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 EDITORIAL

This marks the beginning of 153 years of continuous publishing of the Signs of The Times. We want to thank God for His blessings in preserving the "Signs" for this many years, for giving us writers who have been blessed to set forth the things that are most surely believed among God's people and that which is edifying and comforting.

We thank you the readers for your continued support and we reaffirm our support of the Prospectus of the paper as set forth in 1832, and our associate editors.

We did not double our subscription list as we set out to do last year but we are pleased with the new ones you sent in. It encourages us to work harder to send forth writings you may receive comfort from and enjoy and that which exalts the name of Jesus.

May God bless all for whom it is our duty and privilege to pray.

Editors

EDITORIAL

In the 25th verse of St. John, the 5th Chapter, you will find these words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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."

He is speaking of that day--Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when they that hear the voice of God shall live and we believe that it is this day, that now they are hearing the voice of the Son of God.

As you have sat here on this hillside throughout this day and throughout this meeting, you have been hearing the voice of the Son of God as He spake to you through his ministers that He has called and qualified and brought and filled their mouths with words that would be comforting unto your soul. The hour is coming, and now is that every heir of God will hear His voice. He speaks to his sheep, and they hear His voice and a stranger they will not follow. We know there are some who say that you don't hear the voice of God, but I believe with all of my heart that He speaks to his sheep and they hear his voice. It might not be an audible voice as you are hearing me this afternoon, but it could be a small still voice as He speaks to you. And when He speaks to you, I believe you know his voice. I believe you know the one that is speaking to you. I believe that every heir of promise, everyone whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, that sometime between the cradle and the grave they shall hear His voice and will heed His call. We who were born in sin and trespasses, we who were lost in trespasses and in sin, children of wrath even as others; we who this day profess a hope in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is a reason that you have a profession of this hope. There is a reason that you come to believe in Him. There is a reason that you

look unto Him as your Shepherd. He has stirred up your pure minds, and manifested within you that spirit that has given you life, has given you to hunger and to thirst after righteousness here in this world, has caused you to drive for many miles to come and be with those of like precious faith that you might speak one to another, that you might hear the experiences of those of your brethren, that you might find that you have something in common with them, and know that you are not traveling this way alone, but find there are fellow travelers traveling along with you.

Dear beloved, the time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God. I believe that every heir of promise does hear this voice and they do follow Him. You will leave whatever you are doing when He says, "Take up thy cross and follow me."

If we are partakers of the Spirit of God, if we are one of the heirs of promise, we must partake of the suffering of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must take up the cross with Him, and suffer with Him here in this world if we are to reign with Him in that world to come. It is our precious hope, as we heard the dear Elder who stood before you, standing and trembling, coming as it were down to the end of the sunset of life, yet triumphant in that faith, speaking of how good that God has been to him, He has fought the battles for him.

Haven't you learned already that you don't have to fight these battles, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. He fights the battles for his children. We have worked out of tools and timbers, and have nothing to fight with, we stand as little children, come humble, being cast down sometimes, but thanks be unto God we are not destroyed. The precious hope is that He that has begun a work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

What a glorious way it is. How thankful we are for the blessed hope within our breast, that He has stirred up our pure mind, given us to feel that He is our heavenly Father, caused us to seek that which is food for our hungry souls, given us to hunger and thirst for something, that is better than this time world could ever give, given us to hunger and thirst for something that can only come from His storehouse of mercy. Aren't you glad that the provisions have already been made for you, stored up in His storehouse of mercy, His grace sufficient for all your needs while here in this world. He that has called you from nature's darkness, brought you into the fellowship and the light with those of like faith and taught you to know that He will supply every needed blessing.

Haven't you learned already, as He said unto the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient." Haven't you learned already these things? How gracious and how good God is? And that His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Through every trial you have ever had in this world, He has been there with you to comfort you: **A VERY PRESENT HELP IN THE TIME OF NEED.** What a gracious heavenly Father we have. How thankful we are that He has promised never to leave us, never to forsake us, but be with us always, even unto the end of the world. Isn't it a precious promise, dear mothers and fathers of Israel, that He has promised these things and you who have lived longer than some, how you have been made to know these precious truths, how comforting they are to you when you come to travel through the valleys and shadows of death, and to feel His presence with you. The power to lift you up when you come to the end of your way when you felt there was no way to turn, that you couldn't go on, the burden is too great, you just couldn't stand up. And yet, in some miraculous way you felt strength, you felt at ease,

you felt that peace that passeth all understanding.

Yes, I believe the time is coming, and now is, when the children of God shall hear His voice and they know from whence it comes, and they will be given to trust in Him as they journey from day to day as One who will go with them. Oh, how wonderful it is. I want to tell you if you are His, you are not walking alone because He is with you. He ascended back to the Father. He said it is necessary that I go away but if I go away, I will send the holy comforter and he shall abide with you always. Oh, what a blessing this is! As we journey along, and the older we get the more we realize that this world—as the dear brother said a moment ago, this world is not my home. Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble and we are journeying through a desert land while here. We are suffering with Him if we are to reign with him. As we journey on, as the trials and afflictions of life rain upon you, and as the times come when you feel you can't stand up and you can't go on, this God makes a way for you when it seems there is no way.

Mary and Martha as they went to the tomb to see the Saviour, they went along the journey no doubt they pondered in their minds, who shall roll the stone away? Sometimes the burden becomes so great that we wish we could roll the stone away, we wish we could roll the burden away, but when tomorrow comes we find the way has been opened up.

This God of heaven who promised never to leave you and never to forsake you, knows all of your circumstances. There's nothing that we can acquaint Him with that He doesn't already know. You, who may be feeling that surely there is none like you, that your trials and your afflictions and your sorrows are greater than any. And you begin to worry as Gideon of old, as he asked of the Lord if indeed I have found grace in

thy sight, why have these things befallen me? And yet we feel to know that if we are to reign with Him we must suffer with Him. And in this life He said, ye shall have trials and tribulations. I don't want to preach to you, I would love to, but the Bible doesn't teach it, and I haven't learned it from experience, that this would be an easy way for He said, in this world you shall have trials and tribulations. He said that your bread, the bread I will feed you is the bread of adversity, and ye shall drink the waters of affliction. That is your food, that is your drink as you journey here. But it is not all sorrow, it's not all down in the valley, there are times of being upon the mountain top. There are times when we want to sing praises unto His great and matchless name for the things that He has done for us. Oh, how good He is!

We heard this morning, He doesn't withhold any good thing from Israel. Sometimes our greatest blessings come in the trials of afflictions. If we are never brought down, if there is never a famine in our lives, I doubt if we would be here today, I doubt if we would know any of the joys of the fellowship and the love of God's children. But through these trials, through the afflictions, through the famine that we have to come through, we are brought down to the feet of Jesus and from there we can look up and praise His great and matchless name and know it's from Him that every good and every perfect gift comes.

When you were cast down, He stirred up your pure minds. You didn't know what was the matter with you, you didn't know and you went from day to day, one brother, I believe he said he went for three years under the burden of the ministry.

I went for three years under the burden that some day I would have to come and to stand before God's people and it came to me in a dream at night and I could see myself standing before the

pulpit speaking to God's people and the text that He gave me then was "Fear not him that is able to destroy the body, but to fear Him who is able to destroy both the body and soul." I woke up troubled. Troubled, troubled was I! Never was there any one who felt as unworthy as I. I was so bashful in my boyhood days. I couldn't stand before my school class and speak unto them. It just scared me to death. And when this came unto me, I felt that I couldn't go. Surely this dream will pass and I can find relief. But it didn't pass. It was on my mind every day. Every hour! I tried to get involved in work. I tried to pass it away. I tried to think of everything else but it would come back again. It troubled me.

I can tell you this afternoon, I can fellowship some of the experiences of Jonah as I had to go down to the depths as he went. This went on for several months and the Lord, I hope it was the Lord, visited me again in a dream and it stirred me up even more. And I began to get sick, I began to be so troubled. I began to go to doctors. I didn't seek the help of the Lord. I didn't cry unto Him. It seems that I was seeking the help of man. I went to many doctors. I went to a chiropractor doctor for nine months for three nights a week. Someone told me that they would be good for your nerves, that they could help you but the last trip I went, I left his office as miserable as ever before. As I found only temporary relief. I finally decided--I was going to a medical doctor and I told him, I have no physical pain, but I feel I am going to die. I feel that I can't live. He told me that this is something that you have inherited. You will just have to live with it.

How many nights I have had to rise from my bed and sit in the living room by myself in a chair, just sitting and waiting to die. This was a miserable condition and a horrible pit. As time passed on I got no relief, but got worse and worse. My wife would have to get up at night

and carry me to the doctor. I hope you can bear with me, as I look back upon it. You have heard so much here today as the dear elders have looked back in their book of remembrances that the Lord has written for them to talk of these things, to tell you just a little bit of the journey and the way that we've come.

And as time went on and finally one night, after a period of three years, I was awakened in another dream. But before this time—I felt that I didn't know the letter of the Bible. I didn't know anything about the Bible and I knew that our people didn't believe in seminaries. They didn't believe in going to school (to learn to preach). I just thought if I would slip out at night and attend this biblical college, I would learn the letter and if it pleased God He would reveal it to me.

And this time I awoke, my pillow was wet with tears, I had been crying. I saw myself again standing in this place. And the scripture that was given to me for a text that night was, they shall all be taught of the Lord.

I had been begging for more evidence as I went along in this trial of three years, I begged for more evidence and finally I went to my pastor, (Elder Curry King) I told him of my troubles and I told him of the experiences I had been having. He said, I appreciate your coming to me but I have been looking for this for a long time. He asked me if I would come and take a part in the next service. I told him I couldn't do that, I want more evidence, I want to be more sure of this. I don't want to do that yet. Let's just wait a while. And that's when the dream was given to me: "They shall all be taught of the Lord," and the congregation was singing "How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints Of The Lord." When they came to the verse in the song: "What more can he say than to you he hath said," it was like a record stuck. It was over and over, What more can he

say than to you he hath said? I awoke from my dream and it was then I was given to go talk to my pastor.

And a few months after that the deacons came to my home. They wanted me to open service next meeting. I said, no, no, I want more evidence and finally one Sunday when our pastor was away and we had a visiting elder, Elder Ingram was there, and they called on me again. They didn't ask me if I would take part, but the deacon asked me to open service. Elder Ingram invited me into the stand with him and I went and there attempted my first time to speak in public. From that time until now that burden, that feeling that I was dying, was taken away from me. My nerves were strengthened. I have had no more trouble with it until this day, but I don't thank the doctors because I believe I know from whence my help comes.

I believe I know that my help come from the Lord. Before this came to the end I was at an Association and the Elder was speaking from the 121st Psalm where David is saying, "I will lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help" and I believe if I've ever heard the voice of God, I believe it spoke to me and it was like a voice saying, you've been going to the wrong doctor and if I've ever tried to pray in my life, I tried to pray then, but it was to a different doctor. It was to the heavenly Physician. One that is able and does heal all manner of sickness. Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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.

If you hear these blessed truths, if you've been taught in your heart, and these things have been written in your mind, you shall live. Jesus said I give unto you everlasting life and ye shall never perish. You can be cast down but you are not destroyed. You are in a safe place as you've heard today, that our

lives are hid with Christ, in God. It's in a safe place. And He knows your circumstances here in this life and He'll be with you all of the way. I believe I know from experience these things. I can testify to you, and if I had only read of these things or someone had told me of them I'd be a false witness as I stand before you. I believe these are some of the things that God has shown me, that God has taught me and I believe that they that hear the voice of the Son of God SHALL LIVE. The children of the world don't hear His voice. They are the ones that make fun when you try to tell them of your experience. They are the ones who these things have been hid from and it pleased the heavenly Father to do so. We don't understand it, we don't know why these things are hid from them, but Christ said, "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Dear beloved, you have something precious, and is worth more to you than all the gold of Ophir or the cattle of a thousand hills. It's worth more than all of the money in this world. It's the only thing you've got that doesn't perish with the using.

This is everlasting life, this is something that is with you through this life, it is an anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. It's with you here for all of your needs. It's a stay, it's a rod, it's something to hold you up, it's something to keep you pressing on through all your trials and afflictions. It's something that's precious, it gives you fellowship one with the other, it gives you that love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast. Oh, what joy it is! Yea, it's not all in sorrow, it's not all in distress, it's not all cast down. There are times of joy, there are times when we can rejoice together as we talk of these blessed truths. This heavenly Father

has called us with an heavenly calling and how precious it is. **AND THEY SHALL HEAR THE SON OF GOD AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE**, and then He says: "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." Yes, the time is coming when they that are in the grave shall hear His voice. The graves shall not hold the children of God. If in this life only, you had hope, you would be of all men most miserable.

But dear beloved, there is something better awaiting you. Here you have had only a little tast, it's been sweet to your taste and you desire more of it and you would get more of it if you could but He gives it to you daily, that daily bread -- that which He would have you to have. He drops it down as handsfull of purpose. It's not accidently that you get it, but it's by purpose that you get it. Every heir of promise is going to get everything that God has in store for him. It's going to come down as handsfull of purpose.

I want to tell of a little experience that I had a few days ago as we stood one night in the bedroom of this loved one. He seemingly had a few days to live and is now passed on. He asked that we have prayer together. And while we were there in prayer in this room I witnessed there a light with my eyes closed -- that room lit up brighter than any light I have ever seen. I asked my wife and those that were with me when we left his home, did you see any light? Was there a light turned on while I was bowed in prayer? There was none they said. But it was the brightest light that I've ever seen and I believe surely that the Lord was present there with us.

Oh, how these things humble us, how they cause us to fear and to tremble. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Just a few days after that, he was called home.

These blessed things, these little ex-

periences we have, they are they which keep us pressing on through all of the trials and all of the troubles that we have here, yet not to be compared with that joy God has in store for you. We wouldn't ask Him to change that which He has ordained or purposed. No, it's never been my prayer to ask Him to change that which he has purposed for me. I want to suffer with Him, I want to suffer with Him because I know we must if we are to reign with Him. And it is our precious hope that we some day shall see Him, be made like Him and there be satisfied.

The time is coming that they that are in the grave shall hear. One day He's going to call those from the sleeping dust wherever they are. The final end of time and when that resurrection day comes, He's going to call all of those and it's going to be the ones I believe John saw on the Isle of Patmos. He inquired who they were, and they were those that have come through great trials and tribulations. You have to go through them, there is no detour. There's no way around them. Those who have come through great trials and tribulations and their robes had been washed in the blood of the Lamb and made white as snow. It is our hope and through the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that we do have this precious hope. If the grave had been able to hold Him, we would have no hope beyond the grave, **BUT HE AROSE FROM THE GRAVE**. He arose, ascended back to the Father and is there making intercession for you and He knows everything that you need and He will not withhold any good thing from you. May God bless you, may He give you encouragement to press on when your troubles come. Don't think it's because He has forsaken you because your Saviour suffered for you, He paid the redemption price, He suffered, He was acquainted with grief, and knew much sorrow. May we continue to jour-

ney in the oneness of faith, in that unity of the spirit, and may we continue to enjoy the sweet fellowship and have the desire that we might meet together from time to time, one with another.

A dear sister came to me at the lunch hour who I met probably some thirty years ago in this Association. She said, most of all I desired that I might see you today and that I might hear you, not that she was looking to me as a man but I hope it was because of the sweet fellowship that we had had in Christ in days gone by. She said, "Now I'm blind, I can't see you, I wouldn't know who you are if someone hadn't lead me to you, and it's good to see you." And there we talked of the things God had written in that book of Remembrance. That book of Remembrance has been so precious to me. We've heard so much of it here today as the old elders have gone back in their experiences. There's a Book of Remembrance—written in Malachi, I believe it is. He has written a Book of Remembrance for those who fear the Lord. There is a book of Remembrance written for each of you. How many times we see dear mothers and fathers in Israel come down, maybe shut in, in the nursing home, places where they can't come out and have the privileges that we have enjoyed today. But there they can go back in their Book of Remembrance, still precious and sweet to them as they remember the good times they've had together with those of like precious faith. Some day we shall look back upon this meeting, and the joys we've received here today in our Book of Remembrance.

May God continue to record these blessed things that we might look back upon them when we travel through the barron lands. We have to look back to yesterday to those things. We have to go back and we find David, I believe it was, there were times when he felt to be in a barron land and he ask the Lord to "Restore unto me the joys of Thy salva-

tion." Yes, we are made to cry unto Him from time to time that He might restore unto us again the joys of His salvation, not another, but His salvation. May God bless you is my prayer.

Transcribed from tapes of Sermon Preached by Elder Kenneth R. Key at Staunton River Association July 7, 1984.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

CORRESPONDENCE

MY DREAMS AND TRAVELS

Dear Brother Kenneth:

I hope I can write you some of the things you and I have talked about for some time back. I don't want to write anything to turn any ones head in my direction for flesh sake. I can't think of anything so ashame.

