eagle will tear meat from her breast to feed her young .

We stop to see Hoover Dam , formerly called Boulder Dam , in the Colorado River and on the Arizona - Nevada boundary . This Colorado River is a mighty river in this desert country . We rest at Boulder City , Nevada for the night .

I believe I haven't told you of the microphone at the front of the bus . Each day when Elder Davis read

scriptures he went to the microphone; also, when singing, he and others with the beautiful gifts of voice went to the front of the bus. I remember one day I was quite tired, I just closed my eyes and listened to the singing. It was so pretty and peaceful.

Elder Davis: "We Travel Through A Barren Land" Isa. 35:8. We are blessed to travel this highway of nature to behold the many wonders of God's creation. We have places along this highway where we may enter and exit.

Isaiah speaks of the highway and a way. The highway he describes is the highway of Holiness. The way thereon is Christ for He indeed is the way. He says the redeemed shall walk there and no beast shall be there (sin, corruption, wickedness, etc.). We have no exits on this highway for we shall not desire to leave it.

We render thanks to God that He hath blessed us not only to travel with pleasure the roads of creation but also the highway of Holiness whereof we rejoice.

Crossing into California we see dry lakes, cactus, first grape fields, orange groves, and windmills on mountaintops generating electricity. These "windmills" looked like tall poles with half moons twirling on them. Fascinating to me.

Second Sunday: My thoughts were at Springfield, communion Sunday. I had asked if Elder Davis had any appointments while on this trip and been told no. But I was beginning to feel this complete trip was one appointment, appointed of God I hope. I loved the manner of

Elder Davis each day going to the microphone, asking for a song, offering prayer, reading scripture, and speaking as the Lord gave him utterance.

Elder Davis: "Sovereign Ruler Of The Sky." Mat. 1:18, 23, 25. They presented to Him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold was owned only by royalty so gold typified His heavenly heritage; the frankincense was burned in the temple on the most holy day and it typified the sacrificial offering of Himself. Myrrh was a type of embalming agent for the dead so it speaks of His death. The scripture says they opened up their treasures, but to me they opened up their hearts to praise Him as the Son of the true and living God. Only the wise men of the world are still looking for Christ. When Mary went to visit Elizabeth, at the salutation. "I am with child," John the Baptist within Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy. Mary in her beginning of time had her doubts, "I have known no man." So it is with us spiritually: we have known no man and we are indeed with child in the spiritual realm because Christ is born within us the hope of glory. The church is always in the feminine gender. Therefore, the church is the mother of us all through the person of Jesus Christ. Mary was indeed the earthly mother, but Christ never called her mother but He did say in his dying moments, "Woman, behold thy Son."

We are riding through beautiful mountains toward Yosemite National Park. The Park idea began in 1860's and President Lincoln signed the first Yosemite legislation. I was

almost shocked in seeing the huge rock mountains of Yosemite. I read that the cliffs of Yosemite Valley are sheer, near-vertical walls that rise for more than half a mile. There were giant sequoias and waterfalls. I saw water falling over the very top of the mountain down into the valley where we were. The water seems to fall to a plateau and then fall with much spray onto the next level and finally into the creek. In this Park is El Capitan rock formation which ranks among the tallest unbroken cliffs in the world. At some points the close proximity to these domes and cliffs was almost breathtaking.

We continue across California to San Francisco. There we go on a boat to the Bay area, see Alcatraz and the Golden Gate Bridge. On shore we see the sea lions which had been in the news just prior to the beginning of this trip. So many sea lions were coming in shore the question is what to do about them. The next morning a local tour guide directed us around the City, to Queen Willamilla Garden, Golden Gate Park. We saw many beautiful flowers, trees, Twin Peakes overlooking San Francisco. The houses looked to be simply planted on the side of the many hills.

Leaving San Francisco we drive up Redwood Highway. At Leggett, California, we see the Chandelier Tree in the Drive-Thru Tree Park which is 315 feet tall and 21 feet in diameter. There is a road through the base of this tree and cars go through; the bus couldn't go through and I was glad because I thought "they" had cut this tree quite enough.

Elder Davis asked that we sing "Do Not I Love Thee O My Lord," read Psa. 139 and spoke of Christ going with us every step of the way; we have found Him in the desert and on the mountain tops. Oh, what a wonderful, comforting thought.

Back on the main road we continue traveling north and see Pacific Ocean on the left and mountains on the right. Elder Davis tells us that Pacific means "perfect peace." Do you begin to feel that we were on a journey, that we had a leader, that our leader cared for us? I believe every one who went on this trip wanted to go, and I believe we traveled much on the enthusiasm of this dear Brother, Elder Davis.

Again we turned off Redwood Highway and visited Lady Bird Johnson Grove, Redwood National Park. Here we walked a mile on the nature trail through these beautiful redwood trees. I was very proud of that. No, I never led the group but I was very happy to be blessed to keep up. I read that these trees are thousands of years old, reach heights up to 375 feet, are among the oldest living things on earth and are native to the fog belt along the Northern California and Southern Oregon coasts.

Driving up the Oregon coast one sees the beautiful dark blue Pacific Ocean, waves breaking off shore or on the high rocks in the Ocean; on the right the pretty green mountains come right down to the edge of the water. At one point we stopped to take pictures and wade into the water. We see Oregon Dunes National Recreational Area; the dunes are higher than I've seen on

Carolina coast . The mountains in this Oregon country have been cut for lumber and one can see where trees have been replanted . At one point we saw logs on river tied and ready to be floated downriver for further processing — to meet our many needs I'm sure .

We visited Mt. St. Helens Visitor Center but there was much fog and we couldn't see the mountain . Going through the State of Washington was part of a long travel day . On the long travel days we sing more . The hostess sings with us and one day the driver sang a song for us . I remember one night the hostess was upset because of difficulties about reservations at the hotel and she told us the next day she thought she would feel better if she could hear Elder Davis and others sing .

Elder Davis : “ I Love The Windows Of Thy Grace .” Prov . 8:22-36 . We were with Him before He built the mountains which we have witnessed and before He set the borders of the plains . May we again, as we tour our way across the country , feel in some measure that He is ours and we are His . This speaks of the spiritual realm for Solomon says we were as one brought up with Him . We indeed were brought up in Christ because we were chosen in Him before the foundation of time .

The first stop in Canada was Vancouver . There we caught a ferry to the island of Victoria where we were met by a local guide who took us to Burtchart Gardens . The 50 acre Gardens are open all year and in May many flowers and shrubs were in bloom , including azalea ,

rhododendron , alyssu , forget-me-not . Within the Gardens were Italian Garden , Sunken Garden , Rose Garden ( not in bloom when we were there ) and many varieties of trees . The ferry ride over was 1 hour and 45 minutes so I remembered when returning and walked around and explored the ferry . It had three or four levels and carried many cars and trucks , and had gift shop and restaurants .

The next day we are taken on a tour of Vancouver . It's a beautiful city with pretty parks : Stanley Park , Elizabeth Park and one of these parks has three beaches . In the city we see a steam clock called “ The Landy ,” a revolving restaurant , a “ hanging building ” which is an office building . We see many orientals in Canada and in Vancouver there's a large Chinese section and Japanese section .

Elder Davis : “ Happy The Heart Where Grace Reigns .” I Cor. 13:1-13 . Christ opened the eyes of the boy who was born blind and once He performed this miracle people began to question . Is he ( the boy ) not the one who was from birth blind ? His parents say to those who questioned them about the boy that he is ours indeed and to go to him and ask him , he is of age .

Paul states that charity embodies the attributes of Christ . If we have true charity it is a gift of God and comes through the channel of Grace

Further north into Canada we travel to Kamloops . The Rocky Mountains are beautiful , snow on many , and waterfalls . We see one long waterfall in a mountain which is the backdrop for another one , the

waterfall contains so much water and spray that it looks like much smoke, white smoke. Kamloops is a beautiful little city in a wide valley between gorgeous mountains. It is here that Brother and Sister Ferguson come to see Elder and Sister Davis. They had dinner with us and visited into the evening. They were back the next morning for breakfast and to see us board the bus and take up our journey. I understand there are few Old Baptists in the West and my heart goes out to them. I often feel so far from my brethren but I am blessed to go meet with them most every month.

Elder Davis: "Far From The World, O Lord, I Flee." Psa. 121:1-8. We behold the beauty of these hills (mountains) and feel that David truly knew the beauty thereof because his life came forth from such. We must look to Mt. Zion to view Christ as our help in times of need.

The Rocky Mountains are so beautiful, they begin in Canada and run through the States into New Mexico and Arizona. In Canada they are so numerous and in May many are snow covered or snow-capped. Mt. Robson is the highest in Canada, it is spectacular. We gasp in awe at one mountain and then see another one just as majestic in its beauty. In this country we look for bear, did see moose, deer, cariboo, big horn sheep, ducks on lakes. High in the mountains of Maligne Canyon National Park we went for a walk. I saw the beginning of a waterfall; I looked down upon it, the water racing across rock and falling down onto other rock and into Maligne Canyon far below. Mt. Edith Cavell was

named for a nurse captured by Germans during war. And wouldn't you know, we see mountains named Endless Chain Mountains (a 17-mile mountain chain); and finally, the guide asked that we pick a mountain and name it for ourselves.

Jasper National Park comprises 4,000 square miles and the town of Jasper lies within the park. We had spent the night in Jasper and I thought it one of the prettiest towns we visited. The town lay in a wide valley and the mountains around were so pretty. It was also the northern-most town we stayed in and I remember having to begin the night's rest and seeing much light outside. I'm happy we were not traveling in the short day season!

On Sunday we were driving to Columbia Icefield, the largest body of ice in the Rockies. I'd heard of ice fields and wondered what it would be like. We drove to certain area, boarded a special bus to a station where we boarded a snowmobile that took us onto Athabasca Glacier, one of the glaciers fed by the Icefield. The snowmobile had same tires as munster trucks and drove very slowly on this ice/snow. Here we stood on the Glacier and looked upon the Icefield. We walked a few feet from the Snowmobile and used the cups we had been given to drink from the purest water in the world. This Icefield covers 130 square miles and we look up to the gigantic mountains of Mount Athabasca and Mount Kitchener.

Banff National Park adjoins Jasper National Park and we travel south toward the town of Banff. In this area we see tree line about half

way up the mountains— we learn the vegetation growing season is only 60 days. At Weeping Wall Viewpoint we see Cirrus Mountain where water flows over sheer limestone cliffs and the waterfall is breathtaking. We have a very nice surprise on this Sunday afternoon: Abbott Bus Lines hosts a “ High Tea ” for us at the Chateau Lake Louise, a very large and beautiful hotel built in 1890 by Canadian Pacific Railway, overlooking Lake Louise is well-known for its emerald green color and one can see Mount Victoria and Victoria Glacier from the shore in front of the Chateau. The Tea began with fruit and cream and ended with sandwiches. I think it is very nice to see the customs of other people, and I appreciate the kindness of Abbott to us in so many ways.

Driving to Banff from here we see many aspen trees and the trunks of the trees are bare approximately three to four feet from the ground. The deer eat this bark in winter when no food is available. We've had a local guide with us all day and we've seen many beautiful mountains, waterfalls, glaciers, but something was missing. Banff is our home for the night and after walking and sightseeing a bit we gathered in one of our rooms to hear Elder Davis read from Psalm 89 and in essence said:

At the top of the mountain there is no growth, no nutrient. We have no nutrient at the top and must be born again to the low ground in order to be raised up again by God Himself. We find in the valley the food of Grace and Mercy. When we experience this we are lifted to mountain's height but to find the Lily of

eternal life we must go back to the valley. Dear little ones, love was in that room that night.