I would like to go back in my childhood days and write a letter. Mama told me so many things that I think of now. She told me when I was six or seven that the world would be burned up and time would be ended. This froze my soul, I could not think of such a thing. About that time I dreamed I was standing down behind our neighbors house, looking over the hills. I saw a wall of fire come rolling down the hill in front of me, coming my way. I said to myself, Oh! I'll be burned up. It came close but stopped short of me. I didn't feel any heat. I was so happy I was saved.

About seventeen years of age, one morning standing in front of the mirror, fixing to go to school when the thought come to me. I was looking at my face, the thought come all at once. The end of time. All at once I saw nothing, nothing, black blackness. Have you ever seen nothing? My hands drew back as if it

were hot. I don't know what would have happened if I were left in this condition.

Some time "years" later, just before my husband and I were married, I dreamed of going to the beach with he and his sister. At that point I had never seen the beach. We were walking down an old country road. We came to an old hole, an ugly place beside the road. It was full of water black as ink and real rough, about 20 feet wide. There was so many in having a good time. They said, come in its fun. I looked at that awful stuff and said no. I told them I had heard of a pretty beach some place. They insisted so I thought I'd test it with one toe, before I knew what was happening, I was in over my head. I fought with all my power and could not over come the powerful force. I thought I was gone for good. When a hand and an arm came down and lifted me out and set my feet on dry ground. I was so thankful. I saw a path about a foot wide, I started walking alone, it went bias across a feild. Walking bias across corn rows is almost impossible without stumbling. This path went into the woods, down across a little stream of water and up on to the most beautiful beach. I've been on beaches from Florida to Deleware since, but none compared to this one. The sand was white as snow. The water was clear as glass. I looked down at my feet in this water thinking, Oh! if those people knew or got word that this place was here. I was so anxious about them, I didn't pay any attention to a voice calling me. He called my name so plain, Hallie! I didn't look up. He called the second time. On the third call, I looked over my right shoulder and saw the most beautiful person. He was dressed in snow white, standing some distance from me. The sun was going down behind his head, a gold cross was in the sun. He said, there's nothing for you to worry about, everything's been taken care of. This made me so happy for I was

burdened down. I was lifted up from the earth and carried up so high, I left all care behind as if there had never been any. When I come to myself, I was back in my room over my bed. I knew my body was on the bed but I was floating in the air over it. The most Heavenly Place I can think of. All at once I was let down in my body. Then I was awaken. I wanted to go back where there was no worry or sorrow. I think of how it will be to be absent from this body of clay. I hope I've had a slight taste, I hope so.

The fourth Sunday in May, 1942, I joined Prospect Hill Church. I didn't think of such a thing when I left home. I loved the place from childhood, my grandmother, granddad and great aunt were members there. I loved the place and still do. Going home that evening, I thought I'd done the wrong thing. I felt so deceiving. I wanted to be with them. I thought surely they wouldn't want me. I felt to be a nothing. I didn't know then but I know now what I saw in the mirror that morning before going to school. "I saw myself." I thought I saw the end of time. Who said, he was nothing and less than nothing? I would go to church and feel so much like a worm. I would sit in the car until the last minute, dreading to go in, thinking maybe I'd feel better if I asked them to take my name off. Then when communion days come, I was horrified thinking of what the scripture says "He that eat and drink unworthly." I dreaded to go the the communion table. Then one night I dreamed, I was pulling an old cart up a rough hill. It was so heavy, I pulled until all my strength was gone. I stopped and asked some people coming up behind, what could be on this thing making it so heavy and hard to pull? Some one said, "Christs body." I raised up a white cloth and there laid the most pitiful body that could ever be. He was nothing but bones with skin stretched over them. He was crumpled up and drawn into every

shape. I looked on with such a hurt, I began to cry so hard, I said Oh! look what my sins have done to the Lord, waking up sobbing out loud.

Communion Services, written by Elder Joe Hamrick filled my soul in the "Signs" I feel like it took all of His blood for my sins.

There is an experience I had when I was not asleep. I worked at May's Hosiery Mill in the 40's. I ran a full fashion knitting machine for five years. One night my work was running fine, I was not bothered with anything to speak of. All at once a voice inside my being or soul said, you have got to die. This knocked me almost down, my hands drew back from the machine as if it was red hot. I thought I can't stand this. This thing left as fast as it came! The same thing happened about three weeks later, I ran from the alley, by the time I got to the end of the machine, this feeling was gone. It was such a blow, it left me shaking with a chill, I went to the Doctor, he said I was having a nervous breakdown. One Saturday morning sometime later, it was raining as hard as I ever saw it rain. This same thing, you have got to die hit me, I thought I was dying then and there. I was at home and ran out in the rain with my face turned up to the rain. I screamed, "Oh! Lord, have mercy on me." All this time from the first of this feeling, "you have got to die," to that day, I slept very little. This prayer came with such a force, as if it was bottled up and had to come out. From that day until now, I've not heard this voice again. I believe I did die that day to this worlds lust and things I see and hear every day. It made me hate myself and all flesh, "for," I know in my flesh dwells no good thing.

All these years, months and days since, its been a long ways but I don't want to go back. Something makes me look forward.

"Come see a man who told me all

things I ever did."

All through these experiences, I dream a lot, one of those I want to share with you. Time after time I would dream of living in an old apartment house. It was always three or four stories high. A lot of people lived all over it, but my apartment was always on the ground floor. I would ramble all over, up in other apartments looking. They always looked pretty, well kept and neat. I would go back and fix and fix, I'd work so hard but I never could get my apartment to look pretty, it was always tangled or messy. It worried me so bad.

There was a room up high in this building that I was not allowed in. It had a mystery about it. One time I went up, I opened the door and went in. I knew I should not go, but I did. It had the most beautiful rugs, and all the things in there was soft to look at and touch. There was an old organ over to one side. I went over and began to press the notes and no sound came. I kept pushing and pulling buttons and stops until I got the most horrible sound I ever heard. No one could live long under such a noise. It put such a heavy burden on me, I was forced to run from the room. I can't forget how pretty this room was. This room to me is the world. We can't live in it any more after we see the light. I don't think Paul could go back after this light shined around him.

I don't want to be tiresome, I do remember a lot more but I'll tell just one more.

This last June, my son called me on Saturday before father's day and asked us to come up on Sunday for lunch. I told him I wanted to go to Moons Creek. It would be hard to go to both places. On thinking, I said we wouldn't go to church and just go to his house. Ralph and I spoke about it Saturday night on retiring and said we would not go to church. Sunday morning I awoke at six o'clock, thinking of all this, I thought I'll take an-

other nap. I dreamed of seeing a house about four or five rooms, with no window panes or shut doors. It was stacked full to the top with pretty loaves of bread and every room was full. I looked in every room and thought this is the prettiest bread I ever saw. Then these words came to me, "You can't live by bread alone." I cooked breakfast, and still thought we'd go to our son's. Ralph said, "Lets go to church first." These loaves of bread came in front of me again and the same words, "You can't live by bread alone," I said to him "lets go." I enjoyed the service that day, I knew it was the truth but the climax of that dream didn't come to me until the third Sunday in July. It seemed that all the bread was served that day.

And Jesus said unto them, "I am the bread of life: He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

I'm so thankful we've got a place in out of the storms of life. Sundays are so short and the weeks are long and hard.

I'm also thankful for Greensboro "Giving me a home." I've loved you folks a long time. I find myself far from living by the things I've written. That's what worries me.

A Sister in hope, if one at all.
Hallie O. Griswald

Dear Elder Williams:

Elder E. E. Burgess, served Camp Branch Church, in the Pigg River Association for a member of years. He died in 1963, at the age of 86 years. His daughter, Mrs. Louis (Nina) Koogler found this letter that he had written to brother Perdue. At the time of this writing his eye sight had failed and he was trembly, so he dictated this letter to his wife to write for him. Nina knowing that Jamie and I knew her daddy so well thought that we would enjoy his writing, we did

as have some others, and thought that we would pass it along to you, and if you see fit to use it in the Signs for others to enjoy it is in agreement with his daughter.

Love to you and your family,
Frances M. Cooper

Martinsville, Va.
January 12, 1952

Elder J. A. Perude:

Dear Brother, your good letter came as a surprise, but a most precious one. I fully endorsed every word you have written which is to the praise of Gods glorious grace. My hope is, I have been taught by the same power you have. It seems to me we are sitting together in a heavenly place. I have been believing in a sovereign God that rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth in all events from the chigger to the elephant. To me He is God Almighty, none like Him, and none beside Him. I hope my trust is in this God of power, it would be folly to trust in any other. I have preached the gospel as being the power of God unto salvation to the believers (if I have preached), with the ability my God has given me, not shunning to declare what my experience has taught me, I hope not to please man but to glorify God. My efforts began near forty years ago, some of the old brethern preachers told me it never would be popular, but to continue to contend for the doctrine and if I went down they would go down with me. They have gone to their reward, I have been feeling I was almost alone in believing in a Sovereign God over all worlds, principalities, and powers, yet I fee He will have some faithful witness here when He comes again, I deem you one of those witnesses, not afraid to declare the truth. The doctrine of absolute predestination of all things is the most glorious doctrine on earth to me. It certainly

does not make God the author of sin. The testimony is sin entered the world by the transgression of Adam, just one man, the devil was the cause of that. God is under no law, and can not do wrong, man alone is the sinner and God is the only Savior, does not need the help of man. He is the salvation of the elect for time and eternity, He keeps them as the apple of His eye, all this great salvation came to us and the blessings we are recipients of through the mercy and grace of God.

Grace is a free favor, no worth or merit on the part of the creature. I have not written as I thought I would, I aimed to say in the beginning, you said too many good things about me, I am not worthy of such things, it humbles me. I fear I am mistaken, and that you are mistaken in me. We were at Rocky Mount last meeting and hope to be there next meeting and hope to see you there. Do hope your wife has fully recovered. May the Lord bless you and family. Come to see us and write often, I love you and your writing.

Your brother in hope.
Elder J. E. Burgess

My dear ones:

I come back from our Association thinking of you. When I return home and attempt to write one who has been kind and given me a place to rest, my first line is usually, I had a safe trip home and am thankful for this blessing. I can say that after this trip. In these days I'm always tired and unually rest very quickly upon getting home. Not this time.

There was a pressing desire to see if a certain sermon was on any of the tapes I had because a little sister had asked if I had that one on tape. I doubted it because I remembered turning the tape prior to the beginning of that sermon. I found

the sermon on Sunday night and began listening with pen and paper in hand. Two elders spoke before this one. I stopped after about two hours—there was still tape to be playyed before it gave out. Three nights I worked that tape, always with pen and paper in hand and when the Elder finished speaking with “May God Bless You Is My Prayer” being his last words there was about half minute on the tape!

Having worked all my life transcribing and other office duties, I knew there were good words in the work I had been taking from the tape and desired very much to see them on paper (typed, that is) (I always write first in shorthand). I used to tell some of my bosses after taking dictation that I would hurry and type it so I'd know what they'd said.

Oh, me, what I saw when I began typing (after office hours and one Sunday afternoon). I believed. I believed the report of this dear Elder. A few years ago I heard a little sister tell a most peculiar experience. It was so peculiar I went back to see her and told her I wanted to hear it again. Later I was impressed to write her and did, addressing her and one other sister, my message to both being, I believe.

I've often thought of the word “believe.” With my natural mind it seems so easy to believe, but, if not deceived, there is a power in the belief spoken of in John 3:16 and power is not of us, is it, dear ones? If indeed and in truth I have belief, God himself gave it to me. I do hope sometimes that all within me is not sin. I just hope, I don't know. But you know I don't care to talk of my sins.

I'm thinking of some of you who were not with us at this meeting. Brother Jones and Tilda, we missed you and hope that the dear Lord shall be pleased to restore some health to your body and again send you to be with us. Elder Wray, I missed you and Sister Wray. I heard you are improving and we hope you

shall be blessed to meet with us soon. And Elder Griffin, I don't know that we expected you and Sister Griffin, but we just kind of hoped you might be with us. I hope God may be pleased to again send you to us.

We were blessed with the nicest weather I remember seeing at an Association. I was so thankful for this. Elders Shipman, Cabbage, R. Smith, Agee, Spangler, L. & K. Key, L. & J. Hollingsworth, C. Robertson, Carters were some of the elders I think of now who were with us. And Elder Brown, it was good to again hear him tell of the little man Jesus who came to his trundle bed when he was a child. I believe Elder Brown's report. Isn't it wonderful to believe? To be given belief.

My dear Sister Doss and Sister Susie, I just wanted to say I was happy to see you and hope you are feeling better, Sister Susie. And Sister Dalton, I missed seeing you. I hope I can see you again soon. You know the Union Meeting is to be at Springfield this month, the dear Lord willing.

I have almost spoken to all of you who have been with me these days. Sister Phyllis and Brother Raymond, yes, I thank the dear Lord for a safe trip home. I've had many good things to think upon these days. I enjoyed being with you and thank you for kindness to me.

Sister Blaylock, does not the God of heaven work in a mysterious way? Your feeling, love and desire were conveyed straight to me. Several things I should have done these weeks but I wanted so much to work on that sermon. I enjoyed doing it. I saw things not seen when hearing it at the meeting. And I yet hope to make corrections and send a draft to Elder Key.

Dear ones, I've enjoyed thinking of you in these days. I know I've put many words on paper and said very little. But to me you are that little world of mine, untouched by the things I see and hear

every day. May the dear Lord give us belief.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral
7-25-84

102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153
August, 1984

MATTHEW 23:37

Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wing, and ye would not.

We all know the history of these people concerning the way they dealt with prophets of the past. Down through the years they had repeatedly rejected any and all messages or prophets sent unto them. All this is stated very plainly in these verses. What we want to consider here is the last part of these verses. How often would I have gathered thy children together but ye would not. Now think about that thing for a minute. Jesus, the Son of God is telling these people that He would have gathered them together as a chicken does her young, but they would not. Now, I believe that had He gathered them together, there would have been more than just physical gathering or natural food and such. But, had He gathered them in the way He was talking about, I believe it would have meant many blessings, spiritual blessings, fellowship, etc. Now think about this for a minute. Jesus is saying I would have done all of this had you but come unto me. Now mind you, He did not call them, had they been called, they would have come, much the same as did Lazarus, but He said I would have gathered, but you would not.

Does this not sound like the doctrine

of the world today? How many times have you heard it said. If you will turn from your ways, accept the Lord, etc. you will be saved. It sounds like here it is a matter of will, because Jesus said, but ye would not. Now let us consider this will a little and see some of the reasons why they would not.

1. **PS. 110-3** *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.*

Look for a minute at the great King Nebuchadnezzar when he took the three Hebrew children to bow before his image. He was a mighty man among men and when he gave an order, people obeyed. But, who, or what are great men in the sight of God, less than nothing. When he told the three Hebrew children to bow, he didn't care whether or not they were willing. It seems he was only interested in having his way, exercising his power. But, see the great difference between the way man thinks and the way God thinks. The scripture says thy people are willing in the day of thy power. To keep from getting too lengthy I will not attempt to show how these people would be made willing. I avidly believe all the brethren have experienced this already. For now, suffice it to say, had they been His children they would have been willing.

2. **Phillip 2:3** *He works in you both the will and the do of His good pleasure.*

He plainly states that he came to do the will of his Father, and had it been the will of the Father for these men to come unto him they would have come. Don't the scripture say he works in his children both the will and the do? And we can clearly see here that the will to come had not been worked in these rebellious people.

3. **John 8:43-44** *Why do ye not understand my speech, even because you cannot understand my words, ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of him you will do.*

See how plain it is, there is absolutely

no guess work or chance in the decree of God. Does he not say that he knows the end from the beginning, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. Of a truth he had compassion on these people and he expressed it. Does the scripture not say, he came unto his own and his own received him not.

4. **John 6:44** *No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him.*

Now, I ask you, were these men drawn? Of course not. Jesus goes on to say "...and any man who comes unto me I will in no wise cast out..." How can it be made any plainer, there is no contradiction in the scriptures. Any time it seems to contradict is simply the way men see it. If one is the child of Jehovah, he will be called, it will be worked in him the will and the do, he will be drawn, and, he will not be cast out. If one is not a child of promise, he is of his father the devil and the lusts of him him he will do. Now to clinch the point a little further, let's say that these people did try to exercise their own will and try to accept God as the great multitudes do today. What do you say about that? Simply this **2 Peter 2:22** *"The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."* Or to put it another way, clouds they would be without water.

If left o himself his will most surely will be the path and ways of darkness because in him there is no light. But one of God's children is never moved against his will in the way that Nebuchanezzar tried to force his will on men. But, the Great God of Heaven and Earth makes you willing, works in you both the WILL and the DO of his good pleasure. How many times have you seen someone who was physically handicapped, sick, crippled and in pain, go sometimes great distances just to see and be with the brethren to hear one of God's humble servants speak of the great things God had done

for his people? How many times have you worked hard all week and your body really needed to rest on Sunday, but you were more than willing to force yourself to get up to go to meeting? I tell you, those who have had the blessed God of Heaven work in them through the Holy Spirit know what I am talking about. They know how their will, wants and desires have been changed, instead of wanting the things of sin as they once did, now they despise them. Furthermore, they hate the part of themselves (the carnal man) that still drags them down and causes them to do things they shouldn't

and even don't want to. They say with the Apostle Paul, oh woe is me. But even with all of this, his children are made to praise his great and glorious name to give him the praise and thanks for everything, for they know from where their help cometh.

They know they are being held up with those everlasting arms and have a faith that is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. May it please the good Lord for these few words to bring a little comfort to some of his little ones.

Frank C. Hunt

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Salem Primitive Baptist Church, also known as "Head of the River", was established in 1784. The meeting house is located on 221, three miles south of Copper Hill, Virginia.

In November of 1983 we introduced in the Signs, Salem Church showing their meeting house which was built in 1876, along with a notice of their hopes for building a new building in 1984.

God so wonderfully blessed their efforts and under the ministry of Elder Roy Agee, they now have the new build-

ing shown above. A beautiful new church and pleasingly decorated. Elder Agee was so pleased to see it finished, never realizing his funeral would be the first service to be held in the new church. (See his obituary in this issue).

Their meeting time is eleven o'clock on the second Sunday morning of each month and Saturday before at the same time.

The church has recently called Elder Hale Terry as their new pastor.

VOICES OF THE PAST

“he being dead yet speaketh”

SORROW UNTO DEATH

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. “The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.” Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind; what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter and hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God’s judgements was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and prepared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in this mystery are “unsearchable and past finding out.”

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the

salvation of those within the ark. So while death was passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God’s wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness could not come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was as absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were “preserved in” him, as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not to the place where extremity of sorrow brought him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. “Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me.” But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this hour; yet now that it had come, “he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy.” No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever

was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." And again, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath," (Lam. i. 12; iii. 1.) Now that the hour had come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of others' sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him if it were possible. So great was his suffering that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it "was pitched within and without," so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from which the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die alone, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not with him, but in him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter iii. 20.) The water that

drowned all flesh upon the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jesus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sin. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of God, the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had all been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffetings of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it all was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifested as having been saved in Christ

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the dear Savior can never be told to the understanding of any one who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the latter case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings never knows at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossing and shaking of the ark, not knowing what was going to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that

was above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came out on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the meaning of their strange experience.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and at every farther advance into this awful mystery the learner is alone. They are led by a solitary way. "They shall mourn apart; every family apart, and their wives apart." Each one says to himself, "No one can be as vile in heart as I." Each one feels his own to be an especial case of depravity. If he has been kept from outbreaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet he sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, "Behold, I am vile, I abhor myself." Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of being alone in all our troubles on account of our special sinfulness attends all of the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of the especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear Savior. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, for it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought come to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning "for him whom they have pierced," then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were

on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are. Truly they are "groanings that cannot be uttered." What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our souls when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our souls the blessed promise of the Lord that "the waters shall no more go over the earth," and "that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us." How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel, yet that promise has held good, and will be good unto the end, for it is "Yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are "coming up out of the wilderness."

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you, my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness, but it is just what you feel of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinful-

ness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble contrition and selfabasement before God when you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God, the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted, and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on the stormy sea; but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and rises to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the Spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religious works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek unto the Lord to be led by his holy Spirit.

“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord’s people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God.” We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that “whatsoever we do we

should do all to the glory of God.” The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help and encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, “You ought to obey in order that you may feel better.” The Saviour’s obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of grace, “You ought to be baptized; it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better.” But his reply may be, “I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord’s people.” Now it is for us not to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your souls to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself,

and you have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declared, in the power of the spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But oh, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many a time you have said to yourself, "Surely I must never undertake to preach again." Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which he has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down, for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul, who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church, and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who want them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her."—Isa. lxvi. 10. We must all wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, he always comes "right early." All our times are in his hand, and they can neither be hastened or delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands, to give us daily

errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty; yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God; and if it is only to relieve ourselves of responsibility, and "to feel better," that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quiet go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He and not man, give the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circum-

stances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) It is that salvation which the psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the apostle speaks when he says to Timothy. "In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee," and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus "saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins." The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in time of darkness and distress, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our Sun, and his salvation, like the sunlight, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. Who speaks of another salvation which is not of grace, but of works? That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost are edified and multiplied, (Acts ix. 3) and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Saviour visits his erring children, and restores them to the joys of his salvation. All our times are in his hand, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels

the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "Behold, what wondrous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I." And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life, and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidences of a depraved nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says, "What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, 'but the grace of God which was with me'." So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of and says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and there is no one left out of that heavenly choir when they sing in perfect accord, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

MEETINGS

CANAAN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Canaan looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They, therefore, called for a presbytery to be formed the 14th day of October,

1984 at 2:30 p.m at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Virginia, for the purpose of examination of this gift, brother Harvey Wood 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 sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting was opened by prayer by Elder O. K. Tench. Elder J. R. Williams was elected as moderator and Deacon B. B. Williams to serve as clerk. Brother Richard Stegall, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Harvey Wood to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures in the third chapter of Timothy, verses one through eight by Elder O. K. Tench. Examinations followed by Elders Lane Carter and Haywood Wray. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Leonard Key. The charge was delivered to Brother Harvey Wood by Elder J. R. Williams and Elder Noel Conner. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

Participating in the presbytery were the following Elders and Deacons:

Elders: J. R. Williams, O. K. Tench, Lane Carter, Haywood Wray, Leonard Key, and Noel Conner.

Deacons: Richard Stegall, Raymond May, Fred Murphy, Claude Hopins, Wilson King, Clay Brown, Russell Holley, Marvin Brumfield, Stafford Houston, Coley Strader, Silas Payne and B. B. Williams.

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 Harvey Wood.

The presbytery was dismissed by

prayer by Elder O. K. Tench.

Elder J. R. Williams, Moderator
Deacon B. B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST FOR OCTOBER 1984

Mrs. Donald Arne, SD.	\$15.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD.	\$15.00
Ora S. Conner, VA.	2.00
Lee Gooch, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Gilbert L. Coate, WA.	2.00
Mrs. Luther Procter, NC.	1.00
Elder Gerald Shipman, TX. ...	2.00
Fred Murphy, AR.	2.00
Mrs. Mamie Moran, VA.	1.00
Frank & Ella Simpkins, VA. ...	12.00
Marjorie Harris, CA.	2.00
Mrs. Doris Rowland, VA.	2.00
Raymond C. May, VA.	5.00
R. L. Fleenor, TN.	7.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER JAMES LEROY (ROY) AGEE

It is with a feeling of much sadness that I attempt to comply with Salem Churches request to write an obituary of our dear belated pastor whom we feel is at rest.

Elder James LeRoy (Roy) Agee, age 71, died August 6, 1984. He was a member and pastor of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, also pastor of Paynes Creek and Laurel Creek, all of Floyd Virginia. He served as co-pastor of Valley View Church of Riner, Virginia. For the past eleven years, he had served as moderator of the Smith River Association.

Survivors include two sons, Donald L. Agee, Christiansburg, Virginia and Larry J. Agee of King, North Carolina; three step-sons, Melvin and Donald Gearhart, both of Copper Hill, Virginia and Larry Gearhart of Salem, Virginia; his mother, Sarah Moran Agee, Christiansburg, Virginia; six sisters, Ruie Poff, Ruby Hawley, Doris Hawley, Frances Lewis, Madeline Bonham and three brothers, Rosco, Andrew and Floyd Jr.; four grandchildren and seven step-grandchildren.

Brother Roy walked humbly and softly among his brethren preaching most firmly that Salvation is by Grace and Grace is a gift of God. His foremost conversation was to talk on the scriptures. The Lord's exact time had come for Brother Roy's departure. His work on earth was finished, the battle was fought and though he had fought in much weakness of body, he was blessed by the grace of God to serve his churches faithfully, visiting the sick, his brethren, friends and neighbors. He was loved by many as proof of the host who filled the Salem Church on August 9th for his funeral. Elders Amos Hash and Raymond Goad conducted his funeral with many comforting words, afterwhich he was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. May we all who mourn his departure be reconciled to His Holy Will and be comforted to know that our loss is his eternal gain.

Approved in conference October 13, 1984 by the church that a copy be made in the church records, one sent to the Signs of The Times, one for the Smith River Association Minutes and a copy be sent to the family.

Submitted in loving memory of our dear pastor.

Mary Poff, Clerk
Willie Ratliff, Asst. Clerk

IRMA L. MESSICK

Our Heavenly Father caller from our midst a dear sister and friend, Sister Irma L. Messick on June 20, 1984 at the age of eighty-two.

She was born April 30, 1902 in Whitesville, Delaware, the daughter of Smiley and Hannah Birthingam. Sister Irma united with Little Creek Church, Delmar, Delaware and was baptized May 11, 1968. She was a faithful member and is sadly missed.

Her late husband Edmund P. Messick, Sr. died in 1966. She is survived by five sons; Edmund P. Jr. of Minquadale, Howard T., Robert J. and Donald H. all of Delmar and James A. of Salisbury, Maryland. One brother, Reese Brittingham of Delmar and a sister Doris H. Simion of Detroit, Michigan. Three grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

Services were held at Marvel-Short Funeral Home in Delmar with the Elders Robert N. Lackey, James F. Poole and Lou G. Bradley all of Salisbury, Maryland officiating with burial in Little Creek Church cemetery in Delmar.

Maggie M. Jones, Clerk

SISTER ETHEL V. ROEBUCK

Sister Ethel V. Roebuck was born September 23, 1893, in Martin County, N. C., the daughter of Samuel and Sally Blount Roebuck. She departed this life on May 9, 1984, making her life on earth almost 91 years. She was married to Connor Roebuck who preceded her in death. She was blessed with six children and four of these preceded her in death.

Sister Ethel asked for a home with Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church,

first Saturday in March, 1961, and was baptized the following Wednesday in Rogers Pond by Elder W. E. Grimes. She remained a loving and humble member as long as she lived. She attended church regularly until she became unable to attend the last three years of her life. After she became unable to live alone, her two sons provided a home for her and looked after her welfare.

We realize her two sons will miss her very much, but we Pray God may comfort them, the grandchildren and her sister with the presence of His love and tender mercy.

Flat Swamp Church will miss her, and we express deepest sympathy to her family. We extend to them a desire to have them visit us at Flat Swamp Church at any time. We feel she has gone to that rest prepared for God's children to await that final call.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Reeves Smith, at Biggs Funeral Home in Robersonville, N.C. She was laid to rest under beautiful flowers in Robersonville Cemetery in the presence of her family and many friends.

Done by the order of Conference, Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1984.

Elder Reeves Smith, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Sister Johnnie Gray Everett
Hassel Allen, Committee

LELIA ODELLE WELLS

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write the obituary of my sister in the flesh and I hope sister in Christ. Sister Odelle was the daughter of Eugene and Mae Compton, she was born July 29, 1909, and departed this life December 23rd, 1983. She was

married to John Edward Wells, to this union was born one son, John Edward Jr. Her husband passed away three years after their marriage. She leaves to mourn her, her only son John Edward, and two granddaughters, Mrs. Cathie Hunt of Connecticut and Ms. Caroline Wells of Roanoke. She also leaves six sisters and three brothers and numerous neices and nephews.

Sister Odelle spent most of her young life caring for her son and her small sisters and brothers that were left when her mother died at the early age of forty-six. She cared for them until they were all married even though her father remarried.

Sister Odelle united with North Fork Church and proved to be a faithful member. Her Pastor was Elder Raymond Payne. Elder Rufus Brown baptized her. She was chosen Clerk of her Church soon after she joined and filled her seat as long as she was able until she became ill. She was a devoted sister and a good neighbor. The greatest tribute she left in her memory was her love for her church and the Lord and Savior.

She was laid to rest in North Fork Cemetery to await the Glorious coming of our Lord and Savior. Truly it can be said she was willing to spend all and be spent for those she loved.

Written by a loving sister,
Ada Campbell

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POETRY

Could we with ink the ocean
fill,

And were the skies of parch-
ment made;

Were every stalk on earth
a quill,

And every man a scribe by
trade.

To write the love of God
above,

Would drain the ocean
dry.

Nor could the scroll contain
the whole,

Though stretched from sky
to sky.

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EDITORIAL

“For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
Ephesians 2:8-10.

All people receive what we may term a grace in a natural way, in having a being, a life, and the preservation of it with the mercies of life such as food and raiment, yea, even the very air that we breathe which man is unworthy of. But the special or particular grace of God which is applied to some people only such as electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, calling, and sanctifying grace is what we are, I hope, interested in.

May we now look at the grace of God as displayed in acts of goodness toward his people. The grace of God when displayed toward his people is an act of love, mercy, and goodness bestowed upon them. It is no other than love unmerited and undeserved, exercising and communicating itself to them by Christ in a free and generous manner. The grace of God arises from the goodness of His nature and not from anything in the creature; and is exercised according to His own sovereign will and pleasure. *“I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.”* **Exodus 33:19.**

First, the grace of God appears in the election of His people to everlasting life and is therefore called the election of grace and is denied to be of works. *“Even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.”* **Romans 11:5-6.** This act of the grace of God was passed on in His eternal mind before any works were done, good or evil, and without any consideration of them. *“For the children being not yet 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.”* **Romans 9:11.**

May we at this time view some cases of God’s dealings with His people as recorded in the word of truth. First, let us view the case of Rahab, the harlot. *“And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot’s house, named Rahab and lodged there.”* **Joshua 2:1.** I believe they were divinely directed to Rahab’s house even though it was not likely the two spies were personally conscious of it, at least, until after they had arrived there. God’s providence sometimes acts silently by working in us *“Both to will and*

to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. The two spies may have thought they acted freely in going to Rahab's house, yet their steps were "ordered by the Lord."

It seems clear from the scriptures that Rahab was converted before the two spies entered her home, for she said unto the two men: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land." "For the Lord, your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." Joshua 2:9, 11. Surely the language is that of a believer. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she received the spies with peace." Heb. 11:31. It is indeed a rare sight to see one stand alone for a righteous cause when surrounded by her own idolatrous people who believed not. This change in Rahab's heart came about only by the operation of God's divine grace. Rahab, being a Canaanite was a complete "stranger to the covenant of promise." There were no scriptures for her to read, no preachers so as to hear the gospel. She had been playing the role of a harlot, and was "by nature a child of wrath, even as others." There was nothing in this poor sinful woman to commend her to God. By her own choice she was given up to the vilest of sins. But by the divine mercy of God, she was predestinated a chosen vessel in Christ Jesus from all eternity. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Romans 5:20. "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 ye are saved.)" Ephesians 2:4-5. Do we not see in Rahab's case (as well as our own) the wondrous workings of God's power in His exercise of divine sovereignty and the manifestation of divine grace? God being the Supreme Judge is not bound by any law other than his own free will, and therefore he will "have mercy on whom he will have mercy and on whom he will he hardeneth."

The great Apostle Paul whose name was changed from Saul to Paul is another example of "By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "Not of works." Saul was in authority when Stephen was stoned to death. "And cast him out of the city and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." Acts 7:58. "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem." "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women committing them to prison." Acts 8:1, 3. Saul was filled with fury against the church up to the very moment of his conversion, and believed that in persecuting them he was rendering the highest service to God. He did not seem to doubt that what he was doing was of a righteous nature. Saul was a religious man who believed in the works of the law as a means of his salvation. He fully despised the new sect and their crucified Messiah and regarded them as religiously dangerous. How many people in this world today, who profess to be religious, consider the blessed truth (as it is in Christ Jesus) to be dangerous? Paul was, by the grace of God, called from the darkness and ignorance which he was dead in, into the marvelous light of God's grace.

After Paul's conversion, he was a new man and was shown what he must do which was a spiritual work the ages would bless. He was "baptized" and was with the Lord's disciples several days at Damascus. He became a member of a noble brotherhood of Christians. The lion had become a lamb. Why? Because of his good works? No, because he was a chosen vessel unto the Lord and was ordained for a great work unto the Lord. He bore the name of the Lord to the Gentiles. When we look at Paul's conversion, can we not say that it was from

first to last the work of the Lord, the work of His grace and mercy toward Paul? *"I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."* Can we not look back on our own experience (if we have experienced a change and have been given a blessed hope) and say the same? Paul by his sudden transition was made to realize the impossibility of man saving himself or to have any part in his eternal salvation. He was given to see his total dependence upon the sovereign grace of God and the redeeming work of Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection. I trust we have all (by the grace of God) been shown the same.