The local guide was back with us the next morning and directed us to Sulphur Mountain where we could look down on Bow Valley and the Town of Banff. At the end of Sulphur Mountain Road were Upper Hot Springs and Sulphur Mountain Gondola Lift. Some of us walked to the Spring and put our hands in it. I learned this Spring is the warmest on this Mountain with a maximum temperature near 117 degrees. Others rode the gondola to the summit ridge of the mountain (7500 feet above sea level) to view the town of Banff, Bow River Valley and to see Tunnel Mountain and Mount Rundle. Leaving here we visit Cave and Basin Spring, a portion of Cave and Basin Centennial Centre which was dedicated in 1985 by Prince Philip. One could enter this Cave and know after a very few minutes that sulphur springs were present. Returning to Banff the guide leaves us and we are on our way to Calgary.

We saw and enjoyed much of Canada while the local guide was with us, and now it's good to see Elder Davis come to the microphone, ask we sing “ From All That's Mortal, All That's Vain, ” read Gen. 9:12, 13, 13, 14 and speak:

Symbols of the covenant God made with Noah. We behold symbols of that covenant. There are twelve colors in the rainbow, primary and secondary colors. Vestment that he is wearing as a priest, onyx stones held the vestment together. He holds all things together, even His people. On the front there were

to be placed twelve stones . These twelve stones were the individual and personal stones of the sons of Jacob . Reuben 's stone was a ruby . There were four rows of stones , three in each row . If you look up the color of the stones , they are the same as the colors of the rainbow . Joseph had a coat of many colors . This typifies that he had a covenant with Israel ( Jacob ) . Joseph , born a son of Jacob , would be there to feed Israel when his family was in famine , when destruction came upon the land . I feel the coat is symbolic of the covenant and had the same colors as in the rainbow . Joseph 's coat was torn asunder and soaked in the blood of the kid , then he was sold into bondage . That blood was the blood of deception . The body of Christ was freely offered for the consequences of sin under the law . His blood was the blood of life . Those colors in Joseph 's coat also typify the colors of stones in the walls and gates of Heaven . Go to Revelations and John sees in the building of new Jerusalem twelve stones , precious stones . Precious stones — those stones that belonged to Christ . The holy city had twelve gates , each named for the tribes of Israel . At each gate also is the stone of that individual . My bow shall be a covenant between any and all generations . There are seventy-two generations of man from Adam to Jesus Christ . When you come to Jesus Christ the generation ceases . If we are what we hope to be we see with the eye single . At the end of the covenant of God , end of the rainbow , is something more precious than all the gold of Ophir . The be-

holding of any covenant is good and to see it naturally and to feel it in your own heart means that in time it shall be surely fulfilled .

Upon arriving in Calgary about 4:00 p .m . we learned the Gardens we were to visit were closed because of the Holiday : Victoria Day . The next day was to be another long travel day for we were to head back to the States and to see Yellowstone National Park . May 22 was another beautiful day and we travel south on Route 2 .

Elder Davis : " Tis the Gospel 's Joyful Tidings ." Psa . 71 . He was beseeching God that He never leave him to those who are unrighteous or to those who would attempt to destroy him . God had ordained that he should be saved . Through the house of David shall come the Saviour . We know that David was a wicked man in his latter days and God would cause him to suffer . It would be in his house that the Lord would come . The Lord said to David , this sword shall dwell in thy house forever . This was the sword of suffering , to see incest , rape , murder , etc . in his own household . He begs God to save him from the wicked . We each have an experience of grace along the way . He has been our Keeper . We can feel as David , that when we are old and grayheaded and our strength leaves , He will not leave us . He will go all the way even unto death and then we shall meet Him face to face . The psalmist was begging for strength ; restore unto us the joys of our salvation . May we have comfort from time to time as David experienced . He will not leave us . May God bless

each of you .

Oh , it 's so good to be riding toward home again , to think of the many beautiful places we 've seen , to think of the blessings of the dear Lord to us in these days . On a day like this we talk and visit and the singing is so pretty . Looking across the low rolling hills to the horizon , the sky is light blue , the mountains are snowcovered in the far distance , we see some farm land , cattle , horses , and large mounds of earth in the fields left by the Ice Age . The Canadians were glad to take our money but our change was in Canadian , so now it is time to stop , go into a bank and exchange any Canadian for American money . At noon this day we arrive at USA border , go through customs and we are in Montana , USA ! Singing broke out : " God Bless America . "

Montana is a beautiful state with wide plains , beautiful mountains and I still have a mind - picture of coming around a mountain and seeing the capitol , Helena , in a wide valley with mountains all around , one mountain in the distance being snowcapped . We stop at West Yellowstone , Montana for the night .

Elder Davis : " If God Is Mine Then Present Things . " Job 16:16-22 . Job knew he was near death but he had the consolation of feeling he had a witness in heaven and a record on high . If we are what we hope to be we also have the same witness and record in the person of Christ . John said he was not the light but he bore witness in his time of Christ being our light and witness and our record on high .

Yellowstone National Park is

located in Wyoming , running into Montana and Idaho . This Park consists of 2.2 million acres and contains a variety of spectacular views , the most popular of which may be the geyser , Old Faithful . We arrived here early in the morning and walked over to see it erupt . I read that Old Faithful erupts " faithfully " every 65.5 minutes to heights from 115 to 180 feet and 10,000 to 12,000 gallons of water are discharged at each eruption . This continues day and night , summer and winter ! The Visitor Center estimated the time wait we would have before the eruption and sure enough there it was performing on time . A hail storm came just as we were boarding the bus but we were soon out of that . We drive to the area of the " thumb paint pots " which are very hard for me to describe . They appear to be groups of pools approximately 10 to 30 feet across , colorful and bubbly .

Riding through Yellowstone I see evidence of the 1988 fire . Many burned trees lay on the ground ; I also see growth coming back to the Park . Yellowstone has a Grand Canyon with the Yellowstone River running in its bed . The waterfalls are just georgous . The formations in this Canyon look to be shades of yellow , beige , apricot . And then we come to Yellowstone Lake which is ice covered and mountains in distance are snow covered . At one point I see this cold Lake on the right and on the left side of the road I see steam rising from a pool of water ! After seeing so many different scenes of nature we travel toward Cody , Wyoming for the night .

I look at the titles to the songs we

sang and they just remind me of the beauty we saw and how we marveled at the beauty of one creation after another . Some nights I didn 't rest well and my body was so tired the next day , but I looked and saw yet another evidence of the one God of heaven and earth and my poor body seemed to shed some of that " tired " and forward I looked . You know that God created the heavens and the earth and all in them and He rested . Yes , He rested , but don 't we know that it is He alone who rules the water that comes over those great waterfalls , the beginning and the end of each river , He knows the depths of the canyons and how much deeper they shall become , He knows of those Ice Fields , from whence they come and He knows exactly their increase or decrease before this earth shall burn . He knew this land before the Ice Age as man speaks of the many mounds and formations left by that Age , and He knows the mountains so regal and majestic .

Elder Davis : " O Lord , I Would Delight In Thee ." Job 38:4 . Job became exhalted and lifted up and questioned God as to the abundance of His power . God began to question him as to where he was and who he was when God laid out all creation . He informed Job that he could not cause the hinds to calve nor bring any other thing to pass . Job then could acknowledge that God held all things in His hands .

Job lost all he had at one point ( nature ) but in the end was restored with more than he possessed in the beginning ( spiritual ) .

One Sister asked Elder Davis

about his experience and asked that he relate something to us . He graciously complied .

Elder Davis : When I was about fourteen years old I dreamed I was somewhere and a man was preaching and he was standing on a wagon . Eventually he turned . He had my face . I pondered that for some time and put it aside . When I was fifteen I dreamed that some one ; he was standing on a rock and when he turned he had my face . I married and when 28 years of age I began to be so impressed to join the church and I didn 't feel I was worthy and yet I had no alternative and eventually did join after several years of struggling of spirit and soul and I thought everything would be fine and the burden would be taken away . Shortly after joining the church the burden returned , I kept it a secret for quite a while . I felt I would have to attempt to preach and feel many of you have experienced what I felt of unworthiness . When Moses went to lead out his people he didn 't have evidence but he still felt he had to . I lost weight , couldn 't sleep , didn 't weigh 150 pounds . I became so burdened I begged the Lord to give me a sign that would cause me to believe I could ( preach ) and on this particular night I saw what appeared as half an arm , the hand held out flat and it was holding a mound of sand , glittering like gold . The hand turned and it seemed the gold poured upon my feet and in the hand from which it fell was a hole I could see through . I asked the question , with the hole in the hand , why didn 't that substance pour through . A small still voice said , that 's the gospel , it cannot be

wasted and I became satisfied.

Yet , today , I feel the greatest unworthiness and weakness to try to touch upon the greatness of God. If I have anything I could base my hope upon it 's this experience . I felt at one time I was much like Job. During the time of such burden I took the pistol at night and walked out in the yard thinking I wouldn't come back . Why shouldn 't I give Him all the praise and honor for allowing me to dwell upon such love , people , and enjoy the fellowship of the church and behold the majestic wonders of His creation and the bounties of His salvation .

There was a hush in the bus after hearing this dear Brother tell these precious things . Another little Brother came to the microphone and told of an experience , of praying to God and the prayer not being answered . Yet , I believe God did answer that prayer because the little Brother was made satisfied with the disposition of his query . I was very moved by the relation of these two brethren and for some time had a desire to attempt to speak of what I hoped the dear Lord had done for me .

We are still in Wyoming , another beautiful scenic state . We see Bighorn National Forest , snowcapped mountains , hugh plateau , wide blue sky in any direction , blue violets . In the afternoon a cloud gave us rain and some sleet ; the panoramic view was so wide , I could see the dark cloud to my right and on my left the pretty blue / white sky was so very bright .

Early evening finds us crossing into South Dakota and we rest for the

night in Rapid City . There is a Mt . Rushmore Road in Rapid City and we take this out of the City .

Elder Davis : " O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing ." Psa. 27:1-6 . We have witnessed miracles of creation and spiritually of His grace and tasted of His righteousness . When we are touched by His hand we can see , spiritually , He has given us these days of pleasure and we know when we see Him , in a sense , that we also rejoice and feel great pleasure because it is those things that are spiritual that have worth . This natural world shall in time decay . All things shall pass away except heaven . That which God has stored up for us shall not pass away . As we view these things let us be mindful that we are passing through the highways of His creation , the fields of His righteousness . We could not feel as we do unless He had given us that unction of spirit to accept from where it came and to give Him all honor , glory and praise . Many of the things He did were in order that His name might be glorified . The scribes and pharisees questioned Him as to who sinned that caused the blind boy to be so from birth . That wasn't the case , it was in order that His blindness being healed might glorify God . Things that happen to us today are for the glory of His name . He has built them , as it were , for our enjoyment that His name might be victorious forever .

Mount Rushmore National Memorial . In 1924 a group of men desired to have a monument carved in the mountains of South Dakota and the sculptor , Gutzon Borglum , chose Mount Rushmore for the site .

The site is a huge mass of granite rock which rises 500 feet higher than the hills and forests around it. The faces of Washington, Jefferson, T. Roosevelt and Lincoln have been carved out of this mountain. A very nice visitor center has been built here and we have breakfast in a large dining room, floor to ceiling windows and we look out and see Mount Rushmore and the faces of four of our presidents carved thereon. This is a very pretty place. Coming from Mount Rushmore we see three bears playing in a park, one on a swing. At one point I can see the complete city of Rapid City and its surrounding green fields and rolling hills.

In the afternoon we stopped at Wall Drug, Wall, South Dakota. I understand there was a pharmacist some years ago who was trying to make a living in this comparatively forsaken country. He decided to place a sign out on the road "free water," after other ideas failed. This worked and now Wall Drug consists of many shops, restaurant, etc. and free water.