The conversion of the thief upon the cross was indeed a great display of divine grace and mercy. The cross of Christ is to some a saviour of life unto life and to others death unto death. To them that perish it is foolishness, but to them that are saved, it is the wisdom of God and the power of God. Matthew and Mark both record that they who were crucified with Jesus, reviled him which seems that both may have reviled him at first while hanging on their crosses. But by the grace of God, the heart of one was changed in a moment. The one changed when ready to fall into the hands of Satan was plucked as a brand out of the fire and made a monument of divine grace and mercy.

The thief was given faith to believe that the kingdom of Christ was of a spiritual nature and not of this world. He was also given faith to believe that Christ was the Messiah and was without doubt that Christ would enter into his kingdom and glory after death. The thief said to our Lord Jesus, *"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."* Luke 23:42. This was a prayer of a dying sinner to a dying saviour. Jesus grants a blessed favor to him. *"This day thou shalt be with me in paradise."* (verse 43) What a glorious display of God's grace, love, and mercy rendered to one of his elect

vessels in the last few minutes of his natural life. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

"By grace are ye saved." This is a spiritual salvation contrived and secured in the covenant of grace for those who are of Christ's love. It is applied to His people by the Holy Spirit who applies it in faith and hope. Because of the certainty of it, they are said to be already saved through Christ their head. It is a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, its curse, justice, and from death and the wrath to come. It includes all the blessings of grace and glory and is entirely owing to free and sovereign grace.

This grace involves all the three persons in the Godhead, for men are saved by the grace of the Father who drew the plan of salvation. The Father made a covenant with the Son, in which it is provided and secured, and sent him into the world to obtain it. By the grace of the Son it is provided and secured. The grace of the Holy Spirit makes his people sensible of the need of it and supplies it to them giving them faith to hope in it. For it says, *"through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God."* Salvation is through faith, not as a cause or condition of salvation, or as what adds anything to the blessing itself, but is the way, or means, or instrument which God has appointed for the receiving and enjoyment of it. Faith is not the product of man's free will, but is the gift of God. Salvation through faith is consistent with salvation by grace.

The elect of God were chosen in Christ Jesus from all eternity. They were given to Christ as his bride, as his church. The death of Christ was the means set apart from before the foundation of the world for the saving of them. Christ died as a sponsor *"For when we were without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly."* Romans 5:6. The grace of God toward

his people is independent of all merit and worth in them. *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."* 2 Tim. 1:9. Grace is not grace unless it is altogether free.

The very statement that we are saved by grace implies that we are fit subjects for grace; and who are fit subjects for grace but the guilty, the wretched, the condemned? When the law of God condemns us and brings us guilty before God and like an iron bolt, closes the gates of heaven against us in our feelings; yet this cannot be so if salvation be of grace. Whatever our many sins may be, their greatness will only serve to illustrate the greatness of God's grace, for *"Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,"* Rom. 5:20. Undeserved mercy can pardon one sin as well as another. If God acted on the rule of merit with us, then no sin would be pardonable; but when God deals with us in a way of grace, he can pass by any offence as seeing us in Christ Jesus, for *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."* Rom. 8:1.

If salvation be of pure mercy only, why should not God forgive ten thousand sins as well as one? To blot out ten thousand sins is with him no effort of grace, for *"He is plenteous in mercy,"* Psa. 86:5. The Lord's mercy is an ocean which cannot be filled though mountains of sins be cast into it. You may say, I believe God can save me but my nature is so inclined to sin, especially inclined to certain kinds of sins; but remember God does not deal with his people according to nature. *"For we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* God does not deal with us on the grounds of our nature, but upon the blood and righteousness of his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. Why should the harlot

perish? Why should the thief perish? Why should the murderer perish? For thus saith the Lord, *"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool."* Isa. 1:18.

You may feel as I so often do and say, why do my thoughts and even my acts be so involved in worldly things? O, Lord, teach me to pray, let me not pray as the Pharisee offering up a legal plea that is based upon self. There is nothing in me, O, Lord, but sins and corruption. My sins are laid before thy all seeing eyes as the grains of sand on the seashore. My words are laid bare before thee. Lord, save me from these black and foul things for thy infinite mercy's sake. Lord, thou art merciful, thy mercy will find ample scope in me. Lord, thou are the great physician, I'm sick through and through of my sins. Lord, is not thy mercy free? Come to me, O, Lord, for thy mercy will find a grievousness of misery in me. Lord, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgression. *"Have mercy upon me, O, God, according to thy lovingkindness. According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."* Psa. 51: 1, 2.

"By grace are ye saved." The statement of the text means that all his people need saving. Saving from our sins, and from the consequences of them: And if we are saved, it is not because of any works which we have already performed. Neither are we saved on account of any works foreseen which are yet to be performed by us. Who among his quickened children, upon looking back on his past life, would dare say that he deserves salvation? Thank God that *"Christ died for the ungodly"* and that *"He came into the world to save sinners. By grace are ye saved."* This is true of every saint on earth and every saint in heaven. May

God have mercy upon us all is my prayer.

In bonds of love,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



REED CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Reed Creek Primitive Baptist Church was constituted December 4, 1823 in Henry County, Virginia, being a charter church of the Pig River Association which was organized in 1825. The Church is located on Reed

Creek Rd., off highway 220 North, two miles beyond Bassett Forks, Bassett, Virginia.

Their meeting time is eleven o'clock every second Sunday morning. Elder J. R. Hollingsworth is their present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

EXPERIENCE

I have always thought that the hardest thing in Scripture to believe is

that God sent his Son down from heaven to save sinners; to fetch home again his banished; that his banished be not expelled from him, (2 Sam. xiv. 13, 14; Gen.

iii. 23, 24) the more especially if they are or were as great sinners as the record in my conscience reports of me. The Bible is and always has been easy of belief with me, the story of creation, of the flood, of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Exodus, the Jews and the history of Jesus our Lord, all is easy reading until I come to his laying down his life and taking it again to save ungodly sinners, unspeakably vile as I know mankind to be. Well, yes, it may be so, I assent, the Scripture says it is that way; perhaps he wanted to save people not for what they are as worth saving, but for the educational possibilities in them as vessels of mercy. Yes, I could follow that far, but there came a time when discussions of the extent of the atonement, and of the mercy of God, ceased to charm me in sermon, book or sweet conversation, and a new question startled me, Was I embraced in the plan of salvation? Did Christ love me and give himself for me? That was Paul's limitation of the atonement. The audacity of the man's faith, as I thought of it, and spoke of it. There was another me that I was carrying about with me. This me, to me the most important me in all the world and the most hateful, for in me there was no good thing, not one, only sin. I saw no door of hope, no way of escape for this me, nor from this me. It would exhaust the plan of salvation to save me. Anybody else might in mercy be reached, but mine was an outside case. But this train of reflection was not so appalling when I was young, a lad, a youth, for in those bright, halcyon days I was taught and believed unquestioningly that sincere people could join the church by complying with certain conditions that entitled them to claim the promise. "Do your part and God will do his," was the formula. I accepted the contract when I was nearly seventeen years old, and tried to believe I had the remission of my past sins. There was something akin to comfort in that frame

of mind, but what the readers of this experience understand by "the joy of salvation," "joy unspeakable and full of glory," I had no conception until forty-seven years later, when it pleased God to show me his salvation, (there is but one,) and call me by his grace out of marvelous darkness into his marvelous light. For which I hope to thank and praise him ten thousand years from now.

As I was saying, the time came after forty years wandering in the wilderness of theological controversy and confusion, when I saw there was no salvation for me in the plans expounded from the various pulpits and presses of the times. I felt that I was lost, had sinned beyond possibility of forgiveness. I had no doubt of it, and so I told Elders and brethren and sisters in Tennessee and Georgia, and finally in despair one night in Columbus, Ga., I prayed God to relieve me or kill me, for I was utterly unworthy to live longer in his world. I felt to be the worst and most inexcusable sinner that did ever live. Mine was the misery of remorse, and the goadings and stings and tauntings of a wounded spirit. I had sinned against light and knowledge, not merely the sin of nature, that our preachers speak of as inherited from Adam, but sure enough sins, for I had broken the commandments again and again, and so I said to God, always adding, "Is there not one crumb left for me on thy table, or under it?" I had in other years often made and prayed fashionable prayers, but in these four dismal years of trouble and woe and sorrow I had to pray a prayer borrowed from a despised publican, who stood afar off, and would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

There comes times when that same prayer wells up in my heart, bubbles from my lips and streams from my eyes. Yet tears of contrition, but not of despair, fill my eyes as I write.

To begin at the beginning, I was born of wealthy parentage, grew up proud and wayward, went to school ten or twelve years, was in two colleges, joined a new church in my seventeenth year, (there have been seven new churches come in since my arrival,) and was ordained to preach the doctrine of the new church when I was turned twenty-one, and preached it twenty-five years. Then I studied, and I may say became proficient in a church newer by eight years, and preached its doctrines fourteen years, when it pleased God that I should see that there was no salvation for me in either of these splendid organizations. Then the darkness of Egypt fell upon me. I knew that I was a doomed and damned man "without hope and without God in the world." I then undertook a review of all current theologies, designing to pick out the good, the beautiful and true in each, and construct a composite theology, a mosaic system, that would wash. I went deep into the mines of comparative theology, and found wood, hay and stubble in abundance, but of gold, silver and precious stones not a gem. Chaff and trash in plenty, but of the "corn of heaven" not a grain. Meantime my sins were crushing my poor soul with mountain weight. Whither should I fly for refuge? The Arminian cities of refuge I had thoroughly explored. There was no safety there for me, this me, the only me, of all the me's in the world, that I was especially concerned for, what is to become of me?

My concern about myself came of certain events prearranged in the providence, and as I now have the happiness to think of them as the predestination of God, who works all things together for good to them that love him, and are called according to his purpose in Christ Jesus, before the sun began to shine, or ever the world was. In those dateless depths there was a book written containing the names of the future citizens of

Messiah's kingdom and given to him and called most significantly "the Lamb's book of life," because he, as a condition of his inheriting the headship over them, collectively called "the city of God," must wash them from their sins in his own blood and purify them for himself a peculiar people, the word "peculiar" meaning a purchased possession. Happy they whose names were written in that book. Whatever may betide them in "this time world," as brethren speak, "they shall never perish." Alleluia and Amen, world without end, they shall never perish! O, in those dark days of my trouble of which I have told you, my dread and fear and horror was that I should without doubt perish forever.

My father and mother of God's own choosing, joined the Old Baptist church the Sunday I was just six weeks old. When I was about four years I heard my first sermon; it was preached by Elder Russian, at old Mars Hill Church, in Williamson Co., Tenn. I sat by mother and was very happy. I do not remember a word he said, but I have the pleasant picture of him on my heart, and I caught his delightful solemn tone of voice, and when a little older in that same tone used to climb the dogwood trees and preach to the negroes as they were clearing new ground. One night there was a meeting at our house, and my blessed Old Baptist mother shouted, (she was about twenty-eight or thirty then) and you see I have not forgotten that shouting. I might go back, if you can bear so tedious a narrative, and say that Dr. John M. Watson was our family physician, and was present the Sunday morning when I was born. When I was grown and preaching the most brilliant of the varieties of Arminianism, he told me that he had dandled me on his knees many a time. He was the greatest Old Baptist minister of his day. His last words were, "I am going in peace." O, that God would give me to go that way!

Me again. Yes, and you and all our brethren and sisters.

One morning when I was about ten years old I stood before my mother; she was sitting on the lower step of the stairway, and told her that last night I dreamed of seeing the Savior. I had jumped off the hill back of our house and lit in an open plain, and there stood the Lord. With his right hand he smote me on the left cheek about as my mother might smite me when she was vexed, (though I remember nothing of that sort from her) and then said, "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." Mother turned pale and went up stairs, I now think to weep and pray and rejoice at the visitation of her Lord to her boy, who, she told one of her lady visitors, she thought "would be a mighty good man, or a mighty bad one." The Lord appeared to me in that dream. I shall know him when I see him again. His tall figure, his kingly, benevolent, concerned look as he said those words to me, will never fade from memory. When in my trouble I related this part of my experience to a company of Old Baptist preachers, in Butler, Ga., Elder Respass said, "Brethren the Lord has been working with this man from his childhood." When I related it in Elder Veach's house he said, "That is when you were quickened into life."

"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." That was my authoritative conviction of sin, to be followed by conviction of righteousness, and then of judgment. But I did not become a better boy. I was a bad boy; conscience smote me day and night. "Conscience of sin" followed Sheppard, always at his heels, giving him no rest except such as Arminian opiates afford, and they, you know, only make the case worse, as our Savior pointed out in the case of a certain woman who spent her all paying physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. There is only one physician for a sin-sick soul, and by his knowledge he justifies and

cures, "for he bears their iniquities."

"Now Sheppard, be a better boy," has been ringing in the chambers of my soul through all my pilgrimage, over three oceans, in foreign lands, on the Rocky Mountains, and I hope in company with mother to thank the Redeemer for that first visitation.

The next time I saw him, the same Jesus, was in vision, 9 o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, in an upper room in a young banker's house, Fort Valley, Ga. There deploring my woeful condition, reading Romans six, a chapter or two in Galatians and Philippians, all of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, from feeling that I was the greatest sinner in the world, I was made to feel that I was no sinner at all. Christ whom I saw in the vision, the scene was as plain as was the original reality. He was there dead on his cross, having borne all my sins away 1789 years before I was born. From being the most miserable of all born of woman, I was given to feel the happiest man that ever lived. That very hour, as many a time since, I called on the angels to help me praise God for sending his son to save sinners. I wanted to fill the vaulted dome of the eternal mansions with hallelujahs. At last my burden was gone, and conscience free from guilt. Christ had died for me. I saw him there that hour seeming to hold himself on the cross. You know he had to lay down his life. "No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself." All that scene is as plain to me now as it was that Tuesday, 28th of September, 1886, seventeen years ago. But it was with me as in the call of the chief of sinners on his way to Damascus; there was a light above the brightness of the sun laid down upon the bright light of that morning, and it was all over the face of the world eight hours, whichever way I looked. Whether that light was in the body or out of the body, I have never felt to inquire; one thing I do know, that light was there, a

soft, benevolent, heavenly, restful light, and it was spread over a vast plane. On that plane there was nothing to break the level seemingly ninety miles in its sweep, saving the projection of a large rock, mostly buried in the ground, like the church I was destined to join, most of its members in the dust of the earth, waiting for the "better resurrection." Only a small portion of this church visible now. And I was to live alone on this wide plane. So it has so far turned out, only now and then finding rest in "the shadow of the great Rock in a weary land." I have not known how otherwise to interpret this part of the vision. O, I was so glad that day, so happy, so full of joy, words fail me to describe it to you.

Next thing in order I knew I must be baptized by somebody that knew how it was done, and what for. I had, as I thought, been baptized already not once but twice before. There must be no mistake about the matter this time. The oldest church without a historical founder was the Old Baptist; they were the humblest of religious folk; they were sweet-hearted, no big I's nor little u's among them. I was on all sides descended of Old Baptist stock. I always venerated the Old Baptist church and people.

The next spring after the marvelous light into which I was delivered, out of the marvelous darkness, at Fort Valley, as above narrated, I went before the tribunal of God at Butler, Ga., was received and baptized by order of the church, by Elder John Rowe, lately deceased, and I was again as happy as a soul overwhelmed with the love of God could be. O, I was so happy. Soon after this I had to endure the trial of permitting a brother to wash my feet in church. I submitted with what grace I could, but when I got down on my knees to wash his feet, I was in heavenly places in Christ then; I felt like a big lump of nothing. When you want to get close to God, you must descend the depths of humility, as indeed you had to

do when you joined the Old Baptist church. Whatever you may think of them, there is no people like them on the face of the earth. They are the only people I know that believe their own religion. They worship in spirit, and live by the faith of the Son of God, who loves them now, and loved them before all time, and to the ages of the ages. The Spirit of God in their hearts enables them to bow at his feet to lay hold of the robe of the eternal Majesty, look up into his face, and with the feeling of little children cry, "Abba, Father," confident that he knows what they want. Their only fear is that they do not behave themselves as prettily as his children ought. What a joy it is to me to be one in the unity of the Spirit with them; to be recognized by even one of them.

This poor relation of my sweet experience admits of a word of comment. I submit to your judgment whether the history of it from "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy," to the vision of the Redeemer on his cross, and the great light laid down above the brightness of that bright Tuesday's scene, and the inward feeling of peace and joy, was not the work of the divine Spirit. What but the holy Spirit's power could possibly make a sinner knowing himself vile and guilty feel that he was no sinner at all, Christ having suffered for him the just for the unjust, and this relief coming on him not gradually, not by a course of reasoning, but suddenly and abiding to comfort him with hope as one of the heirs of salvation? O, it must have been the operation of God. I was a saved man, saved, yes, that is the word. I know my unworthiness before and since, but am afraid to lay anything to the charge of God's elect. See Romans viii. 32-39. O, let me rejoice in hope of the grace to be brought to his people at the coming of the Lord in that day.

In another dream or vision, glorious beyond words to tell, I saw for the third

time the Lord, the same that appeared to me at first, on the Mount Zion, surrounded by the thousands of thousands of his saints in white robes, and golden girdles, and he was placing diadems upon their heads, with a word of welcome to each one. Thus in my case the holy Spirit, may I not believe, convinced me of sin, "Now, Sheppard, be a better boy," then of righteousness, Jesus by his death having fulfilled the righteousness of the law in my stead, and then of judgment when he received and crowned his purchased ones with the immortal life? Yea, let me believe and cherish all this; I can, I do, and fall at his feet a sinner saved by grace, amen and amen.

Yours in hope of a better life,

WM. S. SPEER

Benton, Ark., June 8, 1903.

"THOU SHALT
CALL HIS NAME JESUS."

NAME divinely given, coined in heaven's mint, and then brought to earth and given to an infant lying in a manger. Emmanuel, God with us. Divinity and humanity form an alliance never to be served again. God and man one for evermore. The highest glory of God made manifest in the depths of humility, poverty and weakness. Extremes are blended in one person, and he the sinner's only friend. No wonder many were astonished at the birth of him who was set for the falling and rising again of many in Israel. "He shall save his people from their sins." And he said, "I will redeem them from death."

Here reason fails, princes are turned backwards, and the mighty are fallen to the earth, their crowns are laid down, and their honor perisheth, for this is the King of Nations, and the Lord of heaven;

the wise seek to him for wisdom, and princes pay him homage at his feet. Truly, God's strength is made perfect in weakness, weakness of the Lord Christ, that infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laying in a manger. Did two such extremes ever thus meet before, and blend together in such harmonious unity? No, and they never will again, save in the salvation of sinners, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. No wonder that the angels desire to look into this mystery: God manifest in the flesh. He who flung abroad the heavens, and hung abroad the stars as chandeliers of light, dwelt in the babe of Bethlehem, and became a man too poor to pay his taxes.

Did ever such wealth and poverty meet? Yes, here it is in the Lord of glory without where to lay his head; the foxes were richer than he, in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. He who was rich, for our sakes, became poor, that we through his poverty, might be made rich. All is yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. For this he wept and prayed, died, and purchased all things with his blood, which was more precious than gold. O, righteous Father, the glory thou hast given unto me, I have given unto them. O, peerless boon of eternal joy, and sinner, it is thine through the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and by faith in his name, who died and rose again. For by faith we enter into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

I'm rich to all intents of bliss

If Christ the Lord be mine.

Art thou poor, without house or home or shelter, wandering in deserts, and mountains, and caves of the earth? He had not where to lay his head. Do the tax gleaners vex thy soul, and cast thee into prison for debt? He wrought a miracle to pay his own tax, and in his poverty thou art rich, rich in faith, and heir to an immortal throne within the jasper walls of

the heavenly Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of us all. Hast thou no friends? Thou shalt find them there. Hast thou no home? Thou shalt own a mansion there bought with the blood of Jesus, and garnished with all the graces of everlasting love. Yea, God is thy Rock and Portion forever. Are thy garments vile and filthy? His spotless robe of righteousness shall cover thee. Is thy body misshapen and earthy? Thou shalt be like him, in the image of his glorious body, wearing that glory which was his before the world began. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." These are the words of the Holy Ghost, by the lips of an apostle of the Lamb of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Art thou a sinner then, and believest in his name? Then his blood avails for thee, and even death is thine, as the passage way to mansions in the skies. This is a present salvation, and that not on conditions of subsequent obedience, which Jesus wrought out and finished when he died, for what God hath promised, he is able also to perform through the cross of Christ, for the cross of Christ is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." This is the word of promise, which is embraced in the oath of God to Abraham and to his seed. Ye are saved by faith now, and shall be to all eternity, and though the earth be removed and cast into the depths of the sea, I will not fear nor be troubled. God is my Rock and portion forever, and underneath are the everlasting arms. The divinity of Christ in humanity is embosomed forever in the eternal God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was "Cruci-

fied through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but shall live with him by the power of God toward you," says Paul, who was at the head of the saints of God in weakness. So much I have written for the babe in the manger.

Your brother,
I. N. NEWKIRK

102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153
August, 1984

Mark 15:34

At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" Brethren, I must admit that this is a deep subject, and I might say, what does man know about such a great, terrible and glorious thing as this. Terrible, because such a deed was done by wicked men, glorious in the fact that God loved His people with such a deep love that He made this great sacrifice that His people could stand before Him holy and without spot or blemish. Let me be the first to say that myself, the worm that I am, the least of the least should not be trying to write on such a subject. I will not try to make any excuses, but suffice it to say, I must write on it. This scripture has been on my mind, I do believe for a period of perhaps a year. I do believe I must write, so we will take it from there. May the comforter who leads us into all truth direct this pen to the extent that this may be a comfort to some of God's poor people.

Many times I have heard our own ministers speak of the terrible physical pain that was suffered in a death by crucifixion, and speak of how our Saviour must have suffered. Please don't get me wrong, I agree that it must have been

terrible. The very thought of such a death proves to me over and over again of what an awful coward I am. I believe our Saviour suffered all those physical pains that accompanied that awful act, however, that was only a part of it. Can you imagine for one instant the Son of God, the one who spoke this great world into existence, the one who breathed life into our very being and made us a living soul, can you see or understand how he humbled himself and allowed sinful, proud and boastful men to spit on Him, ridicule, taunt, mock and treat him in such a terrible manner. Oh! The shame of it all. The scripture says, he endured the cross, despising the shame. But, these things I have mentioned, are they all of it? No! No! A thousand times no! The things I have mentioned did not cause our Saviour to sweat as great drops of blood and pray in anguish and say, "*If it by thy will, let this cup pass from me.*"

Let us look now at the time when Stephen was facing death, after he told this crowd of people about their many sinful ways and acts, including killing the Prince of Peace, this angry mob took up stones and were in the act of stoning him to death. What did he do? He raised his eyes to heaven and calmly said. "I see the Son of Man standing on the right side of God." Then, praying he said, "Lay not this sin to their charge."

The Apostle Paul as he was about to face death said, "I am now ready to be offered. I have kept the faith, I have fought a good fight." Look at the numerous times he faced an angry mob and was whipped or starved nigh unto death.

Look now back through the years and see the three Hebrew children as they heard the great King Nebuchadnezzar issue the order, throw them in the furnace. I ask you, what could be worse than facing something so horrible as being thrown into such a fire?

But, look at these instances I have mentioned and you will see that as bad,

or as horrible or painful as they were, did you hear or see where anyone prayed with such an anguish, let this cup pass from me. Where did these men get such courage, to face these terrible situations in such a calm manner? Why we all know it was given them by this very Son of God that I am now writing about. By this we can see, the terrible thing he faced was far worse than any of these examples we have just mentioned.

Look now at the Gosp. of St. John 1:1 - "*In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God.*" Now, we all know the word that is spoken of here is not the written word, the Bible. I believe the Bible is the written word of God but this was ages before the bible was ever written. So we see that the word here means the Son of God, as it does in many other places in the scriptures. See what the scripture is saying here, the WORD was with GOD and the WORD was God. What does that tell you? There was a unity, a oneness, a togetherness, a band, a fellowship, a closeness that the world cannot see or ever understand. Does not the scripture say the three are one, Father, Son & Spirit?

I can't write and describe that closeness, neither can anyone else, but I will give a feeble example.

Phil. 4:7 "*The peace of God which passeth all understanding.*" This is a small example of what I am writing about brethren. Has not the great God of Peace and Love blessed and even for only a brief moment to experience that most wonderful sense of peace. Now, since the scripture says it passeth understanding we know that there are no words in the English language that will describe it, and by an ignorant man like me especially. But, when a man has been given to experience that wonderful thing, it won't last that long, but you never forget it. It is a sweet taste of heavenly glory and the memory of it will swell up within your very soul and then you can speak of the sweet

hope within your breast and the great desire to see the fullness thereof. Maybe you aren't given the power and ability to speak of and tell about it like some are, but it works in you exactly what is needed and what the great God of Peace desires. See each child is treated in just such a manner to bring him to fit into the entire building just exactly as it was seen in the mind and purpose of God throughout eternity. Now, as much as this means to a child, as sweet as it is, it, I must say, is nothing to be compared to the sweet fellowship, the holy bond that existed throughout all ages between the Father and Son.

Now, we look at St. Luke 22:42-44.

"Father if thou be willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

Brethren, what do we say now? Do you believe Jesus feared death this much? The scripture says He took upon himself this body of flesh that he may lay it down. Was it the thought of pain that caused Him such anguish? Was He not stronger, greater than Stephen, Paul, 3 Hebrew children? We know for sure that Jesus, the Son of the Living God, gave all the men we have mentioned here and countless millions more a peaceful time to depart this sin cursed life of time here on earth, and even more than that, He has given His children such faith and hope that they in confidence pray "Oh God in Heaven, if it be thy will give me a peaceful time to depart, knowing by faith that he is able."

Now, let us go back to this cup. The scripture says, "He that knew no sin was made sin for us." Yes, brethren, that is exactly what was in that cup. The sins of all the chosen people of God. Can you imagine how awful, how dreadful they must have looked in his most Holy

sight. Just think what a terrible thing it must have been, one who knew no sin, one who had never committed a sin, had no unclean thoughts, lived in complete fellowship with the Holy Father. Brethren, just the thought of all my many sins make me shudder when I think of it. I do believe and I think very strongly so, that although your sins be as scarlet, they shall be washed white as snow. I do believe, and do not hesitate to stand up and admit in salvation by grace, that is, if I am saved, it was and is all by grace and through all of the work done by the blessed Savior, the Son of God. In any and all of my best efforts there was nothing to help but only to hinder on my part. But, brethren, let us all stop and think about this thing of sin, we should think on these things I have just written, and let us view this thing called sin as the hideous thing that it is. I am not saying for you, or me, or us to keep ourselves. I know we can't. But, brethren, I do believe that once we view sin in the light we should see it as it is. Then let us lay aside the sin that doth so easily beset us. Earnestly ask our God and Saviour to lead, guide and direct our footsteps ever thinking about the great price that was paid for our redemption. Because we were not redeemed with such filthy things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Is. 53:11.

When speaking of this great redemption, Isaiah, the prophet said, He saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. Just think about this thing.

"My God! My God why has thou forsaken me?" Why did He feel forsaken? Why, after all He had done, feel so alone, and for the first time, feel forsaken by the Father? Isn't this what was meant when the prophet said, he saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. The sin that Jesus took on himself, in our stead, to redeem us, to make us acceptable caused this anguish on the part of the Saviour. I

believe this was what caused the sweating as of great drops of blood, and the anguish praying, because sin was so dreadful in His sight.

Frank C. Hunt

The order of the church consists not in any mere external forms or ceremonial rites, but in the spirit of love to the Lord and to one another. "God is Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Then the order of this spiritual house must consist in something more than a mere formal observance of duties which may be laid down in rules written on paper. The law of Christ must be in the heart, and the Spirit of Christ must direct every act of obedience in those who follow Him in the order He has appointed....

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:10) "Love is of God." (Jn. 2:7) This is the spirit in which every action must be performed to be in the order which the Lord has commanded. In this spirit every action is in order, with out love all is out of order.

Even though the letter of the law of Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, may have been followed in every particular in a case, instead of being in order, it is at best but mockery, if the motive for action was anything but that love which seeks only the glory of God and the good of the saints.

Wm. L. Beebe

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

EDITORIAL OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

ROMANS IX. 22

"What if God, willing to show his wrath?"

It is not strange that men should contemplate the mercy and grace of God with satisfaction, while they dread his awful wrath, for we have all sinned against him, and should he display on us his wrath, as we have displayed our rebellion against him, no flesh could endure the weight of vengeance under which we should be crushed. The greatest Arminians we have met with, seem perfectly willing that God should show his mercy, his long-suffering and kindness to the children of men, while they deny his right, in justice, to show his wrath, but how few consider that eternal justice calls for wrath, and when justice calls for wrath, that justice would be violated, outraged and trampled upon, if mercy should take the place of wrath. Depraved men, in their unregenerated state, find it hard to conceive how the holy God can pour his wrath on them without violation of his justice, especially if he has made any discrimination, and saved some from wrath, and consigned others who are only of equal guilt, to wrath. But quickened sinners, when under his mighty hand, convinced of their own lost and helpless condition, wonder with much greater admiration, how God can be just, and yet the justifier of any of the guilty sons of men.

Whatever, however, may be the views or speculations of men upon this subject, God has on various occasions shown his wrath in his providential government of

the world. In bringing the flood upon the ungodly in the days of Noah, and sweeping the guilty race from his footstool; in the case of Pharaoh, Amalek, Moab, and upon the heathen nations of the earth, and that he has done it demonstrates that he did it willingly, or willed to do it, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For his pleasure, we are told, the earth and heavens are and were created, and that he doeth his pleasure in the army of heaven and among men, and none can turn him. Had God been unwilling to show his wrath, who could force him to do it against his will? And had he not been willing to show his wrath; when the Son of God hung writhing on the cross, by what door could grace and salvation have entered for any of the guilty sons of men? But, was God willing to show his wrath, and to pour his vengeance upon the suffering, bleeding Lamb who died on Calvary? *"It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief."*—Isaiah liii. 10. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. For this very purpose came he into the world. *"Then, said I, Lo, I came to do thy will, O God."*—Psalm xl. 7, 8; Hebrews x. 7, 10. And when the dreadful hour had arrived for which he came, he was seen crushed with agony in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, and praying, *"O, my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass."* But no other way was possible. *"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."*—Isaiah liii. 6. And where iniquity was found, the bolts of justice must fall. The doleful prayer wrung from the agonizing heart of the suffering Saviour, fully establishes the doctrine for which we contend. *"If it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done."* Could wicked Romans or spiteful Jews, could earth or hell inflict on him one pang beyond what was the will of God? Never, we confidently affirm, from the creation of the world to the great burning day, has wick-

edness of men or devils been so fearfully developed, never has hell belched forth so much spite at any time, as when the immaculate Lamb of God, loaded with the iniquity of all his people, stood the victim. Truly against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determines before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. *What if God willing?* Does that make him the author of sin, or does it afford the man a just cause to blaspheme his holy name? God forbid. Because God has power and wisdom to control, restrain, permit, overrule, and even to make use of the wicked acts of men and devils, just as he pleases, does that imply that he is himself a sinner, or that sin flows from, or is compatible with his nature? Absurd and preposterous. Nay, wicked and blasphemous as such conclusions are, the charges are often belched forth from infidel lips, and alas! must we add, that some of God's dear children have thoughtlessly, or carelessly indorsed the horrid blasphemy, by arguing that if he absolutely governs and controls all beings, all worlds, and all events, then he is, or must be the author of sin? But, be entreated, dear child of God, to pause and consider this matter a moment. Must God lay aside his crown, must he yield some part of his governing power, in order to escape your charge? But you say you admit that he has all power, and that he controls all events and all worlds. But, forget not that he is the infinite God; of one mind, and none can turn him; what he wills to allow to-day, was his will yesterday, and from everlasting. You cannot believe that he has found out anything new, that he did not have in his mind and will before he made this world. One of two things you must admit, either that Jehovah knew precisely what kind of a world he was about to make, and

that he made it just as he intended to, or else that he has been disappointed in his purpose. You dare not deny that this world with all its vast machinery, is precisely as the omniscient eye of God saw it, before the days of creation: peopled with all its infinite variety of men, and beasts, of birds, of fishes, of serpents and of worms, from the grosser objects down to the myraids of animalcule which people a single drop of water. What part of the history of the world have we a right to believe God did not know from everlasting, and what may we presume he knew, and yet had not in his inscrutable wisdom determined? Is there a sparrow or a worm, by him created, for which he has no use? True, we may not know or comprehend the use of many of his creatures, but we are finite, and have only that measure of intelligence which he has appointed and provided for us, and beyond that measure who can go?

But, once more. What if God be willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known? The apostle anticipates the ranking venom of the depraved hearts of men, and says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will?" In one general sense, every carnal man has and does resist the will of God, they are not reconciled to it; they hate it, and employ all their depraved powers in opposing it, as Stephen charged the persecuting Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." But how vain is their resistance? All the powers of earth and hell combined cannot prevent the execution of his purpose so as to cause a sparrow to fall, or bring even a single hair of our heads prematurely to the ground. But in the sense evidently intended, the apostle does not say that any have or can successfully resist the will of God. Woe to the world, if they could. What then would it avail us to know that it is our Father's good will or

pleasure to give us the kingdom, if he were unable to execute his will? But must it be inferred that if God is so infinitely wise and omnipotent, that he executeth his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, that he has therefore no right to punish men for their wickedness which he overrules for his own glory? This is strange logic for infidels, but stranger still for christians. "Nay, but O, man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, why has thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known?" Has he not an undoubted right to do so? Are any of his creatures able to give a reason why his will shall not be the supreme rule of his government? If any of us feel that it would be unsafe for us, why do we mock him by praying, "Thy will be done," and then object to his universal control and government of all beings, and of all events, according to his own sovereign will?