Leaving Wall Drug we were soon in Badlands National Park (very near that free water). This land is very hard to describe but I read the Badlands were formed by various deposits of rock, sand, clay and silt when the sea that covered the area drained away millions of years ago. That may be true, I don't know, but I do believe God Himself is the Creator. I'll just look and marvel. There is some grass, little valleys, and miles and miles of mounds, shapes, the colors of these mounds and shapes look yellow, pink, grey, tan. Most are not tall, many look

approximately 20 - 40 feet high. They were roped off and I thought, I'd like to touch and sift this.

We drive on to Mitchell, South Dakota, to rest for the night. I think I shall miss most the panoramic views of the earth and sky. It mattered not whether we were riding through the plains, the mountains or the rolling hills, the horizon extended as far to the right and to the left as I could turn my head. Through South Dakota there were many different views and as the sun approached the horizon the hues of the blue sky changed a bit darker to my high left and on my lower left pink showed up in the sky and seemed to spotlight the clouds nearer to mid left. A beautiful sunset.

Mitchell is the center of the corn belt in South Dakota and the city has built a Convention Center called the Corn Palace. This Palace is decorated each year with corn, using a new theme each year. We toured the Palace and it was very interesting. Elder Davis was so moved by the picture that came into his heart when he viewed the artist's theme on the inside of the building that he spoke of what he "saw" when next he read scripture, Ecl. 12:1-2 and we had sung "Saviour, Visit Thy Plantation." And singing continued as it often did as we traveled, "How Great Thou Art," "Amazing Grace," and "How Firm a Foundation."

We travel into Iowa and next day cross Missouri River into Nebraska. It is Sunday when we visit Boys Town. I'm sure such places are good for many little ones but I just feel sorry for children who don't have

parents who love each other and them. In this world is sadness; in the world to come is perfect peace.

Elder Davis: "Does The Gospel Word Proclaim." Several verses of scripture seem to have entered my thoughts this morning and I would surely desire that He will bless us that our thoughts may bring these things together. I Cor. 15:35, 49. Paul is touching upon the very essence of our faith and we are continually questioned as to what we believe and what our thoughts are on the resurrection. We find that here Paul is explaining the difference in the natural body that goes into the grave and the spiritual body that shall come forth from the grave. If we have any glory it is arising from the person of Christ. And it does not belong to us as long as we are in this time world.

We believe that our churches have adopted, all the way back to the days of Christ and John the Baptist, the precepts of Christ Himself. The Articles of Confession were adopted about 200 years ago. We embody the ordinances of baptism and communion and the predestination of the church ( His people ). John saw a great miracle. He saw the books open. The Book of the Lamb — those whose names are in the Book stand before God alive. Those whose names are in the books stand before God dead because they have not been made alive spiritually. Some shall be resurrected to eternal glory and some to damnation. We know that God shall say to those on the right, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the

foundation of the world and to those on the left He shall say, depart from me ye workers of iniquity I never knew you. We go back to the basis of the Primitive Baptist: He hath saved us and He hath called us. The saving comes first; the calling comes last. We are often questioned why we believe that God chose a people before the foundation of the world. To substantiate our belief we must go to the 8th chapter of Romans. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. He justified us in His life and He glorified us in His death.

We left Columbia, Missouri, early in the morning. Elder Davis asked we sing "Do Not I Love Thee," read Prov. 3:13-26 and spoke so comforting of the beginning of wisdom. Having attempted to convey to you some of the beauty and joy of these days I have come to realize that Elder Davis most often concludes each delivery with a prayer for the hearers. For example, on this occasion his words were: "May God bless each of us in the days ahead. May He give us a peaceful rest when death has taken our bodies until such time as the voice shall say 'Come.'"

Little ones, you can see that all beauty we beheld was not on the outside of the bus window. When I learned of the proposed trip being in May I thought of two things: one, May is communion month and two,

I'd miss complete strawberry season. And this day I still thank Him for His many blessings and for the many moments of communion given us in these days.

We are crossing these rivers again coming back toward home, the Mississippi, Little Warbush, Ohio. In Illinois and Indiana we see miles and miles of flooded fields, see gas pumper overcome by water. Our last night out is spent in Louisville, Kentucky. Here, again Abbott Bus Lines gives us a very nice treat. We were their guests to dinner. We are a bit sad, yet we want to get home and see our people. This wonderful trip is already beginning to be a dream. Not completely, I think I shall remember much I've seen, the dear Lord keep my mind.

We leave Louisville very early. It will be a long day to come home. Elder Davis asked we sing "A Sovereign Protector I Have," read Gen. 1:1-5 and spoke:

Each of us can say we've had a Sovereign Protector with us all the way. I've thought of how we left our homes on the first day, and we began the journey with expectations. We can now finish the journey as a witness to what we saw and how it has been. God created all things. He divided the light from the darkness, and evening and morning were the first day. He has revealed when His spirit moved upon the waters of life and within our spirit and in essence said, let there be light and the darkness of carnality flees. The power of light dispels darkness. The light of the glory of Christ coming into the world of sin brightens our experience. John said, I am not that

light but a witness of that light. There have been the workings of spirit that cause us to bear witness of that light. We shall be brought forth from that darkness — God has said, let there be light. I note that the evening and the morning were the first day; now we have come to the evening and morning of the last day so far as our journey is concerned. We must trust in God that our days shall be as blessed at the end of the journey of life when the evening and morning shall become the last day of time and the evening typifies our lives. It typifies our unworthiness. It typifies the end of the law. On the seventh day He rested from His work because it was a holy day and may we be blessed to feel that when death comes to close our eyes we see that as the last evening. We shall see Him in His glory, we shall be like Him and we shall be satisfied. We shall know as we are known. May God bless each of you in the future days that lie before you. We know not the future but we know who holds the future. I trust we shall be traveling in the straight and narrow way when the earth burns with fervent heat. When we reach the realm of Glory to sing a new song never before sung, of Moses and of the Lamb, our voices shall be in true harmony forever.

We are nearing home, have our last meal of the trip in Bristol, Virginia and in Christianburg the first of our group leave the bus. The trip officially began in Roanoke and we are told that from Roanoke and return we traveled 8,659 miles.

Dear ones, you have been so kind to ask me about the trip with

Elder Davis and I know you have been unable to attend meetings for a long time. If I can say we, to include myself, I hope and do believe we are on a journey, the end of which is brighter than the noonday sun and that, little ones, I cannot describe.

With love I hope,  
Reidy Pickral

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*VOICES OF THE PAST*

"he being dead yet speaketh"

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### THE USE OF LEARNING

**B**ecause worldly wisdom is out of place in the preaching of the gospel, we need not canonise ignorance. If it be "the foolishness of preaching," God does not send fools to preach. Bunyan, Huntington and Gadsby were not men of learning and education, but they were no fools. On the contrary, they were men of original minds and natural powers which would have made them conspicuous in any sphere. Augustine, on the other hand, Luther and Calvin were men of deep and varied learning; and in modern times, Romaine, Berridge and Toplady were hard students. Nay, to come to Scripture instances, Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Daniel was skilled in all wisdom, knowledge and science (Dan. 1: 4, 5, 11), and Paul sat at the feet of Gamaliel.

Learning, therefore, abilities and study are only so far hindrances, and great hindrances too, as they are made substitutes for the teaching and wisdom of the Spirit. This is

their great danger, and most of all in the self-instructed and half-learned, who have not got so far on the road as to know their own ignorance. With such tall masts and spreading sails, a deal of heavy ballast is needful. But with that there may be less risk of toppling over.

There is one test that they are kept in their place—when they never appear. Hart earned his daily bread by teaching languages. Where is there a trace of his knowledge of languages in his hymns beyond the admirable propriety and clearness of well-nigh every line? Romaine was a thorough master of Hebrew. But where do we find him, beyond a passing hint in his writings, digging up Hebrew roots, and slicing them up hot or cold? Berridge was a tutor of his college, and a hard student. But where in his beautiful hymns are his Clare Hall researches visible? Luther was one of the most learned men of his age, but his German writings are so addressed to the popular understanding, so homely, pointed, racy and expressive that they are models of simplicity and strength, without the slightest tincture of pedantry or display, but gushing out of his heart clear, sparkling and forcible as a mountain stream.

If a man possess natural or acquired ability, it should make him all the more plain and simple, and only enable him, like a skillful mechanic, to turn out his work more sharply and finely. It is only bunglers that can't handle their tools, who make a parade with the chisel. A man's knowledge should be wrought into his hand as the mechanic's skill is wrought into his eye and mind. Let

the work show the workman, not the tools flourished before the eyes .

It thus kept in its place, if sanctified to the service of God, if used only with a single eye to His glory and His people's good, human learning is not to be despised. It is the application that decides the value. Gold was given to make the golden calf, and gold was given to make the golden candlestick; the one was an idol, the other gave light to the sanctuary. We may ask this simple question, "Where would have been our English Bible but for human learning?" The Scriptures are written in what are called the learned languages. To translate these into English required an accurate and extensive knowledge of those languages, only to be acquired by long and patient study and labour. So far, then, learning has been used as an instrument in the hand of God for the benefit of thousands. The poorest man, with the Bible in his hand, may say, "Were it not for human learning I should never have read a line in this blessed book." To despise, therefore, human learning in itself, and apart from all abuse of it, is to despise what had been made a signal blessing to the church of God. And we suspect that its greatest despisers are those who do not possess it. Pride is of so subtle, accommodating a nature, that whilst one man is proud of his knowledge, another is proud of his ignorance.

J. C. Philpot

( Sent in by Roy and Nancy Pullig ).

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CONTRIBUTIONS

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Ray Cunningham, OR .....	\$ 7.00
Mrs. Opelene Cunningham, AL.....	2.00
Frank Hunt, VA .....	12.00
H.P. Conner, VA .....	2.00
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Eld. Willard Cox, VA .....	2.00
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Charles E. Hatchett, OK ....	2.00
C.W. Wood, VA .....	7.00
Mrs. Frank Pilgreen, LA .....	2.00
Irvin Holley, VA .....	3.00
Mrs. Claude Mann, FL .....	7.00

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ROMANS 15 : 5-7 .

*Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus :*

*That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*

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 OBITUARIES
 

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## ELLA PEARL LEE

**S**ister Ella Pearl Lee, born in Rising Star, Texas, on July 26, 1898, was called home on May 6, 1989, at the age of ninety years, nine months, and ten days.

Sister Lee united with Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, on May 7, 1939. At the time of her passing, she had been a member of her church far longer than any other living member. She went home to be with her Lord on the day before the fiftieth anniversary of her uniting with Saints Rest Church. She was the daughter of Elder C. B. Teague, former pastor of Saints Rest Church.

Sister Lee was faithful in her attendance as long as her health permitted. Several years ago her age and health required her to be relocated to Niceville, Florida, to be nearer her daughter who lovingly cared for her during her final years. Even then, she remained faithful in her support of the church and in her corresponding with the church brethren and friends for as long as she was able.

Sister Lee knew well what she believed, and rejoiced in the free and sovereign grace of God in the salvation provided in Christ Jesus, His blood and righteousness alone, without any admixture of human works or supposed creature merit. Her favorite scripture was Romans 11:33: "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!"

Sister Lee was survived by her daughter, Evelyn Peck; two sisters, Pruda Brown and Flora Boyd; two nephews, Bill Lee and Durward Rhodes; two nieces, Naomi Wilkerson and Jeannine Walters; one granddaughter Linda Broom; and one great-grandson, Steven Broom. Her mortal remains were laid to rest in Laurel Land Memorial Park, Dallas, Texas, to await the return of her Lord and Savior in that last great day. She is missed and will be missed by those who knew her.

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church while in regular quarterly conference on June 4, 1989, with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Lee'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 HAZEL MOSS

**O**ur dear Sister Hazel Moss departed this life March 15, 1990, after a two week stay in the hospital. She had been in declining health for several years.

Born April 6, 1915 in Pittsylvania county, she was the daughter of the late William Shreve and Elizabeth Widdifield Shreve.

She was first married to Russell Ireson, who died April 6, 1972. She later married Lawrence P. Moss who survives.