But, instead of the frightful images painted in the vain imagination of men, as to the consequences of his wearing the crown, bearing the sceptre, and occupying the eternal throne, let us consider how he shows his wrath, and how he makes his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

If it were his sovereign pleasure to show his wrath and to make his power known upon the vessels of his wrath, by crushing them to atoms, or by such signal displays of his power and wrath as when he destroyed Sodom, or when he deluged the world in the days of Noah, his right to do so could not be contested. But it is his will to show his wrath and display his power in a very different form. *By enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.*

By allowing them to pursue their own course, act out the enmity of their own wicked nature, walk in the light of their own eyes, and to fancy themselves the masters of their own destiny. Long has he suffered them to dispute his reigning power, and to call his sovereign government unjust. With much long-suffering has he spared their lives, afforded them health and strength to fill up their cup of iniquity, by stoning his prophets, killing his messengers, under the old dispensation, and with what endurance and long-suffering has he allowed them to drench the earth with the blood of his saints, and even to stain their guilty hands with the blood of his dear Son. With what forbearance did he wink at the idolatry of the Gentile world before the advent of the Redeemer, and how has he, for purposes of righteous wrath, allowed the anti-christian powers of iniquity to make drunk the nations of the earth with the wine of Babel's intoxicating cup. Even now, what more awfully retributive judgment of God can we contemplate, than to be suffered to reject and defy his government, and to pursue our own course, the course of this world, under the power of darkness, in the pride and vanity of our own hearts treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? Why has he suffered the wicked to prosper, or seem to prosper, in their abominable wickedness? Had he no power to restrain them? He had, for he has all power. But it is because in his inscrutable wisdom he saw fit thus to show his wrath, and to make his power known on them.

How, or why is it that unto his chosen, redeemed, regenerated children, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and from all others this knowledge is withheld? Because, in this very way it is his sovereign will to show his wrath and make his power known. Nor is this a matter for his saints to regret or deplore. Having the mind and spirit of Christ, we will rather with him rejoice and thank

God that he has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because so it seemed good in his sight. If our Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in spirit at the accomplishment of the sovereign will of his Father, can we possess his Spirit, and yet desire that it should be otherwise? If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

We do not say that God could not display his mercy without also making a display of his wrath, for we dare not limit his power and wisdom, but the Scriptures teach us that it is in wrath, that he remembers mercy. (Hebrews iii. 2; Isaiah lxi. 2; lxiii. 1, 6.) The very first intimation of mercy made to fallen man fully expressed this doctrine. The seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. God's people were preserved by the destruction of their enemies. Egypt must suffer the wrath of God, that the Hebrews might be mercifully released from bondage. The same miraculous display of power which wrought the salvation of Israel at the Red Sea, overwhelmed in wrath, and utterly destroyed their pursuing enemies. The everlasting salvation of the church of God, from sin, death and hell, was made manifest by the wrath which her sin-bearing Savior endured, when he carried her sorrows and bore her griefs, when the chastisement of her peace was laid on him, by whose stripes she is healed. And the final triumph which awaits the saints at the resurrection, their bodies will be raised simultaneously with the destruction of the last enemy which is death. What then, we once more inquire, "If God, willing to show his wrath and make his power known,"

*"Shall man reply against his God,
And call his Maker's ways unjust?"*

*"Shall mortal man presume to be
More holy, just or good, than he?"*

**Does it not rather become us to be still
and know that he is God?**

The will of God being the only recognized standard of holiness in heaven, whatever that will dictates, whether of wrath or grace, is right, and just, and harmonious with all the eternal perfections of Jehovah. If then it be his will to launch the fiery bolts of vengeance down upon the ungodly, or even to bruise his only beloved Son, when the guilt of his people was laid on him, or if he choose to redeem from sin, and death, and hell, millions of the chief of sinners, and ultimately to raise them up to crowns and seats at his right hand, all, all we need to know is, that it is the will of God, and then we know it is all right, for that will is the true standard of righteousness. High as the heavens rise above the earth, are God's ways and thoughts transcending our ways and our thoughts. Therefore, with the apostles, we beseech the saints to be reconciled to God. Our brightest, our only hopes of heaven, rest on the complete and perfect execution of the will of God in all things. If in a single thing it could possibly fail, that failure would shake the very foundation of our hope. It is because he is God, because as God he changeth not, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. O, may we then in sincerity and truth pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.
August 1, 1860.

MEETINGS

The West Country Line Union Meeting will be held with Dan River Church the fifth Sunday in March, 1985.

All lovers of the Truth are invited and all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Brother Boyd Minter, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Brethren and friends of the Pigg River Association with our correspondents, thus assembled at Pigg River Church, Roanoke Church being the Host Church, 3, 4, 5 of August, 1984. We greet you in the name of the Lord our God. Happy is the man that can truthfully sing all my trust on Thee is staid for God will keep them in perfect peace. Well did the Poet say, Once there was a Precious season when my Saviour smiled on me, every groan His grace did sweeten, every bond His love set free. We thank God that He has preserved our Association that we might come together and worship Him and sing praises unto His Holy Name. We would invite our Sister Associations, Sister Churches, and friends to gather with us in this meeting and hope God would make you all feel welcome. What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us? As we gather for this meeting may God give us to look one to the other in love and our coming together will not be in vain. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. May God bless us to the end.

Elder Rufus Brown

NOTICE TO CHURCH CLERKS OR PASTORS

All notices for publication should be sent in 60 days prior to the time of your meetings. Also, if you haven't already done so, we would like for you to send us a picture of your meeting house along with a brief history of same, regular meeting time and name of present pastor.

Editors

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FOR NOVEMBER, 1984

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OBITUARIES

JOHN RICHMON BURNS

John Richmon Burns was born in Leesville, Louisiana on July 9, 1894. Making his stay here on earth 89 years, 10 months and 28 days. He was affiliated with Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church in El Dorado, Arkansas. Sur-

vived by his wife Mattie Lou Harris Burns, two sons, Richard H. Burns, and Billy J. Burns, one daughter, Bobbie J. Adcox all of El Dorado, Ark. Also two brothers, Clifford C. Burns of El Dorado and Gilbert Burns of California. Two sisters, Ruby Gilchrist of Center, Texas and Lidy Brown of Houston, Texas. Five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

I had several long visits with Brother Burns the last five years of his life and found him to be well read in the bible together with a good memory. He loved the things which I quoted from the Bible at his funeral. The very facts of one loving the doctrine of Salvation by Grace is one of the best evidence of one being borned again, not reborned, but borned again such as Romans 8:28-39.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are 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.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Who is he that condemnt? It is Christ that died, ye rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or perils, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are

killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord.

This is a chain of events ordained of God that no man will ever break.

His funeral was held July 9, 1984 at Resthaven Memorial Gardens in El Dorado, Arkansas by Eld. David E. Turner, and laid to rest in Resthaven Cemetery.

Written by the request of
his children and family
Elder David E. Turner

ESTELLE CORUM DIX

Estelle Corum Dix, daughter of the late Eddie Rain and Betty Gammon Corum, was born March 26, 1905 in Rockingham County. She was married to the late Dillard Dix on July 2, 1942. On May 24, 1958, Sister Estelle asked for a home in Dan River Primitive Baptist Church where she remained a loyal member, attending her meetings regularly, for as long as her health permitted. She loved her Church and the doctrine it stands for and always enjoyed meeting with her beloved brethren.

Siste Estelle was in failing health for several years before God, in his infinite wisdom, called her home on July 30, 1984. Though we shall miss her here below, we are comforted in knowing her suffering and afflictions are ended and she is now asleep in Jesus. Funeral services were held at Dan River Primitive

Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, on August 2, 1984. Her body was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, when He shall bid his children rise to meet Him in the air and ever be with Him.

She is survived by three brothers, Irvin Corum of Eden, Marvin Corum of Reidsville, Spencer Corum of Ruffin and one sister, Mrs. Rosa French of Eden. May we be blessed to know that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church in conference on August 5, 1948.

Jean Moran

MARY V. FLOOD

God, in His Infinite Wisdom, called Sister Mary V. Flood from this life August 6, 1984. She was born Sept. 16, 1892, the daughter of Bryant and Jennie Vick. Her stay on this earth was ninety-one years, ten months and twenty-one days.

Sister Flood was married to Lonnie R. Flood of Edgecombe County. He died in 1960. Ten children were born to this union. Two of her children preceded her in death. Surviving are two sons; Johnny and Solomon of Rocky Mount, NC. Six daughters; Edna Browder of Lawrenceville, VA., Josephine Creech of Wilson, NC., Dorothy Turner, Mae Lancaster, Louise Perry and Virginia Traxler, all of Rocky Mount, NC.

Sister Flood united with Pleasant Hill Church Sept. 25, 1938. She was faithful to attend meetings as long as she was physically able. Due to declining health the last two years of her life, she was not able to meet with the brethren and friends. She believed strongly in Salvation by

Grace and that Jesus was the Author and Finisher of her Faith.

Her funeral was held at Johnson Funeral Home by her Pastor, Elder Henry Jones, who was assisted by Elder C. B. Davis and Rev. Ashby Browder. She was laid to rest in Williams Cemetery beneath a beautiful display of flowers.

She will be missed by those who loved her, but we must be submissive to God's Will for we know that He does all things well.

Written by order of Pleasant Hill Church in Conference, Sept. 22, 1984.

Alvin Lancaster
Elder Henry Jones, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

LANNIE HUGHES

A dear member of Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., Brother Lannie Hughes, was called to rest by our Heavenly Father August 31, 1984 at Jackson County Memorial Hospital.

Services were held at Tim's Chapel of Memories, with Elder C. C. Morris of Dallas, Texas officiating. Burial was in Altus Cemetery under the direction of Tim's Funeral Home.

He was born April 12, 1896 near Altus. A son of pioneer parents, the late John and Kizzie Hughes. Was married to Alice Mae Thrush March 22, 1914. She preceded him in death on December 22, 1978. A son, Steve, also preceded him in death in 1943.

He is survived by one son, Jack Hughes of Fredricksburg, Texas, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Brother Hughes joined Little Flock Church on May 27, 1968 by experience

and baptism. He was baptized by Elder W. W. Taylor.

We wish to bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Fathers Will at his passing.

Ava Stewart, Church Clerk
Altus, Oklahoma
Little Flock Church Little Flock Church

SISTER

BESSIE MAE EDMONDSON NORWOOD
November 1892 - April 1984

As a Committee appointed by Flat Swamp Primitive Baptist Church, I will attempt to write the obituary of our dear deceased sister, Bessie Mae Norwood.

She was born the daughter of Nathan Thomas Edmondson and Harriet Louise Griffin Edmondson on November 28, 1892, in Robersonville. Most of her life was spent in the Robersonville community. She was married to Thomas Coffield Norwood on January 27, 1909. The Lord blessed this union with two sons, Paul Turner and Thomas Edward. Her Husband and son Paul preceded her in death, but Thomas was blessed to care for his mother in her latter days. When she became unable to maintain her home in Robersonville, he moved her to his home in Chesapeake, Virginia, where he and his wife gave her special care and love she could not have received anywhere else. Three of us from the church were blessed to visit her shortly before her passing on April 4, 1984. We found the home very warm and comfortable for her, with all conveniences near her room. A short time before her death, she was placed in a nursing home near Thomas's home, and he checked on her every day. May God's blessings continue with Thomas and his companion

for their devotion to her.

Sister Bessie felt the Lord was dealing with her, and she asked for a home with Spring Green Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder B. S. Cowan the fourth Saturday in September, 1914. She was a true and devoted lover of the Primitive doctrine and her church. Her membership remained at Spring Green until June, 1973, when she moved her membership to Flat Swamp for the convenience of attending service. She attended her church regularly as long as she could, and then she was thoughtful in writing and supporting the church.

We of Flat Swamp extend our deepest sympathy to Thomas and his companion and to the two grandchildren. We along with them will miss her, but we feel she has gone to that rest that only God can give. We pray the vacancy of her passing may be filled with the presence of God's love and tender care. We extend to the family a desire to have them visit us at any time.

Her funeral was conducted at Flat Swamp Church by her pastor, Elder Reeves Smith. She was laid to rest in Robersonville Cemetary under beautiful flowers in the presence of many relatives and friends. May she sleep in peace until she hears her heavenly Father call, "Child, come home".

Done by order of conference, Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1984.

Elder Reeves Smith, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Hassel Allen, Committee

SISTER DELLIE PICKERAL

The Lord called home Sister Dellie Keese Pickeral. She was the

daughter of the late Alonza B. Keese and Sally Holly Keese. Sister Pickeral was born August 29, 1901. She was the widow of the late Norman H. Pickeral.

Sister Dellie Pickeral's survivors are six daughters: Alease Creasy of Chatham, Becky Turner, Mag Mayhew, and Joyce Brumfield all of Gretna, Jean Ware of Providence, N.C., and Libby Hedrick of Altavista. One sister: Bertha K. Bowen, Burkesville. Seventeen grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Sister Dellie was a dear and faithful member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism, September 12, 1937. Sister Dellie loved her church and brethren and came to meetings as long as she was able. She passed from this life, July 2, 1984. Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Earnest Roebuck. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

We pray God will reconcile all to his will. Sister Dellie will be sadly missed.

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

OSCAR LEE PRESLEY

Brother Oscar Lee Presley, a beloved member of Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla. passed from this life to his eternal rest July 13, 1984, lacking 15 days of reaching the age of 101 years.

He was born July 28, 1883 in Holly Springs, Miss. to John and Adelle Presley. Was married to Mattie Maud Redden January 6, 1909.

Survivors are 3 sons, 3 daughters, 13 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren,

3 great-great-grandchildren, 2 sisters and 1 brother.

Brother Presley joined Little Flock Church August 24, 1968 by experience and baptism. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood.

Services were held at First Baptist Church in Mangum, Okla. with Preacher Sikes officiating. Interment was in Riverside Cemetery under the direction of Greer Funeral Home.

He was preceded in death by his wife in 1959.

Brother Presley was a faithful member. Brotherly love was manifested in his daily life and we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

Ava Stewart, Church Clerk
Altus, Oklahoma

SISTER MAUDE T. PRUITT

Sister Maude Pruitt, at the age of 92, was called home by her Lord on August 7, 1984. She was the daughter of the late James S. and Fannie Griggs Taylor. Even though she lived most of her life in Ruffin, N.C., she was originally from Patrick County, Virginia. Her husband, George T. Pruitt, died in 1963. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Irene Pruitt of the home and Mrs. Hazel Wall of Reidsville, and two grandchildren.

Sister Pruitt united with the Dan River Church on July 23, 1950. Her funeral was conducted there by her pastor, Elder David Spangler, and Elder H. W. Wray, after which, she was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Sister Pruitt loved her church dearly and was faithful to fill her seat. Even though we recognize that our loss is her eternal gain, we will miss her greatly. Her gentleness and her kindness will be

etched in the memory of this writer for as long as I live. At her request on the day of her funeral, her favorite hymn, "How Sweet The Name of Jesus Sounds" was sung. This hymn leaves no doubt as to from whence came her strength. "Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend, my Prophet, Priest, and King, My Lord, my life, my Way, my End." She was a lovely sister and her memory and the path the Lord blessed her to walk and the example He blessed her to set will not be forgotten. Although we are saddened by her death, we would, if we know our hearts, thank the Lord for blessing us to commune with her, and to see the Lord in her countenance and in her life. I believe that in her request for the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians to be read, she left with us a message, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." She was not the kind of person who would wish to be eulogized or grieved over but would rather the praise be rendered to her Lord. May the Lord bless us to witness with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," and may He bless her family with the peace of mind of knowing that she has gone home to be with her Lord, which though, she loved them, is where she most wished to be.

Humbly submitted by one
who loved her dearly,
Mary L. Hawkins

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Editors

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

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EDITORIAL

And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto him, art thou he that should come or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again these things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, who-soever shall not be offended in me.

Mat. 11:1-6.

I had come to the conclusion that I was going to lay my cover over my typewriter, and that I too was going to

quit writing. I wandered out into my garden firmly convinced that I had been too active, too long, with my writing. But few mortals enjoy getting their hands dirty in garden work. I salved my feelings with the ointment of the flesh. I would also quit my activities in the garden of the Lord, because (so I told myself,) let somebody else write.

My feelings had been ruffled by an anonymous critic, and set out to leave the writing to somebody that had told me that they knew now and what to write. I soon found out that I had gone to the wrong place for placating my ruffled feelings. It was too cold and too wet to garden; it was not warm enough to have put out tender plants that had to be sturdy and strong in order to survive. At the beginning I had more compassion on the tender plants than I did on poor frail critics.