Most of her life was spent in Danville and she was the retired co-owner and manager of H & S Furniture .

In addition to her husband , survivors include a son , Donald R. Ireson , Sutherlin , two daughters , Patricia I. Haymore of Eden , N.C. , and Linda E. Edwards of Blairs ; and a stepson L.P. Moss III , of Spring Garden . She is also survived by two brothers Cosby Shreve of Danville and Victor Shreve of Toledo , Ohio , 14 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren . Sister Hazel also had a son , Russell Ireson , who succumbed to injuries resulting from an automobile accident , September 28 , 1972 .

When Sister Hazel's mother was on her death bed , the Lord blessed Sister Hazel with a wonderful experience that was precious to her and she shared it with many of us . This gave her a hope that she clung to the remainder of her life .

She joined Banister Springs Church on the 3rd . Sunday in September 1966 . She believed that salvation was totally by the grace of God . The love she had for the church could be seen and felt as she greeted everyone with a smile and handshake or embrace . She enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren , sisters and friends . In the last few years her health had been failing , but she never complained and attended church if she were physically able . We 'll always remember her sweet smiling face .

Sister Hazel was happy to have brethren , sisters and friends visit them and always made them feel welcome . Her warm happy spirit and the patience with which she bore her

illness was an inspiration to all who knew her because it could have only come from God .

She enjoyed doing anything she could for the welfare of the church . If the church building needed repairs or anything to make it more comfortable , she and Lawrence were there doing their part joyfully . She was also faithful about checking on sick members , cooking delicious food for church meals or anything that needed to be done .

Graveside rites were held at Highland Burial Park on March 17 , by Elder Melvin Shelton and Elder Polo Somers .

The church wishes to express its sympathy to Lawrence and family . Sister Hazel will be missed by all who knew and loved her , but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain . She is at peace now where there 's no suffering , awaiting the resurrection when Christ shall come to claim his jewels . I feel she is one of these jewels of mercy .

Written by order of the church :  
Ruth Taylor , Clerk

---

In Memory of One Precious

BLANCHE SAUNDERS

**B**lanche Saunders, though her name was not recorded on any church book , we feel and have evidence to believe her name was recorded in the Lamb's book of life .

She welcomed the Primitive Baptists in her home and manifested a heart filled with grace and truth .

The precious memories she left with us would fill a book .

She was an invalid the last eighteen of her ninety years in this low ground of sin and sorrow , manifesting the spirit that the will of the Lord be done .

When she was young , she was engaged to be married , but her husband - to - be died before the wedding . She never dated another saying he was the only man she could ever love . Though he was dead , her love never ceased .

Her mother died when she was twenty years old . Her daddy , Deacon T.W. Saunders , Sr. , had to provide for a large family of small children . The writer's wife was but one month old and Blanch was the only mother she ever knew . No mother could have shown more love and care for her children as she spent her life for her family .

For many years she could not speak ; yet , when we went in , her countenance said I love you .

I have found this recorded , " But if , when ye do well , and suffer for it , ye take it patiently , this is acceptable with God ." All the many years she was like a mother to the writer , I never heard her complain .

It was a sweet sorrow when we saw her meek and quiet spirit was with us no longer . Yet , we mourn not as those who have no hope ; for precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints .

Her funeral was conducted by one who loved her as his grandmother , Elder Cleo Robertson , assisted by Elder H.W. Wray . Both had been blessed to have sweet and precious words of prayer by her

bedside at various times during her long illness .

She was laid to rest that peaceful rest beside her mother and her daddy whom she so tenderly cared for in his last days .

This was on my mind and I could not rest until it was written and there are yet many precious memories untold .

One who loved her ,  
Clifton C. Robertson

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#### DAVID THOMAS SHORT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst another Brother from Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church . Brother Short was born in 1896 and departed this life May 23 , 1988 .

Brother Short served in World War I on the front line and was blessed to return home safely and lived for many years with good health . Later in life , he became disabled and passed away in the V.A. Hospital in Salem , Virginia .

Brother Short was the son of the late James Short and Martha Cox Short and was married to Ruth Worley Short . Survivors include three daughters , Leona Arrington , Florence Robertson , and Helen Joe Lawson . Three sons , Carl , Gene , and Dell Short . Eighteen grandchildren , fifteen great - grandchildren . Five sisters , Lizzie Adams , and Sisters Ora Adams , Jeanie Murphy and Annie Hedrick .

I was blessed to visit with Brother Short many times while he

was in the V.A. Hospital. One time when we went to see him, he expressed his feelings and experience, he said he wanted to unite with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Short was received into fellowship and baptized by Elder Raymond Goad on September 27, 1981.

His funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elders O.K. Tench and Marvin Brumfield. He was laid to rest in the Worley Family Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Written by Elder Marvin Brumfield

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### TOM V. STRICKLAND

It is with a sad heart that I will attempt to write of the death of our dear brother in Christ and my companion of fifty-two and one-half years. He is survived by the wife and one daughter Mrs. Benay White, four sons Jerome H. Strickland, James Kindred Strickland, Harry Truman Strickland and Alton F. Strickland. He has 10 grandchildren, three step-grandchildren and four step-great grandchildren.

Brother Strickland was born on January 3rd, 1907 at Moores Bridge, AL. After many years of poor health he went to sleep in Christ at Druid City Regional Medical Center at Tuscaloosa, AL. on May 6, 1989 making his stay on earth eighty-two years and five months. His funeral was held at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church on May 9, 1989. Due to circumstances beyond our control

our pastor Elder Lon Dee Moon was not able to conduct Brother Strickland's funeral. Two young men who visited with him many times at the hospital, Rev. Jerry Montgomery and Rev. Chester Free spoke comforting words to the family and friends. He was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Brother Strickland joined Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church of the Hopewell Association in Alabama on September 25, 1983 and was baptised by Elder A.H. Brock, assisted by Elder W.T. Posey.

He was a firm believer of the doctrine of absolute sovereignty of God, the predestination of all things and salvation by Grace. He is sorely missed by his family, his Church, his many friends and community.

His sufferings and sorrows are over and God's purpose for him in this world is finished. Our earthy loss is his eternal gain.

Written by his wife,  
Sister Dannie Moore Strickland

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 11 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

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*"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"*

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## ALPHA AND OMEGA,

*If God had purposed we should know  
The date of birth of Christ His Son,  
His word would plainly, clearly show  
The hour and advent of this one.*

*The day, the week, the month or year  
Is not important to our ear  
For let us not exhalt a day  
Apart from Christ, who is the way.*

*We would not celebrate one day  
As separate from the heavenly way  
For all the work of Christ, the king,  
To Him we would our praises bring.*

*To exhalt one day above another  
In honoring Him, our elder brother,  
I'm sure that we forgetful be  
That He truly 's deity.*

*His birth, His life, His blood, His cross  
Makes all things else appear as dross.  
He is alpha and omega, too;  
The beginning and ending, Oh how true.*

*I remember the day, the month, the  
year  
He was born in me. My Saviour dear,  
The cross and trials along the way  
Has made Him more precious, day by  
day.*

*If round a tree your family meet  
In spirit bow at His dear feet  
Behold in Him abounding grace  
And find in Him a hiding place.*

*This tree of life is ever green  
Twas in the garden, first was seen  
In Revelation Twenty - Two  
We there behold, what it can do.*

*The late Elder David Spangler*

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Brother Wilbur G. Brown	
Odell Dalton Dove	
Sister Alice Graham	
Mamie A. Sullivan	
Mertie Tyler	

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 EDITORIAL
 

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## HEBREWS 11:1 .

*“ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for , the evidence of things not seen .*



Elder R. H. Campbell

In these few simple words , the Apostle Paul declares a truth that defies the intelligence of the natural man to discern and the ability of man to attain. It is as foreign to the natural mind as the mystery of life itself. It is the understanding of this basic truth that separates the elect from the non- elect, Cain from Abel, Jacob from Esau and the sheep from the goats. It cannot be seen with the

natural eye or experienced with the natural senses . It cannot be obtained by the efforts of man , but , neither can it be lost , by his failures or shortcomings , once he is in possession of it .

The Apostle Paul wrote in his epistle to the church at Ephesus that faith is the gift of God unto salvation by his marvelous grace and it is only to those whom he has quickened together with Christ ; that it was not of works, lest any man should boast. He said that those quickened souls were the workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works which he hath before ordained that they should walk in them . The works are just as much a part of that gift as the faith that accompanies it , and both are just as much beyond the ability of man to accomplish , so that there is no occasion for boasting on the part of the receiver of this most precious gift . They are sovereignly bestowed upon each child of God and it is because of God’s promise to Abraham in his day , not because of any goodness seen in the subject, in his day .

Faith is not exercised by the one who has it but rather activates the one who receives it and they walk in ways they have not known and which were foreign to them before . Most of the scriptures left on record, by those who have gone on before , are the experiences which they have lived when motivated by this faith in their journey here in time . Many were things beyond the ability of the natural man and required wisdom that the man in nature does not possess . Isaac was born to Abraham by Sarah when she was well

past the age of child bearing ; Abraham offered up Isaac ( the pride of his natural life ) when commanded to do so by God ; the three Hebrew children faced the fiery furnace rather than worship the golden image ; Daniel faced the lions ; and others fought battles against superior forces , wrought righteousness and suffered cruel deaths rather than deny this faith which was the driving force of their lives . This faith was the gift of God to each to enable them to perform these good works which he had before ordained that they should walk in them to the honor and glory of his holy name .

All are not called to bear the same trials and burdens but the same gift of faith is manifested in their life as each one runs the race that is set before them . Their fear is that they would not stand if called upon to face these trials in their day but the record indicates all do if they have the gift of faith . The presence of this faith is made manifest when a need arises and then , and then only , in this day just as in days gone by , the called will stand forth and respond to that calling from nature 's darkness to the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ .

Faith is not just a part of the salvation of the saints of God but rather is the sum total of it . It is the whole life of the born again individual and affects them in their every thought and deed ; whether they realize it or not , every decision that they make is influenced by this faith whether it be right or wrong . Their whole set of values are changed when they are born of the Spirit and

when they do things contrary to that set of values it causes them grief and suffering whether anyone knows about it or not . That set of values is the law that is written on the fleshly tables of the heart and it judges their every thought and deed and that is what causes them pain . As Paul said , " I find then a law , that when I would do good evil is present with me , for I delight in the law of God after the inward man : but I see another law in my members , warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members . " They cannot escape this judgement and acknowledge that it is just . This is their daily struggle , but their faith conquers even this because it is based on the promises of God which were made to a chosen seed and their experience of the change in themselves causes them to believe that they are of this chosen generation . This is the evidence that is not seen , but , it is felt in the heart and witnesses to the testimony left on record by the saints of old and they dare not deny that kindred spirit .

The substance of things hoped for is their interest and claim of the promises of God to Abraham and his seed after him in succeeding generations ; a city which hath foundation whose builder and maker is God for an everlasting possession ; a country that is an heavenly country where they will dwell in the presence of God , where he shall not be ashamed to be called their God and they shall know the peace that Jesus said he left with his elect . The substance is the holy city , new Jerusalem which shall come down

from God out of heaven where he will dwell with them ; where they shall know even as they are known , and there shall be no more sorrow nor any more pain , only the joy of the fullness of the beauty and glory of their salvation . That city shall have no temple for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it ; it shall need no sun nor moon for the glory of God shall lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof . The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it , and the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day : for there shall be no night .

This is the heritage of those whom the Lord loveth , and causeth to approach unto him . It is the earnest expectation in the bosom of every heaven born soul that claims these precious promises as theirs , by the right of inheritance . In this life they enjoy the earnest of their inheritance , a foretaste of that to come , by their spiritual birth making manifest that they are sons of God and joint heirs with Christ . A joint heir is not an heir of one part of the inheritance but has no claim to another part ; a joint heir is equal heir to the fullness of the inheritance , all of the joys and blessings of the whole . The whole being the fullness of the promises of the Almighty to those that he loved before the foundation of the world and who manifested that love by calling them , quickening them by his spirit and bestowing upon them this marvelous gift of faith .