As I gently stirred the soil, making every effort to gather some dry twigs of grass to protect the tender plants, my mind was caught away from my own grasp and I was immediately carried in mind to prison where John was incarcerated behind bars. I truly believed that my mind was removed from the weak and cold plants before I had really thought about the sad condition that John was in, but be that as it may, I was soon removed from the garden of this world into what I believe was the garden of the Lord.

I love my garden work. Working there is profitable to me from a monetary standpoint as well as from the standpoint of health. I get a lot of benefit from taking care of this earthly garden. Just so is it in the garden of the Lord. Handling and working in a garden of the earth is much like that in the kingdom of heaven.

The Saviour, even God, is the Husbandman. He often goes down into his garden to see how the plants do grow. At times he finds them ailing. His skill at taking care of individual plants is amazing in-

deed, and how like the plants in the kingdom or garden of the Lord are the natural plants in an earthly garden.

All of the plants in the garden of the Lord are like unto the experience of John. So often the query comes up in our daily experience that the feelings of John on this sad occasion is feeling of them all. The manner of John's coming, his experience on every occasion was surely, in times of tranquillity, given to enable him to bear conflicts as a soldier of Jesus Christ. The most of us, including subjects of grace like unto Job, would be able to bear up under persecution, trials and tribulations, but in hours of distress it causes us anxious inquiry, as to reason for the distress.

The manner of conception, the strange assets of his deliverance and life, would cause strong reflections on our being here and while the sun was shining, it would give us more age than when the sun goes down or in other words, when our God hides His face, then dark, and maybe, mooted questions would appear to cause our soul to tremble, and anxious inquiries to be found escaping our lips in groans and sorrow. In order that we may be at home in this investigation, isn't it that way with you? Is this our state, when even though we have had bright evidences of acceptance with Him, yet when the clouds arise and the face of the Lord is seen no more, and the cold bleak wind begins to blow, we wonder right off, has he clean gone forever? Has he hid His face from us, has He forgot his sacred promise never to leave nor forsake us?

I write to my dear kindred in the Lord. Is this a mutual feeling in your trembling bosom when His nearness is not felt; when his tender arm is not felt nor seen in action. If you know what I am writing about from an experimental standpoint, then we are fit subjects to examine John's inquiry.

Unless we have learned our earthly

lessons first and well, we will not find any joy with John as he humbly makes this petition. Think about what is being said. Look back at the dark seasons that you have passed through. Remember dear little one the enormous burden that you were laboring under when you were also inquiring of Him, Art thou the One, or shall we look for another?

Draw near to our little band of inquirers. Listen to John. You have been there. Your soul has been ready to give up because your hope seemed so worthless. Yes, you too had thought that he was the one, that he was yours. But now, where is he now? And come with me, let us get close to John as his query is answered. All of the family has asked this question, and all the family has leaned forward in earnest hope that we will get consolation from the answer.

As He begins the answer, we sink in despair. Our troubled heart tells us that he did not understand our query, that he is ignoring our question. Then suddenly scales fall from our eyes and we understand the deftness and the discerning mind behind the answer. Let us listen, dear readers.

First, John had already been told that He was the One. How weak we all are. How poor our memory is. Being this frail, the likelihood is that we would not be pert with the Saviour.

The wonderful things that had been done and were still being done were things that sinners cannot do for one another. The characters thus being so tenderly considered and dealt with in their afflictions were all helpless. If my object was to prove the helplessness of poor sinners, I would not go a step further. These are all people helpless to render to themselves the necessary help to enjoy and participate in the blessings of the Kingdom of God. These are the usual afflictions in a natural way that attack sinners along life's journey. There is a spiritual counterpart that all

sinners are partaker of and it is primarily these afflictions that we are all afflicted with.

Every poor sinner that has been born of God finds out in the outset of his or her journey in the kingdom of heaven that they right early come in contact with them, and, as of now, and as far as I have come, I have come in contact with these poor frail decrepit beings, and each one of them have been helpless in the receipt of these blessings from His kind and gracious hand. Let us take an inventory of these afflictions, as laid down by Jesus of Nazereth.

Before we examine ourselves, and before we join in with John in taking hope, and enjoying in him as the Saviour in each of these dire afflictions, let us listen to the angel of the Lord as he spoke to Joseph (Mat. 1:21). This was and it still is a momentous declaration from heaven to poor sinners. It is a promise of salvation to poor wretched sinners. The sun and substance of that message is unique. There has never been a declaration as full and complete and that covered every inch of the uneasy travel of a child of God from nature to spiritual life in Christ Jesus the Lord.

When one is born of the Spirit of God that poor sinner finds themselves unable to see, unable to walk, unable to avoid sin (leprosy), unable to hear, unable to get out of a dead state. How circumspectly we can be in dealing with one another's faults and failings. In connection with the treatment of the Saviour with John, let me insert this word of testimony. The report of those without is that we are so brotherly and so kind to one another when the sun is shining but that if trouble comes there is not anything that we will not do to one another. What a sad reputation. Further, how sad it is that the most important commandment that we ever received from our Saviour was this: If thy brother offend thee go to him alone and make

reconciliation. It does not make any difference what I am called, nor does it make any difference how much abuse is heaped upon me, nor does it make any difference how many call me weak in the doctrine, I know and I know that you know, that there is not a passage of scripture that is any more fragrantly violated than that. Go tell it to him privately first. That is the Saviour's command.

Another thing, how often have we all been forgiven of our wrongs, our flagrant violations of the scriptures? Yet, YET, I have heard it said from sanctimonious lips "that I can forgive the matter if they will forgive me, but I cannot forget how they treated me. That is the hard demanding talk of nature and how nauseating it is to a tender spiritual minded child of God.

Bless his gentle and holy name, he did not reprimand John for his forgetfulness. The exact wording is precious to a tender weak trembling saint of God. The Saviour did not only say go tell John again, but go show him again. The thing to be shown was what the Saviour had said, but this time show the discouraged again. Go show him again. This is Jesus the Saviour that we are writing about.

Yes, yes, I know that it is often that we cannot hear; that we are unable to hear the gospel with a hearing ear. Every reader has had this deplorable condition to pass through, I hear it said that the first blessing, the first saving out of this ruined condition, is of grace and that the further blessings of being rid of these afflictions is of our own efforts. I do not believe a word of it. Notice that this is what was said at first, and remember that we all are ready to ascertain that the first deliverance is by redeeming grace. Now remember something else. When John asked the Saviour if he (and us) were to be saved, how was it to be. His reply for the continued saving was

to be like the first, to wit, it is again. It is not that it is similiar; it is not that it is something nearly like it was the first time. None of that. It is the 'again' salvation that John is to be shown again.

If we have forgotten (as we all do forget) then we need to be shown again that it is all the work of Jesus Christ.

Your afflicted brother in Christ,
Elder W. D. Griffin

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28

Yesterday we tried to speak from this Scripture, and as our mind is on the matter yet, we will try and pen a few thoughts in connection with it.

The apostle, in addressing the church of God at Rome, uses the expression, "And we know," showing that the knowledge he speaks of is not known by him alone, but also by those he was addressing, as he says in another place, We do not tell you these things because you do not know them, but because ye know them. Amidst a world of confusion and strife, where nations are falling right and left, where men's hearts are failing them, where fear is in the hearts of man, it is a comforting thought that God is Lord of heaven and earth, and all things are in his hand, from the falling of a sparrow to the heart of kings, and are in his hands as rivers of water and he turns them withersoever he will. God works all things after the counsel of his will, and none can stay his hand. If we could feel as sure that we are the ones who love God and are the called according to his purpose, as we do that he works all

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

*"When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
To fetch thy ransomed people home,
Shall I among them stand?
Shall such a worthless worm as I,
Who sometimes am afraid to die,
Be found at thy right hand?"*

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

No doubt the reason men reject the idea that all things are being worked together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his pur-

pose, is because they only see the act, and cannot behold the purpose.

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

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

Even the apostles of our Lord when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophecy concerning the suffering of Christ, the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling the manner of his death, that a bone of him should not be broken, that they should look on him whom they had pierced, that for his garments they should cast lots, etc., that they would have understood these things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. The reasoning of the carnal mind is always contrary to truth. Peter was a stronger predestinarian on the day of Pentecost than he was in the judgement hall, and so are we all. As he stood in the judgement hall and bitterly denied that he knew the Lord, he knew not the purpose of God in the matter. The Savior had told him that before the cock crow this night thou shalt deny me thrice, yet it took the completion of the denials for him to remember the word of the Lord. All this was working together for his good. He had declared that he would not forsake the Lord, even though others did. Now he had learned how weak he was, and had been converted, and sifted as wheat, so that he could strengthen

the brethren with the doctrine that, You are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. None know their weakness as those God has left to try themselves, and have found they are not their own keepers. Through such experiences we learn that our only hope is that underneath are the everlasting arms.

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

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

Elder D. V. Spangler

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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



LITTLE HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church is located at Route 1, Elliston, Va. Their meeting time is at 11:00 a.m. every fourth Sunday and 2:00 p.m. on Saturday

before. Little Hope is the home church of Elder Junior Conner. Elder Lane Carter is their present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

December 3, 1984

Dear brother Williams,

I believe my subscription to the Signs expired with the December issue. I am sending you a check for ten dollars (\$10.00) to continue my subscription for another year.

It is comforting to read the beautiful articles and to realize this periodical

stands for and upholds the same precious truth upon which it was founded back in 1832.

It is such a blessing to be given to realize that there is an all wise, unchangeable, Merciful God who has a purpose in all things and will surely bring it to pass for the good of His people and for His ultimate glory.

May God continue to bless you editors and all who are instrumental in getting

the Signs to His dear people.

Please extend my love to sister Williams.
We miss seeing you dear people so much.

In bonds of love,
Janie P. Trent

102 Lake Ave
Salem, Va. 23153
August, 1984

Heb. 4:10

"For he that is entered unto his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

Can you think for a minute what has been said here. Oh! If only the blessed Saviour in Heaven would bless us to the extent of allowing us to glimpse even a little of the mighty things that are contained in these few words. But, even were we allowed to see in them their full meaning, we could never write them down here nor could we tell them to anyone because we as mortal men couldn't put words together to convey such a wonderful message. Just as the Apostle Paul was taken up into the third heaven, he was given such marvelous revelations that it was unlawful for him to try to explain it. I believe one reason it was unlawful is that it was beyond explaining by mere words. Just as Jesus said that eye has not seen, ear has not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man the things that Jesus has prepared for them that love him. I know these are a little different subjects or a little off from our text, but I am using them as examples, to show faith or illustrate what a wonderful truth is in these words. He that had entered into his rest. We are in a sense speaking of the peace that passeth understanding, for isn't that what we are talking about? How many times have God's little ones heard

their pastor, or some other servant of God in whom they trust tell of the many times and days, that they through their work and efforts have spent many endless days and sometimes sleepless nights trying to work their way into a blessed hope or peaceful relationship with their God. While listening to the preacher tell of his experience along these lines, and of these mighty efforts and struggling done by them, the brethren who heard him could say "Why he is talking about my own experience." Why, of course it seems that way. Does not a just God and God of Peace bring all his children along the same pathway but yet in different ways.

Brethren, we are speaking of something here that the world knows nothing about. For, while they are working in their zeal, and their efforts and intentions are to make God indebted to them to the extent that they have earned their salvation. Romans 10:2 & 3 They have a zeal of God, and they are trying to work our their own salvation. That is what the Apostle Paul said of these brethren, isn't that what we have all tried to do until it pleased our blessed Saviour to bring us into knowledge enough and lead us in such a way that we could behold, accept and believe through faith the work of Christ for us, seeing our righteousness as filthy rags, but seeing that the work of Christ was our imputed righteousness. Then and only then were we permitted or given to enter into His rest.

But, read the scripture as they may, they seem to be blinded to the verse that says, "It is not of works lest any man should boast...". Yes, and all the many more verses that are just as sweet to one who has been blessed spiritually to see and understand what the spirit has revealed to those who have ears to hear. But, to go back to our rest, oh what a miserable condition we were in when we were going through this period of

trying to be reconciled to God through our puny works and efforts. It seems that the harder we run the slower we go, the things we think that help us the most, seem to hurt or do us the most harm. But, still we continue, because you see, that is the only way we know, in our pitiful condition, that is the only thing we can do. Until, yes at last, when we have grasped at every straw, worked to our complete wits end and we sink down and pray Oh Lord, help or I perish. Then it seems that our blessed Redeemer has brought us to the very spot he had been leading us to all along the way. Then we hear, or we are given to see, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Then, overpowered by the mighty spirit of God, (for the work must the Spirit perform) we are led, or blessed to feel the wonderful love and fellowship whereby we are enabled to cry Abba Father. Then we came to see by and through a wonderful revelation that God has the work performed, and the peace that a little one feels at this time is truly called the peace that passeth understanding. No need to try to explain it, those who read this know what I am talking about and words can't explain it anyway. Then the little one is able to enter into that rest, not to stay in that perfect state of rest, yet. But a little here, and yet a little more there, enough to keep that blessed hope which is an anchor of the soul most sure and steadfast. Enough for him to know from whom all his help cometh, and to make him know that surely the flesh profiteth nothing. What did the Psalmist say - "He leadeth me beside the still waters, he restoreth my soul." He had entered into his rest. What a wonderful and blessed Saviour we have.

Frank C. Hunt

GLASGOW, Kentucky.

DEAR EDITORS:

Jesus Christ saves us, not our doings, our character, our works, our obedience, our reputations, our prayers, our tears, our penance nor alms. All these qualities are good and commendable, but none of them separately, nor all of them together, will save a man. It needs to be said over and over again that Jesus Christ saves. Christ in you the hope of glory. When we receive Christ we are justified, are sanctified, are adopted, are born from above, are children of God, have everlasting life. We pass from death unto life when we receive him, and have God with us, have the Holy Spirit with us and are saved and safe forever. He that hath the Son hath life, hath love, hath truth, hath immortality, hath the divine nature and hath light. The nature of that light is to make manifest the things which by the power of darkness had been concealed from us before being quickened by Christ, the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. We are made to see and feel our sinfulness and our lost and helpless condition, and the same light which reveals these things also shows us the enormity of our guilt, the justice of our condemnation and the impossibility of salvation by the law. The light of life now begotten in us reveals the holy God, a new relationship, Christ, who is our life, is formed in us, and his sonship, his heirship, his inheritance of glory and immortality are born in us and we are one with him, even as he is one with the Father. From this heaven-born Spirit flow all the fruits of the Spirit, which testify that we are born of God. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."—John xiii. 1. "His own!" What a blessed expression! We belong to the Lord Jesus in a three-fold way. First, by the Father's eternal election, we are the Father's love gift to the Son, "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." Second, we are his by his own redemptive rights. He paid the pur-

chase price; he bought us for himself. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Third, we are his by the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and we are created anew by the Holy Spirit, "born of the Spirit." What a precious promise: "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."—Psalms xxxii. 8. How thankful we christians should be that the One who guided Israel by day and by night across the tractless desert is the One who is our God and is guiding us, and makes no mistakes. "He led them forth by the right way."—Psalms cvii. 7.

Submitted in love.
C. W. FRODGE.

GENESIS XII. 1-3.

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

The language of the word of the Lord of Abram, as recorded above, we feel to call your attention to its wording and meaning with such ability as the Lord will give us understanding. We must know something of the meaning of words before we can grasp the expressions. The word "Abram" in its original language signifies an high father; the father of elevation. We note Abram was the son of Terah, and only one brother lived and was married, which was Nahor, but Nahor was not in this command of the Lord to Abram. We are

not to question why, but note the purpose of his commanding Abram, and in the command of the Lord he separated him from all his country, kindred and father's house, unto a land he had not seen. The outstanding feature was to elect Abram unto the purpose of the Lord, which was in the eternal mind and purpose of God before the world began, for of the seed of Abram, according to the flesh, Jesus was born. We see Abram raised above those of his own flesh to the wonderful purpose of God in salvation to all families of the earth. In his purpose we see he (God) would make of him a great nation, which was manifested as God testified to Abraham, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called. God spoke to Abram, saying, "I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."—Gen. xvii. 1-5. At the time of Abram's life when this was brought to his realization he was ninety and nine years. We know that according to the flesh of our day Abram was a very old man, and also that God's purposes must be fulfilled, and that his power is over all flesh. Abram was not limited to the meaning of the name, but God added to that by which he was made the father of many nations. As is recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis, all the days of Abraham's life were one hundred and seventy-five years, and his sons buried him in the cave Machpelah. As we pass on, God did not cast off all men except Abraham and Isaac, but in the line of Isaac shall the seed of Abraham be called. And God inspired men to write of his dealings with Isaac and his

sons, and here we hear the word of God testifying that Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, but according to the flesh Isaac loved Esau, but God's purpose was in Jacob, and he changed Jacob's name to Israel, which signifies power. God had prospered Jacob, that he was the possessor of much wealth and was the father of a great multitude. The name Israel signifies that Jacob as a prince had much power with God and men. (Gen. xxxii. 38.) We hope to call special attention to man having power with God and man later on.