The scriptures are the records of the trials of faith , of the saints of God in all ages of time , under the law and in the gospel day , as he leads them

in ways known only to him , to teach them of their total dependence on him for all things . The law was the schoolmaster to bring them to Christ that they might be justified in him by his sacrifice , acceptable to God , for their sins . The law only manifested their inability to obtain righteousness of themselves but the scriptures told them of a prophet to come who would be bruised for their iniquities and by whose stripes they would be healed . When they were given the gift of faith they saw Christ as that prophet , and saw that their only hope of salvation was in his finished work in laying down his life for their sins as prophesied by the scriptures . They could then say with Dauid . “ Although my house be not so with God ; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant , ordered in all things , and sure ; for this is all my salvation , and all my desire , Although he make it not to grow .” As David they had no right to claim any standing before a just and holy God yet he had made a covenant with them fulfilling all requirements for them . They saw a completed work finished in the death , burial and resurrection of Christ , nothing to be added by man , ordered and sure to all , as many as were treasured in him from before the foundation of the world .

Surely , this is the substance of the things hoped for by the elect family of God since the beginning of time , and surely , this is what is termed faith , for it can only be received from the giver of every good and perfect gift . The knowledge of these things would never enter into the natural mind because they are

foolishness to it . In every experience of record it was the sovereign and majestic work of God in turning a vessel of mercy from the ways of the world to himself and then filling it with knowledge of spiritual things which produces the faith that directs him all his days in all of his ways. This is surely the substance of things hoped for in the hearts and souls of the saints of God in this time world .

In bonds of love ,  
Elder Richard H . Campbell

### NOTICE

The Primitive Baptist Library at 4023 North Highway 87 , Elon College , NC 27244 , (919) 584-8531 , has not been able to publish a quarterly for the Library for eleven years . Therefore we will give the brief background of the Library for those who receive this little paper .

In 1932 , Elder W . J . Berry began collecting the historical records of the Old School , or Primitive Baptists . He had a love for them , feeling that they declared the truth “ as it is in Christ Jesus . ” He valued their heritage , and saw our records being destroyed by those who have little interest in spiritual things , nor understanding the value of the truth and the preservation of our heritage .

His collection of these records , and old and rare books grew to the extent that a suitable place must be provided for them . Therefore , in 1946 he contributed a building site . Funds were needed and received to erect an attractive , brick , fire - proof

building .

A self - perpetuating trusteeship of interested , godly men was selected to establish a foundation called THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES .

This was the first such library established for the service of our people .

Unfortunately due to the death of Brother Berry in 1986 , many thought the library had ceased to function . It was to prevent such an eventuality that he placed the library in the hands of a faithful and able trusteeship .

The library has continued to serve our people , and we welcome any records or books for safekeeping here and for availability to those doing research . The records and books are catalogued and easily accessible for ready reference .

We receive and welcome visitors from any group of Primitive Baptists anywhere .

All the labor here is given freely out of love for the cause of our dear Lord , and the Primitive , or Old School Baptists .

The library is in need of funds to maintain and expand its service . It is funded only by voluntary contributions , which are gratefully received .

By Mabel ( Mrs . W . J . ) Berry ,  
widow of the founder .

THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST LIBRARY IS INTERESTED in obtaining — church and association minutes , periodicals , church records and church histories , photographs of meeting houses , ministers , etc . , historical materials , biographical writings , newspaper clippings , microfilms ,

diaries and other informative material of interest .

### AN URGENT REQUEST

There are many good books , old periodicals , church records , etc . , which you may know should be preserved in this library . We urge you to see to the matter of having them sent at an early date . Quite often when such matters are delayed they are left to others who may not see their value or know where they could be preserved .

On file , in boxes are all of the Primitive Baptist periodicals , labelled for easy accessibility , as are minutes of most , if not all the associations in the U . S . There is also a good store of extra copies of minutes and periodicals . If these are desired , write for details .

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### VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

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### OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

BY

AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY

1740 - 1778

**T**oplady flashed upon and past the world like a meteor . A brilliant streak of light , and he was gone . But he will ever live in the affections of all who love pure religion , and scorn every touchstone save the Holy Scriptures . To have produced the greatest hymn in the English language — “ ROCK OF AGES ” has , by general consent , been assigned the place of honour — would alone have earned him the

gratitude of the churches . So remarkable , indeed , has been its vogue that the public are apt to overlook the fact that he was the author of many other hymns , some of which — for example , “ Deathless Principle , ” and “ What Though My Frail Eyelids Refuse ” — surpass in euphony and ethereal beauty , though not in depth and intensity of feeling , his acknowledged masterpiece . In these hymns , written in rapturous moments that come only to the privileged few , and to them but rarely , the ardent soul dissevers itself from earth , mounts on eager and confident pinions , and flutters ecstasied before its God . But it is not as a hymn - writer only that Toplady excels . The best of his essays are studded with vitalizing thoughts expressed in noble and virile English . His sermons , which contain many magnificent passages are storehouses of sound and lucid divinity . ”

*Necessary to be premised , in order to our better understanding the Doctrine of Predestination .*

Although the great and ever Blessed God is a Being absolutely simply , and infinitely remote from all shadow of composition ; he is , nevertheless , in condescension to our weak and contracted faculties , represented in Scripture as possessed of divers properties , or attributes , which , though seemingly different from his essence , are in reality , essential to him , and constitutive of his very nature .

Of these attributes , those on which we shall now particularly

descant ( as being more immediately concerned in the ensuing subject ), are the following ones ; 1 . His eternal wisdom and foreknowledge . 2 . The absolute freedom and liberty of his will . 3 . The perpetuity and unchangeableness both of himself and his decrees . 4 . His omnipotence . 5 . His justice . 6 . His mercy .

Without an explication of these , the doctrine of predestination cannot be so well understood : we shall , therefore , briefly consider them , by way of preliminary to the main subject .

1 . With respect to the divine wisdom and foreknowledge , I shall lay down the following positions :

Pos . 1 . 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 permit others to do , “ Known unto God are all his work , from eternity . ”

Pos . 2 . Consequently , God knows nothing now , nor will know any thing hereafter , which he did not know and foresee from everlasting : his foreknowledge being co- eternal with himself , and extending to every thing that is or shall be done . All things , which comprise past , present , and future , are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do .

Pos . 3 . This foreknowledge of God is not conjectural and uncertain ( for then it would not be foreknowledge ) but most sure and infallible ; so that whatever he foreknows to be future shall necessarily and undoubtedly come to pass . For his

knowledge can be no more frustrated , or his wisdom be deceived , than he can cease to be God . Nay , could either of these be the case , he actually would cease to be God ; all mistakes and disappointment being absolutely incompatible with the divine nature .

Pos . 4 . The influence which the divine foreknowledge has on the certain futurity of the things foreknown does not render the intervention of second causes needless , nor destroy the nature of the things themselves .

My meaning is that the prescience of God does not lay any coercive necessity on the wills of beings naturally free . For instance , man , even in his fallen state , is endued with a natural freedom of will ; yet he acts , from the first to the last moment of his life , in absolute subserviency ( though perhaps , he does not know it nor design it ) to the purposes and decrees of God concerning him ; notwithstanding which he is sensible of no compulsion , but acts as freely and voluntarily as if he was , subject to no control , and absolutely lord of himself . This made Luther , after he had shewn how all things necessary and inevitably come to pass , in consequence of the sovereign will and infallible foreknowledge of God , say that “ We shall carefully distinguish between a necessity of infallibility and a necessity of co- action ; since both good and evil men , though by their actions they fulfil the decree and appointment of God , yet are not forcibly constrained to do any thing but act willingly . ”

Pos . 5 . God's foreknowledge ,

taken abstractedly , is not the sole cause of beings and events ; but his will and foreknowledge together . Hence we find , Acts ii . 23 , that his determinate counsel and fore - knowledge act in concert ; the latter resulting from , and being founded on , the former .

We pass on .

II . To consider the will of God ; with regard to which we assert as follows :

Pos . 1 . Deity is possessed not only of infinite knowledge , but likewise of absolute liberty of will ; so that whatever he does , or permits to be done , he does and permits freely and of his own good pleasure .

Consequently , it is his free pleasure to permit sin ; since , without his permission , neither men nor devils can do any thing . Now to permit is , at least , the same as not to hinder , though it be in our power to hinder if we please ; and this permission or non hindrance , is certainly and act of the divine will . Hence , Austin says , “ Those things which seemingly thwart the divine will are , nevertheless , agreeable to it ; for if God did not permit them , they could not be done , and whatever God permits , he permits freely and willingly . He does nothing , neither suffers any thing to be done , against his own will .” And Luther observes that “ God permitted Adam to fall into sin , because he willed that he should so fall .”

Pos . 2 . Although the will of God , considered in itself , is simply one and the same ; yet in condescension to the present capacities of men , the divine will is very properly distinguished into secret and revealed .

Thus it was his revealed will that Pharaoh should let the Israelites go ; that Abraham should sacrifice his son ; and that Peter should not deny Christ : but as proved by the event , it was his secret will that Pharaoh should not let Israel go , Ex . iv . 21 , that Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac , Gen . xxii . 12 , and that Peter should deny his Lord , Matt . xxvi . 34 .

Pos . 3 . The will of God , respecting the salvation and condemnation of men , is never contrary to itself ; he immutably wills the salvation of the elect , and vice versa : nor can he ever vary or deviate from his own will in any instance whatever , so as that should be done which he willeth not ; or that not be brought to pass which he willeth . Isaiah xli . 10 . My counsel shall stand , and I will do all my pleasure — Psalm xxxiii . 11 . The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever , and the thoughts of his heart to all generations . Job xxiii . 13 , 14 . He is in one mind , who can turn him ? and what his soul desireth , even that he doeth ; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me ; and many such things are with him . Eph . i . 11 . Being predestinated , according to the purpose of him , who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will .

Thus , for instance , Hophni and Phineas hearkened not to the voice of their father , who reproveth them for their wickedness , because the Lord would slay them , 1 Sam . ii . 25 . And Sihon , king of Heshbon , would not receive the peaceable message sent him by Moses , because the Lord God hardened his spirit , and made his heart obstinate , that he

might deliver him into the hand of Israel, Deut. ii 26, 30. Thus also, to add no more, we find that there have been, and ever will be some, whose eyes God blindeth, and whose hearts he hardeneth, i. e. whom God permits to continue blind and hardened, on purpose to prevent their seeing with their eyes, and understanding with their hearts, and to hinder their conversion to God, and spiritual healing by him, Isa. vi. 9. John xii. 39 - 40.

Pos. 4. Because God's will of precept may, in some instances, appear to thwart his will of determination, it does not follow either, 1. That he mocks his creatures, or 2. That they are excusable for neglecting to observe his will of command.

1. He does not hereby mock his creatures; for if men do not believe his word, nor observe his precepts, the fault is not in him, but in themselves; their unbelief and disobedience are not owing to any ill infused into them by God, but to the vitiosity of their depraved nature, and the perverseness of their own wills. Now, if God invited all men to come to him, and then shut the door of mercy against any who were desirous of entering; his invitation would be a mockery, and unworthy of himself; but we insist on it, that he does not invite all men to come to him a saving way; and that every individual person, who is, through his gracious influence on his heart, made willing to come to him shall, sooner or later, be surely saved by him, and that with an everlasting salvation. 2. Man is not excusable for neglecting God's will of command. Pharaoh was faulty, and

therefore justly punishable, for not obeying God's revealed will, though God's secret will rendered that obedience impossible. Abraham would have committed sin, had he refused to sacrifice Isaac; and, in looking to God's secret will, would have acted counter to his revealed one. So Herod, Pontius Pilot, and the reprobate Jews, were justly condemned for putting Christ to death, inasmuch as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will. "Thou shalt do no murder;" yet, in slaying the Messiah, they did no more than God's hand and his counsel, i. e. his secret ordaining will, determined before should be done, Acts iv. 27, 28; and Judas is justly punished for perfidiously and wickedly betraying Christ, though his perfidy and wickedness were (but not with his design) subservient to the accomplishment of the decree and word of God.

The brief of the matter is this; secret things belong to God, and those that are revealed belong to us; therefore, when we meet with a plain precept, we should simply endeavour to obey it, without tarrying to inquire into God's hidden purpose. Venerable Bucer, after taking notice how God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and making some observations on the apostle's simile of a potter and his clay, adds that, "though God has at least the same right over his creatures, and is at liberty to make them what he will, and direct them to the end that pleaseth himself, according to his sovereign and secret determination, yet it by no means follows that they do not act freely and spontaneously, or that the

evil they commit is to be charged on God."

Pos . 5 . God's hidden will is peremptory and absolute ; and , therefore , cannot be hindered from taking effect .

God's will is nothing else than God himself willing : consequently it is omnipotent and unfrustratable . Hence we find it termed by Austin and the schoolmen , *voluntas omnipotentissima* because , whatever God wills cannot fail of being effected . This made Austin say , " Evil men do many things contrary to God's revealed will ; but so great is his wisdom , and so inviolable his truth , that he directs all things into those channels which he foreknew ." And again " No free - will of the creature can resist the will of God ; for man cannot so will , or nill , as to obstruct the divine determination , or overcome the divine power ." Once more " It cannot be questioned , but God does all things , and ever did , according to his own purpose : the human will cannot resist him , so as to make him do more or less than it is his pleasure to do ; *quandoquidem etiam de ipsis hominum voluntatibus quod vult facit* since he does what he pleases even with the wills of men ."

Ps . 6 . Whatever comes to pass comes to pass by virtue of this absolute , omnipotent will of God , which is the primary and supreme cause of all things . Rev . ix . 11 . Thou has created all things , and for thy pleasure they are , and were created . Psalm exv . 3 . Our God is in the heavens ; he hath done whatsoever he pleased . Dan . iv . 35 . He doth 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 dost thou ? Psalm cxxxv . 6 . Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven , and in earth , in the seas , and all deep places . Mat . x . 29 . Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father . To all which , Austin subscribes , when he says , " Nothing is done but what the Almighty wills should be done , either efficiently or permissively ." As does Luther , whose words are these , " This , therefore , must stand ; to wit , the unsearchable will of God , without which nothing exists or acts ." And again , " God would not be much , if he was not almighty , and if any thing could be done without him ." And elsewhere , he quotes these words of Erasmus : " Supposing there was an earthly prince who could do whatever he would and none were able to resist him , we might safely say of such a one , that he would certainly fulfill his own desire , in like manner , the will of God , which is the first cause of all things , should seem to lay a kind of necessity upon our wills ." This Luther approves of , and subjoins , " Thanks be to God , for this orthodox passage in Erasmus's discourse ! but , if this be true , what becomes of his doctrine of freewill , which he at other times so strenuously contends for ? "

Pos . 7 . The will of God is so the cause ; for nothing can be the cause of that which is the cause of every thing .

So that the divine will is the *ne plus ultra* of all our inquiries ; when

we ascend to that , we can go no farther . Hence we find every matter resolved ultimately into the mere sovereign pleasure of God , as the spring and occasion of whatsoever is done in heaven and earth . Matt . xi . xi . 25 . Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent , and hast revealed them unto babes : even so , Father , for so it seemed good in thy sight . Luke xii . 32 . It is your Father 's good pleasure to give you the kingdom . Matt . viii . 3 . I will : be thou clean . Mark iii . 13 . He went up into a mountain , and called unto him whom he would . Jam . i . 18 . Of his own will begat he us , with the word of truth . John i . 13 . Which were born not of blood , nor of the will of the flesh , nor of the will of man , but of God . Rom . ix . 15 , 18 . I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy , and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion . Therefore , he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy , and whom he will he hardeneth . And no wonder that the will of God should be the main spring that sets all inferior wheels in motion , and should likewise be the rule by which he goes in all his dealings with his creatures ; since nothing out of God , i . e . exterior to himself can possibly induce him to will or nill one thing rather than another . Deny this , and you , at one stroke , destroy his immutability and independency ; since he can never be independent who acts *pro re nata* , as emergency requires , and whose will is suspended on that of others ; nor unchangeable , whose purposes vary and take all shapes , according as the persons or things vary who are the objects of those purposes . The

only reason , then , that can be assigned why the Deity does this , or omits that , is because it is his own free pleasure . Luther , in answer to that question , “ Whence it was that Adam was permitted to fall , and corrupt his whole posterity ; when God could have prevented his falling & c . , says , “ God is a being whose will acknowledges no cause : neither is it for us to prescribe rules to his sovereign pleasure , or call him to account for what he does . He has neither superior nor equal : and his will is the rule of all things . He did not , therefore , will such and such things because they were in themselves right , and he was bound to will them ; but they are therefore equitable and right because he wills them . The will of man , indeed , may be influenced and moved ; but God 's will never can . To assert the contrary is to undeify him . ” Bucer likewise observes , “ God has no other motive for what he does than *ipsa voluntas* his own mere will ; which will is so far from being unrighteous , that it is justice itself . ”

Pos . 8 . Since , as was lately observed , the determining will of God , being omnipotent , cannot be obstructed or made void ; it follows that he never did , nor does he now , will that every individual of mankind should be saved .

If this was his will , not one single soul could ever be lost ; ( for who hath resisted his will ? ) and he would surely afford all men those effectual means of salvation without which it cannot be had . Now , God could afford these means as easily to all mankind , as to some only ; but experience proves that he does not ;

and the reason is equally plain , namely , that he will not ; for whatsoever the Lord pleaseth , that does he in heaven and on earth . It is said , indeed , by the apostle , that God would have all men saved , and come to the knowledge of the truth ; i . e . as Austin , consistently with other Scriptures , explains the passage , “ God will save some out of the whole race of mankind , ” that is , persons of all nations , kindreds and tongues . Nay , he will save all men , i . e . as the same father observes , “ every kind of men , or men of every kind , ” namely , the whole election of grace , be they bond or free , noble or ignoble , rich or poor , male or female . Add to this , that it evidently militates against the majesty , omnipotence , and supremacy of God , to suppose that he can either will any thing in vain , or that any thing can take effect against his will ; therefore , Bucer observes very rightly , ad Rom . ix . “ God doth not will the salvation of reprobates , seeing he hath not chosen them neither created them to that end . ” Consonant to which are those words of Luther , “ This mightily offends our rational nature , that God should , of his own mere unbiased will , leave some men to themselves , harden them , and then condemn them ; but he has given abundant demonstration , and does continually , that this is really the case ; namely , that the sole cause why some are saved , and others perish , proceeds from his willing the salvation of the former , and the perdition of the latter , according to that of Paul , He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy , and whom he will he hardeneth . ”

Pos . 9 . As God doth not will that each individual of mankind should be saved , so neither did he will that Christ should properly and immediately die for each individual of mankind ; whence it follows that , though the blood of Christ , from its own intrinsic dignity , was sufficient for the redemption of all men ; yet , in consequence of his Father ’s appointment , he shed it intentionally , and , therefore , effectually and immediately , for the elect only .

This is self evident . God , as we have before proved , wills not the salvation of every man ; but he gave his Son to die for them whose salvation he willed ; therefore , his Son did not die for every man . All those for whom Christ died are saved ; and the divine justice indispensably requires that to them the benefits of his death should be imparted ; but only the elect are saved ; they only partake of those benefits ; consequently for them only he died and intercedes . The apostle , Rom . viii . asks , Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect ? It is God that justifies , i . e . his elect , exclusively of others ; who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died for them , exclusively of others . The plain meaning of the passage is that those whom God justifies , and for whom Christ died ( justification and redemption being of exactly the same extent ) , cannot be condemned . These privileges are expressly restrained to the elect ; therefore , God justifies and Christ died for them alone .

In the same chapter Paul asks ; “ He that spared not his own Son , but delivered him up for us all , ( i . e . for all us elect persons ) how shall he

not, with him, also freely give us all things? i. e. salvation, and all things necessary to it. Now, it is certain that these are not given to every individual; and yet, if Paul says true, they are given to all those for whom Christ was delivered to death; consequently, he was not delivered to death for every individual. To the same purpose St. Austin argues, in Johan. 45. col. 335. Hence that sayin of Ambrose, *si non credis non tibi passus est, ie* "if you are an unbeliever, Christ did not die for you." Meaning, that whoever is left under the power of final unbelief, is thereby evidenced to be one of those for whom Christ did not die; but that all for whom he suffered shall be, in this life, sooner or later, endued with faith. The Church of Smyrna, in their letter to the dioceses of Pontus, insist every where on the doctrine of special redemption. Bucer, in all parts of his works, observes, that "Christ died restrictively for the elect only; but for them universally."

Pos. 10. From what has been laid down it follows that Austin, Luther, Bucer, the scholastic divines, and other learned writers, are not to be blamed for asserting that "God may, in some sense, be said to will the being and commission of sin." For was this contrary to his determining will of permission, either he would not be omnipotent, and sin has place in the world; which it could not have, if God willed otherwise; for who hath resisted his will? Rom. ix. No one can deny that God permits sin; but he neither permits it ignorantly, nor unwillingly; therefore, knowingly and willingly. Vid. Aust. Enchir. c. 96. Luther

steadfastly maintains this in his book *De Serv Arbitr* and Bucer in Rom. i. However, it should be carefully noticed, 1. That God's permission of sin does not arise from his taking delight in it; on the contrary, sin, as sin, is the abominable thing that his soul hateth; and his efficacious permission of it is for wise and good purposes. Whence that observation of Austin, "God, who is no less omnipotent than he is supremely and perfectly holy, would never have permitted evil to enter among his works, but in order that he might do good even with that evil," i. e. over-rule it for good in the end. 2. That God's free and voluntary permission of sin lays no man under any forcible or compulsive necessity of committing it; consequently, the Deity can by no means be termed the author of moral evil; to which he is not, in the proper sense of the word, accessory, but only remotely or negatively so, inasmuch as he could, if he pleased, absolutely prevent it.

We should, therefore, be careful not to give up the omnipotence of God, under a pretence of exalting his holiness; his is infinite in both, and therefore, neither should be set aside nor obscured. To say that God absolutely nills the being and commission of sin, while experience convinces us that sin is acted every-day, is to represent the Deity as a weak, impotent being, who would fain have things go otherwise that they do, but cannot accomplish his desire. On the other hand, to say that he willeth sin doth not in the least detract from the holiness and rectitude of his nature; because,

whatever God wills , as well as whatever he does , cannot be eventually evil : materially evil it may be ; but , as was just said , it must ultimately be directed to some wise and just end , otherwise he could not will it ; for his will is righteous and good , and the sole rule of right and wrong , as is often observed by Austin , Luther , and others .

Pos . 11 . In consequence of God 's immutable will and infallible foreknowledge , whatever things come to pass , come to pass necessarily ; though , with respect to second causes , and us men , many things are contingent ; i . e . unexpected and seemingly accidental .

That this was the doctrine of Luther , none can deny , who are in any measure acquainted with his works : particularly with his treatise *De Serva Arbitrio* , or free - will a slave ; the main drift of which book is to prove that the will of man is by nature enslaved to evil only , and , because it is fond of that slavery , is therefore said to be free . Among other matters , he proves there that " whatever man does he does necessarily , though not with any sensible compulsion ; and that we can only do what God from eternity willed and foreknew we should ; which will of God must be effectual , and his foresight must be certain . " Hence we find him saying , " It is most necessary and salutary for a Christian to be assured that God foreknows nothing uncertainly ; but that he determines , and forsees , and acts , in all things , according to his own eternal , immutable , and infallible will ; adding , Hereby , as with a thunderbolt , is man 's freewill

thrown down and destroyed . " A little after , he shews in what sense he took the word necessity ; " by it , " says he , " I do not mean that the will suffers any forcible constraint , or coercion ; but the infallible accomplishment of those things which the immutable God decreed and foreknew concerning us . " He goes on : " Neither the divine nor human will does any thing by constraint ; but , whatever man does , be it good or bad , he does with as much appetite and willingness as if his will was really free . But , after all , the will of God is certain and unalterable , and is the governess of ours . " Exactly consonant to all which are those words of Luther 's friend and fellow-labourer , Melancthon : " All things turn out according to divine predestination ; not only the works we do outwardly , but even the thoughts we think inwardly : " adding in the same place , " There is no such a thing as chance , or fortune ; nor is there a readier way to gain the fear of God , and to put our whole trust in Him , than to be thoroughly versed in the doctrine of predestination . " I could cite , to the same purpose , Austin , Aquinas , and many other learned men ; but for brevity 's sake , forbear . That this is the doctrine of Scripture very adapt in those sacred books cannot but acknowledge . — See , particularly , Psalm cxxxv . 6 . Matt . x . 29 . Prov . xvi . 1 . Matt . xxv . 54 . Luke xxii . 22 . Acts iv . 28 . Eph . i 11 . Isa . xlvi . 10 .

Pos . 12 . As God knows nothing now which he did not know from all eternity ; so he wills nothing now which he did not will from everlasting .

This position needs no explanation nor enforcement ; it being self-evident that , if any thing can accede to God , *de novo i. e.* if he can at any time be wiser than he always was , or will that at one time which he did not will from all eternity , these dreadful consequences must ensue : 1 . That the knowledge of God is not perfect , since what is absolutely perfect , *non recipit magis et minus* , cannot admit either of addition or detract - ion . If I add to any thing , it is from a supposal that , that thing was not complete before ; if I detract from it , it is supposed that , that detraction renders it less perfect than it was . But the knowledge of God , being infinitely perfect , cannot consistently with that perfection , be either increased or lessened . 2 . That the will of God is fluctuating , mutable , and unsteady ; consequently that God himself is so , his will coinciding with his essence , contrary to the avowed assurances of Scripture and the strongest dictates of reason , as we shall presently shew , when we come to treat of the divine immutability .

Pos . 13 . The absolute will of God is the original spring and efficient cause of his people 's salvation .

I say the original and efficient ; for , *sensu complexo* , there are other intermediate causes of their salvation , which , however , all result from , and are subservient to , this primary one , the will of God . Such are his everlasting choice of them to eternal life : the eternal covenant of grace entered into by the Trinity on behalf of the elect ; the incarnation , obedience , death , and intercession

of Christ for them ; all which are so many links in the great chain of causes ; and not one of these can be taken away without marring and subverting the whole gospel plan of salvation by Jesus Christ . We see , then , that the free , unbiased , sovereign will of God is the root of this tree of life , which bears so many glorious branches , and yields such salutary fruits : he therefore loved the elect , and ordained them to life , because he would ; according to that of the apostle , having predestinated us according to the good pleasure of his will ; Eph . i . 5 . Then , next after God 's covenant for his people and promises to them , comes in the infinite merit of Christ 's righteousness and atonement ; for we were chosen to salvation in him as members of his mystic body , and through him , as our surety , and substitute , by whose vicarious obedience to the moral law , and submission to its curse and penalty , all we , whose names are in the book of life , should never incur the divine hatred or be punished for our sins , but continue to eternity as we were from eternity , heirs of God , and joint - heirs with Christ . But still the divine grace and favour ( and God extends these to whom he will ) must be considered as what gave birth to the glorious scheme of redemption , according to what our Lord himself teaches us , John iii . 16 . God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son , & c . ; and that of the apostle , 1 John iv . 9 . In this was manifested the love of God towards us , because that he sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him .

Pos . 14 . Since this absolute will

of God is both immutable and omnipotent, we infer that the salvation of every one of the elect is most infallibly certain, and can by no means be prevented. This necessarily follows from what we have already asserted and proved concerning the divine will, which, as it cannot be disappointed or made void, must undoubtedly secure the salvation of all whom God wills should be saved.

From the whole of what has been delivered under this second head, I would observe that the genuine tendency of these truths is, not to make men indolent and careless, or lull them to sleep on the lap of presumption and carnal security, but, 1. To fortify the people of Christ against the attacks of unbelief and the insults of their spiritual enemies. And what is so fit to guard them against these as the comfortable persuasion of God's unalterable will to save them, and of their unalienable interest in the sure mercies of David? 2. To withdraw them entirely from all dependence, whether on themselves or any creature whatever; to make them renounce their own righteousness no less than their sins, in point of reliance, and to acquiesce sweetly and safely in the certain perpetuity of his rich favour. 3. To excite them, from a trust of his goodwill towards them, to love that God who hath given such great and numberless proofs of his love to men; and in all their thoughts, words, to aim, as much as possible, at his honour and glory. We were to consider.

III. The unchangeableness which is essential to himself and his decrees.

Pos. 1. God is essentially unchangeable in himself. Were he otherwise, he would be confessedly imperfect; since whoever changes must change either for the better or for the worse: whatever alteration any being undergoes, that being must, *ipso facto*, either become more excellent than it was, or lose some of the excellency, which it had. But neither of these can be the case with the Deity: he cannot change for the better, for that would necessarily imply that he was not perfectly good before; he cannot change for the worst, for then he could not be perfectly good after that change. *Ergo*, God is unchangeable. And this is the uniform voice of Scripture. Mal. iii. 6. I am the Lord: I change not. James i. 17. With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Psalm cii. 27. Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Pos. 2. God is likewise absolutely unchangeable with regard to his purposes and promises. Numb. xxiii. 19. God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? 1 Sam. xv. 29. The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent. Job xxiii. 13. He is in one mind, and who can turn him? Exek. xxiv. 14. I, the Lord, have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it: I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent. Rom. xi. 29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 2 Tim. ii. 13. He abideth faithful, and cannot deny

himself .

By the purpose of decree of God we mean his determinate counsel , whereby he did from all eternity pre-ordain whatever he should do , or what permit to be done , in time . In particular , it signifies his everlasting appointment of some men to life and of others to death ; which appointment flows entirely from his own free and sovereign will . Rom . ix . The children not yet being born , neither having done any good or evil ( that the purpose of God , according to election , might stand , not of works , but of him that calleth ) , it was said , the elder shall serve the younger ; as it is written , Jacob have I loved , but Esau have I hated .

The apostle then , in the very next words , anticipates an objection which he foresaw men of corrupt minds would make to this : What shall we say , then ? is there un-righteousness with God ? which he answer with , God forbid ! and resolves the whole of God's procedure with his creatures into his own sovereign and independent will : for he said to Moses , I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy , and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion .

We assert that the decrees of God are not only immutable as to himself , it being inconsistent with his nature to alter in his purposes or change his mind , but that they are immutable likewise with respect to the objects of those decrees : so that whatsoever God hath determined concerning every individual person or thing shall surely and infallibly be accomplished in and upon them . Hence we find that he actually

sheweth mercy on whom he decreed to shew mercy , and hardeneth whom he resolved to harden : Rom . ix . 18 . For his counsel shall stand , and he will do all his pleasure : Isa . xli . 10 . Consequently his eternal predestination of men and things must be immutable as himself , and , so far from being reversible , can never admit of the least variation .

Pos . 3 . “ Although , ” to use the words of Gregory , “ God never swerves from his decree , yet he often varies in his declarations : ” That is always sure and immoveable ; these are sometimes seemingly discordant . So when he gave sentence against the Ninevites by Jonah , saying , “ Yet forty days , and Nineveh shall be overthrown , ” the meaning of the words is , not that God absolutely intended , at the end of that space , to destroy the city , but that , should God deal with those people according to their deserts , they would be totally extirpated from the earth ; and should be so extirpated unless they repented speedily

Likewise when he told king Hezekiah , by the prophet Isaiah , “ Set thine house in order , for thou shalt die , and not live ; ” the meaning was that , with respect to second causes , and considering the king's bad state of health and emiciated constitution , he could not , humanly speaking , live much longer . But still the event shewed that God had immutably determined that he should live fifteen years more ; and , in order to that , had put it into his heart to pray for the blessing decreed ; just as in the case of Nineveh lately mentioned , God had resolved not to overthrow that city then ; and ,

in order to the accomplishment of his own purpose in a way worthy of himself, made the ministry of Jonah the means of leading that people to repentance. All which, as it shews that God's absolute predestination does not set aside the use of means, so does it likewise prove that, however various the declaration of God may appear (to wit, when they proceed on a regard had to natural causes), his counsels and designs stand firm and immoveable, and can neither admit of alteration in themselves, nor hindrance in their execution. See this farther explained by Bucer, in Rom. ix., where you will find the certainty of the divine appointments solidly asserted and unanswerably vindicated.

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### LIGHT.

New Vernon, N. Y., May 1, 1842.

*"If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!"*

THE MASTER.

**W**e are informed by a prophet of the Lord, that men have put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and do we not see this fact abundantly exemplified in the present age? The terms, *light* and *darkness*, are metaphorically used sometimes in the scriptures, and decidedly so in the passages above referred to. Intellectual acquirements in the sciences of this world are esteemed, by the general consent of mankind, as light, and justly so, when confined to their appropriate spheres; but when attempted

to be applied to the things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, they cease to be light, and are denounced by divine authority as darkness of the most sable shade. However profitable and desirable human erudition may be in qualifying men for eminence and usefulness in temporal things, it never can enable the mind to understand the things of the Spirit of God. God has made foolish the wisdom of this world, and it has pleased God in his wisdom, that man by wisdom shall not know him: he has hidden the things of his Spirit from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because it has seemed good in his sight so to do. And ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men, &c., are called; that God has chosen the weak and foolish things of this world to confound the wise. The admonition of our Lord, Take heed that the light that is in you be not darkness, implies that there are characters of that description among men, and that we are liable to be mistaken in regard to what we denominate light. While this is the deluded condition of every natural man that flatters himself that he knows anything about spiritual things, and peculiarly so in the case of all who confide in theories of scholastic divinity, religious education and religious training, is it not also measurably the case, in some instances, with the children of God? Peter speaks of a neglect, on the part of christians, which will produce blindness, so that they cannot see afar off, causing them to forget they were purged from their old sins.

It is true, God has translated his

children from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son , and he has informed us that light is sown for the righteous ; yet he has also said , “ Who is among you that feareth the Lord , and obeyeth the voice of his servant , that walketh in darkness and hath no light ; let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God . ” We frequently hear the saints complain of what they call darkness , when we are led to conclude that light is what they mean . As when the prophet cried , “ Wo is me , for I am undone , ” &c . , it was the effect of extraordinary light , and not of darkness , for he had beheld a vision of the Lord . And we may rest assured that christians never see and feel and mourn over the corruptions of their hearts , unless they are in the light . It requires the true light which emanates only from the Sun of Righteousness to convince us of sin , and to cause us to feel the infinity of distance intervening between us and that perfect standard of holiness that we desire , and that we shall be brought ultimately into the full , perfect and eternal enjoyment of when we awake with his likeness .

However distressing it may be to feel and realize the depravity of our natures , it is a certain evidence that we are in the light , and that that light that is in us is not darkness .

But when men , who know not God experimentally , are left to rely upon the light of human reason , human wisdom , knowledge or science , and from the possession of these , connected with works corresponding with their conceptions of God and of the things of the Spirit of God , however pious they may

appear unto men , they are but whited sepulchres , and the light that is in them , being only that of human acquirements , is darkness , and that darkness is great indeed .

Is it not , therefore , of vital importance , that we who hope for heaven and happiness beyond the grave , should examine carefully , prayerfully , and in the fear of the Lord , into the nature of that light on which we rely to make plain the pathway wherein we should walk , and to illuminate us through the dreary chambers of the valley of death ?

At that critical hour when all the glittering lights of human science and intellectual vivacity shall be put out by the cold damps of death and the chill vapors of the grave , then the scholar and the idiot , the monarch and the slave shall be disrobed of every shade of distinction , and lay down their mortal tenements in one common bed , to slumber together until the trump of God shall sound , and the Archangel 's voice shall call them forth in the resurrection of the last day .

Elder B . L . Beebe

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### 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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MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

**T**he Staunton River Union will meet with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, The Lord willing, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December, 1990. 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.

Weatherford Church is located approximately 6 miles from the town of Gretna at the Intersection of state road 760 and 763.

Elder O.K. Tench, Pastor  
Phyllis Goad, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

**T**he West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in December. The meeting will be held at Dan River Church with Moon's Creek being the host church.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator  
Sister Sartin, Clerk

IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?  
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE  
IS 12 / 90  
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1990

- Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA ... 5.00
- Mrs. Mae B. Hudson, VA .... 2.00
- Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL ... 5.00
- Mrs. Eva Hollar, NC ..... 2.00
- Mrs. Janie Fanning, AL ..... 2.00
- Eld. J.T. Prescott, NC ..... 7.00
- Mrs. S.G. Harralson, KY .... 5.00
- Mrs. Frank Scarce, VA ..... 2.00
- Mrs. Donald Arne, SD ..... 50.00
- Eld. G.W. Jone, LA ..... 2.00
- Mrs. Velma Estelle, AR ..... 2.00
- Allen Carroll, NC ..... 2.00
- Mrs. Ruth Sparkman, TX ..... 5.00
- John W. Townsend, CA ..... 5.00
- Mrs. Zanie S. Shively, VA ... 2.00
- A.R. Potter, VA ..... 2.00
- Mrs. L.A. Thompson, NC ..... 10.00
- Mrs. Nanie Moran, VA ..... 2.00
- Raymond Haygood, TX ..... 2.00
- L.W. Nichols, VA ..... 5.00
- Alonza Davis, VA ..... 2.00

OBITUARIES

FLORA BOYD

**S**ister Flora Boyd was born on January 28, 1903, in Rising Star, Texas, the daughter of Elder C.B. Teague, former pastor of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas.

Sister Boyd united with Saints Rest Church along with her husband, J. Taylor Boyd, on November 29, 1964. Brother Boyd was later or -

dained as a deacon . Sister Boyd was a loving and faithful companion to him all their days together, and an active and faithful member of our little church until her failing health limited her attendance and activities . Even then she was able to occasionally attend church through the help of her loving and devoted daughter , Jeannine Walters , who watched over her and cared for her during her final years .

Sister Boyd was a strong believer in the historic principles of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, rejoicing in His free grace , His blood atonement as the only ground for salvation of needy sinners , the absolute predestination of all things , and a firm hope in the resurrection , and life in Christ hereafter .

She went home to be with her Lord on December 18 , 1989 , at the age of eighty- six years, ten months, and twenty days . She was survived by her sister , Pruda Brown ; her daughter , Jeannine Walters ; and three grandchildren .

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor , Elder C.C. Morris . Her body was laid to rest in Laurel Land Memorial Park , Dallas , Texas , to await the resurrection morning .

Sister Boyd is yet loved and missed by those of us who knew her .

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church while in regular quarterly conference on March 4 , 1990 , with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Boyd'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 , Mod .  
Deacon Dean G. Connell , Clerk

## BROTHER WILBUR G. BROWN

**B**rother Wilbur G. Brown, beloved member and deacon of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church , and husband of Lillie Mae Merritt Brown of Florence , S.C. , departed this life February 11 , 1990 . He was born October 26 , 1912 .

Brother Brown was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace . He manifested a great love for the Church and believers of this doctrine . Brother Brown and his wife traveled hundreds of miles every weekend they were physically able to meet with the brethren throughout the Contentnea Association and its correspondents . He manifested great joy in being among the brethren and in singing the precious old hymns . One of the hymns he frequently requested was #284 in Lloyd's Hymnal — " Jerusalem , my happy home , O how I long for thee ; . . . etc . "

We miss our dear departed brother , but we rejoice in the hope that he is now resting in peace with Jesus " Where congregations ne'er break up and Sabbaths never end . "

In addition to his wife , Brother Brown is survived by two daughters : Mrs . Jerri B . Anthony , and Mrs . Judy E . Curtis , both of Florence , S.C. , two brothers , Edward and Donald Brown both of Wilmington , N.C. , a sister Mrs . Rosalee B . Etheridge of Durham , N.C. and several grandchildren .

Many years ago Brother Brown united with Mount Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church in Bishopville , S.C. . He was baptized by Elder Jerry Carter . Later his membership was with the Wilmington Primitive Baptist

Church , then at Stump Sound Church in Onslow County , N . C .

Written at the request of Stump Sound Church by an unworthy Sister in hope , the least , if one at all .

Evelyn Pratt

Written by her daughter ,  
Louise Hutcherson ,  
who misses her so much .

#### ODELL DALTON DOVE

**I**n loving memory of Sister Odell Dalton Dove , who was born on July 17 , 1913 , to the late David and Sarah Dalton in Pittsylvania County . She was one of five children .

Sister Odell was married to the late Reace Marshall Dove in October 1934 . To this union one daughter was born , Mrs . Louise Hutcherson .

For the last year , Sister Odell was confined to her home and bed . She was lovingly cared for by her daughter , son - in - law , and her sitter .

She , along with her husband , joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on December 16 , 1965 , and was baptized on May 8 , 1966 . " Do unto others as you would have them do unto you " , was a verse most precious to her .

Funeral services were conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on Monday , July 31 , 1989 , at 2 p . m . by Elders O . K . Tench , Raymond Goad , and Marvin Brumfield . She was laid to rest in the church cemetery .

Sister Odell will be greatly missed by Weatherford Church and by her family and friends . May all that mourn her loss be reconciled to God 's Holy Will .

#### SISTER ALICE GRAHAM

**S**ister Alice Graham was born on October 11 , 1902 . She was baptized at Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church of Dallas , Texas , on September 2 , 1950 . On that same date her husband , Thomas H . Graham , who preceded her in death on July 14 , 1973 , united with Saints Rest Church and was also baptized .

Sister Graham was a loving and faithful member and attended meetings as long as she was able . She loved the doctrine of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ , loved to hear the gospel preached , and rejoiced in hope of salvation in Christ alone .

For years sister Graham was the one who ordered flowers in the name of our little church when one of its members or friends passed away . It was indeed doubly sad , then , when the time came that someone else had to order flowers for sister Graham 's memorial service .

Sister Graham was called home to rest in Christ on February 7 , 1990 . She was survived by her daughter , Doris Rivard , two sons , Aubrey Graham and William Graham , her sister Bertha Carter , and a great number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren .

Sister Graham 's funeral was conducted by Elder Loyd Wall , of Bivins , Texas , who was assisted by Elder W . W . Taylor of Tinsman , Arkansas . Her body was laid to rest

beside that of her husband , Brother T.H. Graham , awaiting the glorious resurrection morning in the cemetery at Mount Zion Primitive Baptist Church , Cash , Texas .

Written by direction of Saints Rest Primitive Church while in regular quarterly conference on March 4 , 1990 , with the direction that a copy be sent to sister Graham'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 , Mod .  
Deacon Dean G. Connell , Clerk

### MAMIE A. SULLIVAN

**I**t has pleased our dear God to call from our midst , Sister Mamie A . Sullivan . She passed away November 15, 1989 at Druid City Hospital , Tuscaloosa , Alabama at the age of 95 years , 7 months and 9 days .

Sister Sullivan was the daughter of the late Elder D.T. and Gerushia ( Brazeal ) Moore . She was married to Arlie T. Sullivan on June 13 , 1915 , who preceded her in death in 1973 . To this union was born four sons , M . L . , Fred , Bruce and Lesley Sullivan , Bruce preceded her in death . Three daughters , Jimmy Nell Oswalt , Sue Quarles and Agnes Sullivan . Eleven grandchildren and sixteen great - grandchildren .

Sister Sullivan united with Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church of the Hopewell Association in Alabama , on September 24 , 1950 . She was their oldest member . She loved

church and attended regularly until ill health prevented her from going , about a year before she passed away . Her children were so good to carry her to church . She firmly believed in an all wise God that made no mistakes and salvation by Grace and Grace alone .

Her funeral was held by Elder H H . C . Moon , whom she esteemed very highly . He spoke so beautifully about the virtuous woman , which to us she truly was . She was laid to rest at Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church cemetery to await the coming of our dear Lord .

We miss her so deeply , but feel to know our loss is her eternal gain .

Written by one who loved her so dearly . . . Her daughter and little sister in hope .

Agnes Sullivan

### MERTIE TYLER

**W**e at Oak Grove Church are deeply saddened by the passing of our dearly beloved sister Mertie Tyler , who was loved by all who knew her , and whom God took from us , to live with Him in His house forever .

Sister Mertie was born March 7 , 1908 , at Chestnut La . , the daughter of D . M . and Delma Finley Godwin and was taken from our midst February 16 , 1990 , making her stay here on earth 81 years , 11 months and 9 days .

Sister Mertie was married to Sylvester , Tyler in October 1926 , and to this union God gave two sons ,

Tracy Cole Tyler , and Eldon Ray Tyler ( now deceased ) and one daughter Nelda Faye Tyler , but besides her own children , she reared three younger sisters , and three grandchildren . I believe that I speak for us all when I say , She was a mother indeed to us all .

Sister Mertie united with Oak Grove Church , February 9 , 1957 . She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace . She loved to sing the Old Baptist hymns . She loved to hear the comforting sermons brought forth through the mouths of our ministers who are well educated in the school of grace . She was faithful to the end , always standing firm in the doctrine in which she believed .

Sister Mertie was survived by one son , Tracy Cole Tyler , Chestnut , La . One daughter , Nelda Faye Tyler Tolar , Natchitoches , La . 11 grandchildren , 16 great grandchildren , One brother — Elder David Godwin , Goldona , La . , three sisters — Edith Norman and Kate Mathews , both from Shreveport , La . and Hildridge Burch of Springhill , La .

Funeral service was conducted by our Elders , David Godwin and Hilton Mercer , at the Pilgrim Home Baptist Church , under the direction of Edmonds Funeral Home . She was laid to rest beside her husband in Oak Grove Cemetery , under a mound of lovely flowers .

Although we will miss her , we at Oak Grove Church ask God that we might bow our heads in humble submission to His will , feeling that our loss is her gain and God's glory , thanking Him that we were given this time to share with her , the joy of fellowship in the church and in the

home , comforting one another .

We love her so much ,  
Written by her  
sister in flesh  
and spirit I hope .

Kate Mathews

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### GOD'S UNITY

**U**nity is an attribute of God as clearly taught in the Scriptures in the sentence , " Let us make man in our image after our likeness ." This clearly shows that there are three persons in the Trinity , for there are three that bear record in Heaven , the Father , the Word , and the Holy Ghost . These three are one . The same attributes are equally ascribed to each . They are possessed of one eternal and unchangeable will , which is the primary cause of all things . They are represented as being distinct in office work , but one in covenant relation . It seems that the object in creating the world , was to multiply the Heavenly Family . The Father gave the Son a bride . The Son accepted her , died to redeem her , put away her sins , made her pure and holy . The Father elects , the Son redeems . The Holy Spirit calls each person performing the stipulations of the covenant as agreed upon in the determinate counsel . " By the blood of thy covenant , I have sent forth the prisoners out of the pit wherein there was no water ." The three are united in all things , and are One .