We have God's word to Abram that he would bring him into a land that he would show him, which was the land of Canaan, which was to him and his seed. After Abraham passed away there came in the family of Jacob strange dreams, which were given to Joseph, as you are familiar with the reading, and also they caused an uprising in the flesh against God's servant Joseph, which brings us on through the life of Joseph in the house of Israel and the fulfillment of God's word in a natural sense dealing with men. This Israel was brought down to Egypt naturally to manifest that the God of Israel was almighty. The travel of Israel down to Egypt their bondage and deliverance from the Egyptians through the Red Sea, the teaching they received by the triumphant power of almighty God, by which he had destroyed both horse and rider in the sea, and by the Spirit of the living God with them they sang the song of Moses and the Lamb. We do believe that the Spirit of the living God teaches his ways by the demonstration of his power. We read from the Scriptures of God's working among the sons of men bringing them into the fulfillment of his divine purpose. God inspired Moses to write the first five books of the Bible, and then the record of the Kings in Israel, then the prophets that received the word of the Lord and held up to Israel as a nation the Lord Jehovah. All

that is testified in the Old Testament shows the triumphant power of God, by which all things were made to bow to him. Jesus said, search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but they are they that testify of me. So all the dealings of God with the seed of Abraham were, to our mind, to prove his electing love, and his power to separate from the world his elect and appoint their way, that no man, or men, could hinder him. This seed of Abram is one nation, and Isaac is the chosen out of that nation, but th show Isaac was yet fleshly as a man was proven in the case of Esau, and on through we find similar relations proving God's purposed Israel as a nation was dissolved. For there must be that which is holy set up, and that was the kingdom of God's dear Son, and the peace and increase thereof shall know no end. When the time appointed of God for greater things to be manifested than that of Israel according to the flesh Elizabeth conceived and the power of the Most High God overshadowed Mary, and by the Holy Ghost she conceived and bare a son, and before either of these two sons were born Mary visited Elizabeth, "and it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy."—Luke i. 41-44. What glorious things were appearing? It was the dawn of a new day, and the dark shadows of the law and prophets were being ended and entirely new realizations were testified. We do not want you, dear reader, to think that we would infer that it was not the same Spirit that was making manifest these things that rested

with Abraham and all his seed, for it was the same God. Abraham and all his seed were the creation of God, and Jesus and his Kingdom were not of the seed of Abraham, but He was none other than the Son of God, and all who are born of him are of that incorruptible seed by the word of God, and are not of flesh and blood, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. In Jesus Christ the one born of the seed of Abraham all families of the earth are blessed. And God gave of the multitude or great nation of Abraham the disciples as well as the prophets, and they each testified according to the measure the gift of God, and Jesus the Son of God, as the fulfiller of all God's will that all families are blessed, declared, other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, I shall also bring. We do believe that God chose in Christ Jesus his elect from before the foundation of the world out of every land, kindred and tongue, and all men are born of the first Adam and are by nature the children of wrath, the elect included, but by the imputed righteousness of God the elect of God are justified. John preached the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and was by the Holy Ghost given to discern between flesh and Spirit, and he commanded those to whom he preached to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and those who did not bear that fruit he called a generation of vipers. We do not give any distinction between Jews and Gentiles according to the flesh, as Jesus broke down the legalities of law worship and all that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth, for he doth seek such to worship him. The Spirit abode upon Jesus that identified Jesus as Son of God, and when John beheld him coming where he was baptizing, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus demanded baptism of John, but John, feeling the weakness and depravity of his flesh, testified

that he had needs to be baptized of Jesus, and asked, Why comest thou to me? Jesus commanded and John baptized him, and as he came up straightway out of the water the Spirit abode in a body liken to a dove and said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. After Jesus' baptism by John he called his disciples to be with and bear record of him. So we have the New Testament testifying of the man Christ Jesus and the power of the Father that was with him, and the way by which he offered himself without spot to God for the sins of his elect. The apostles declare that which they tasted and handled of the word of life, and were not commissioned any further, and the power of God that rested with them forbid all fleshly relations of men, and they were led by the Spirit, as Paul declares they should know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified. The Spirit teaches that denying of ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly and righteously in this world.

There were others born of the first Adam besides those who were of Abraham's seed, and are united in God's salvation of sinners as much as those of the multitude herein mentioned. As is recorded, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39. We are minded to call your attention to the power of almighty God that rested with Abraham as he was commanded to take the lad, the one God told him should be called his seed, and go yonder and worship. In which he offered up Isaac for a sacrifice, and God stayed his hand and presented the offering He had prepared, and not as Abraham had thought. The offering herein presented is a type of our blessed Savior that should be offered for sin, and by this offering sin was put away for all that were embraced in the offering, which cannot be changed for it is God's work.

“In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” The connecting link in this sentence binds Abraham’s seed to all families of the earth, and as Jesus was born of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, and was none other than the Son of God that should redeem out of every land, kindred and tongue under heaven, and bring them off more than conquerors, and the called of God contend for the same faith that was the moving power in Abraham, and all the way down the line from a righteous Abel to the present time. Shall men speak that God was not just in not choosing other men as he did Abraham? Or that other women were unjustly used because Mary was the chosen virgin that should bear the Son of God? No. The Spirit of God in his people makes them thank and bless his holy name and feel that just and true are all his ways, and to realize that he is the almighty God and Jesus Christ is the Son of God. These virtues of his power separate men and women from the people of the world to worship God in Spirit, of which Abraham was the type. The service of divine worship is not a mere form, but the manifestation of an endless life, being manifested as God’s elect, and who is it that repliest against God? Or who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? (Rom. viii.33) Or question, why doest thou? The way of the righteous is evilly spoken of by those in carnality, and the carnally-minded are those, to my mind, that God said he would curse, and he would bless them that blessed Abraham, and all who are born of that incorruptible seed by the word of God are those who bless Abraham, and God blesses them, and they are the blessed of the Lord. This covenant of God was openly brought out among the sons of men, but God declared that he would make a new covenant with them in those days, saying, I will put my law in their hearts, and write it in their inward parts; I will be to them a God, and they

shall be to me a people. These are the blessed of all families of the earth. What a wonderful God is the God of Abraham! All his works shall glorify his Son. The poet Watts, according to hymn number one in Lester and Durand’s hymn and tune book, and number one in the Beebe hymn book, expresses reverence, which we feel to record:

“Eternal Power, whose high abode
Becomes the grandeur of a God;
Infinite lengths, beyond the bounds
Where stars revolve their little rounds.

The lowest step around thy seat,
Rises too high for Gabriel’s feet;
In vain the favored angel tries
To reach thine height with wondering eyes.

Lord, what shall earth and ashes do?
We would adore our Maker too;
From sin and dust to thee we cry,
The Great, the Holy and the High.

Earth from afar has heard thy fame,
And worms have learned to lisp thy name;
But oh the glories of thy mind
Leave all our roaring thoughts behind.

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.”

These glorious things are recorded to express some of the glorious things that are spoke of Zion, city of our God. Oh that all men would praise the Lord.

C. W. V.

THE HAND OF THE LORD

The record given us by Moses declares that “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” Coming over to the New Testament, we find John saying, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*** All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Paul testifies, “For by him were all

things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." -Col. i. 16, 17. These declarations are all-inclusive and we believe every word of them. Among the creatures and things which God made was man, and we are told that God saw all that he had made, and, "Behold, it was very good." Job says, With his hand formed he the crooked serpent, so the serpent, along with everything else, must have been good for the purpose for which it was made. God was not, then, in any sense of the word disappointed in his crowning creature-work when Adam transgressed his law and became a self-condemned sinner.

"From hence it appears he made nothing in vain, For Adam thus formed was a link in the chain; In him 'twas decreed that his members should die,

And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

Not many, if any, of our readers will deny the hand of God in all of creation. And history is conclusive in showing the rise and fall of nations, the making and unmaking of kings and rulers, whether great or small, and the destinies of all peoples that have ever dwelt upon the face of the earth have been in his omnipotent hand. Our object at this time, however, is to consider more particularly God's dealings with his chosen people and to show how he has and does continue to lead them. When God made promise to Abraham concerning Isaac, embraced in it was that his seed should dwell in a strange land for four hundred years and be in bondage and servitude, but it also carried with it the assurance that he would bring them up out of Egypt with great treasure. Isaac's offspring proved to be twins, or strugglers; Esau, the first, being red and hairy, of the earth, whom God hated, but Jacob, the

younger, was the Lord's portion, whom God loved, and that before either of the children had been born, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Jacob tells us that the Lord found him in a waste-howling wilderness and led him about and instructed him. Tracing his offspring we soon run into some of the mysterious deeps of God's providences. Among his twelve sons was to be found a dreamer, and when Joseph had told his dreams he was hated by his brethren. They conspired against him and he was sold, first to the Ishmaelites, then to Potiphar in Egypt, where he was falsely accused and cast into prison. God did not forsake him, however, but with his own hand did keep and lead and prosper him until finally he was placed in charge by Pharaoh "over all the land of Egypt." He who had begun the work was carrying it on and in due time a great and terrible famine was spread out over the face of the whole earth, and when necessity was laid upon Jacob he sent his ten sons to Egypt for corn. Little did Joseph's brethren know of God's way at first, but step by step they were shown the iniquity of their own hearts, until finally they stood dumb with silence before him whom they had so greatly wronged. It was then that Joseph spoke unto them, saying, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life." How wonderful and sacred is the Savior's love when it is made known to and experienced in the sinner's heart. Joseph's brethren meant it for evil, but God ordained it for good. It is a blessed thing when our own evil purposes are overthrown by the hand of God. This, however, does not release us from guilt, but rather demonstrates the greatness of God's matchless love. And be it far from us to say, the hand of the Lord

leads one into sin. James said, let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. David rightly assumed the responsibility of having made his bed in hell. He acknowledged his transgression, declared that his sin was ever before him. On another occasion, he was heard to say, "I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man." Only those whose lives have hung in to the balance, and who have been deserving of death, can fully appreciate what it means to fall into the hands of the Lord; they know that his mercies are great, that God is merciful, or full of mercy, and their desire is to sing of that mercy as long as they have breath. They are made to realize that when sin did abound, grace did much more abound, and the hand of the Lord is seen in providing a way for their escape.

The hand of the Lord! What do we in reality know about it? Doubtless there are groups of the Lord's people, known as churches, who have prayed for and verily believed that they were given to see the hand of the Lord in raising up or sending to them gifts and pastors, or truly called and qualified servants of God to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ; his hand has been seen in adding to their number such as he would own and have to be saved. Sometimes it has been a gradual work, at others it has been a sudden cutting down of the rebellious, as with the apostle Paul, but always it has been the Lord who gave the true increase. The hand of the Lord has likewise been seen in the midst of great difficulties and trials, when his people have been compelled to wait upon him and he has delivered them out of their distresses.

Pastors and ministers have very peculiar experiences, sometimes believing that the Lord has opened their field of labor to them, while at other times his hand has closed the door so that they could not enter therein. They know of a truth that the Lord opens and none can shut, and shuts and none can open. How good it is when their lot is cast in pleasant places and among brethren who dwell together in unity and peace. In all walks of life, those who have been led through deep waters have been made to earnestly desire to see the hand of the Lord directing their steps and guiding them in the way they should take. Many have had their prayers answered and experienced that every good gift, as well as every perfect gift, cometh down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is neither variableness, nor a shadow of turning. Temporal blessings, such as the gift of a good companion, a child or children, loved ones and friends, as well as the necessities and comforts of this life, have all come from his bountiful hand. Too often we forget it. Many are made to desire wisdom from above that they may choose that which is right and acceptable unto God. When all goes well and we prosper in our undertakings, we may feel that the Lord is with us. His hand can withhold as well as give, but we are not so ready to recognize it in crossing our purposes and laying low all our fancied schemes. When trouble comes, when adversity and poverty stalk arm in arm through the door, and sorrow and sickness, and possibly the grim and cold hand of death enters our homes and takes from our very bosoms those whom we hold most dear on earth, it is not so easy to say, It is the hand of the Lord. Yet, do we not have to exclaim with Naomi, the Lord hath dealt bitterly with us? Today, distress is rampant throughout practically the entire civilized world, and great suffering and

possibly starvation has been experienced in many countries and thousands of homes. There are those who deny the controlling providence of an infinite God. We have no word for them, but to *the living* we would say, stay upon your God; though the storm in its fury rage and though the very foundation of your hope seems to shake, be still, for the Captain of your salvation is not only aboard the vessel, but his hand is at the helm, and only his wisdom and skill can be depended upon to bring you through safely. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience [endurance] the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." We are aware, as we look about Zion, that there is much to disturb our minds; there is much to mystify and bewilder us, neither can we understand the whys and wherefores of a great deal that is going on about us, but let us not lose faith in the Almighty.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

It seems easy to recognize his hand in times of deliverance, when he showers his blessings upon us, but let us not forget that trials are often in mercy sent. Job saw no hand but that of God in all of his afflictions. With him, it was God who gave, and it was that same God who took away, and he could still say, blessed be the name of the Lord. He verily believed that all things were working to one end and purpose, and that finally he would come forth as gold tried in the fire and purged of its dross. His faith was adequately rewarded in the end, for he answered the Lord, and said, "I know that

thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Listen to him once more: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The widow of Sarepta saw the hand of the Lord each time she went to the barrel and discovered that the meal had not wasted, neither had the oil in the cruse failed. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego saw the hand of the Lord in the fiery furnace, for instead of being destroyed, they were set at liberty and came forth without even the smell of fire upon their garments. Daniel was a witness to the same thing in the den of lions. Jonah saw the hand of the Lord as he lay at the very foot of the mountains in the depth of the sea, and was made to say, "Salvation is of the Lord." In the days of our Lord upon the earth it was often seen by his disciples: the wind and the sea were made to obey his voice, the grave gave up its dead, the blind saw, the deaf heard, the lame walked and the poor had the gospel preached to them. The woman at the well confessed it, the leper realized its cleansing power; Mary, out of whom seven devils were cast, experienced it; Peter and James and John were all witnesses, and what shall we say more? for time and space forbid to tell of the others.

However much may be in the record and regardless of the innumerable witnesses that might be placed upon the stand, we must have more than these if our own souls are to put in their claim. If we are to build upon the firm and solid foundation as individuals, we must be able to find some good reason for the hope that is within us. If we have been made to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, we have known what it was to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not weary, to walk and not faint. Such experiences have convinced us that there is no god like our God, and we

have been persuaded that there is absolutely nothing too hard for him. Every day brings forth new struggles, however, and we have to prove again and again that his grace is sufficient for us. We hope to continue fighting the good fight of faith, ever looking unto Jesus to guide us through the wilderness of sin and unbelief. Sometimes the following petition becomes our very own:

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou are mighty,
Hold me by thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.

Open thou the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams do flow,
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Song of praises
I will ever give to thee."

In conclusion, we verily believe the hand of the Lord has been seen preserving the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as a medium of correspondence for the benefit of the saints, and the arm of him who has sustained it thus far is not shortened that it cannot save. Let us, therefore, not only look back upon mercies which are past, but look confidently to the future with hope, in the full assurance of faith, believing that he who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, will do all things well, and when he takes us from this sin-cursed world, forever to be with him, he shall ever say, It was THE HAND OF THE LORD.

R. L. D.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE II. 14.

"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men."

These words are a portion of that heavenly song of "a multitude of the heavenly host" sung at the birth of Jesus Christ.

"Glory to God." These are the first three words in the song. Is it not this very language of all the manifest elect of God? Others may glory in men, in their wisdom, might and riches. (Jer. ix.23.) They may glory in their own blasphemous doings, in their missionary societies to save souls, theological colleges, Sunday Schools, means and instrumentalities. They compass sea and land to obtain converts to their religion, and never fail to perpetuate the practice of those of whom the prophet Habakkuk writes, "They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plentiful." But the taught of the Lord are cut off and saved from such doings. In themselves how can they glory? The Holy Spirit is pleased to discover to them what they are in themselves: poor, loathsome sinners, and under divine tuition they see, and learn that vanity is stamped on all earthly things. They have the same spirit of the psalmist when he cried, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."—Psalms cxv. 1. Having had revealed to him something of the majesty and excellent glory of the Holy One of Israel in the condemnation of transgression in the law, and justification most sweetly realized in the blood

and righteousness of Jesus, the believer is prepared and does in spirit cry, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."—Gal. vi. 14. The heavens, and the earth, the deep places, all proclaim the glory of God. Oh what wonderful works are to be seen in the creation of God. "The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious." Therein the holiness, the terrible majesty, and eternal justice of God is made known and felt in the hearts of the Israel of God. But the glory of the ministration of righteousness, the ministration of life doth exceed in glory. (2 Cor. iii. 7-10.) In the gospel of the grace of God is that glory that far outweighs and outshines all other manifestations of the glory of the King of glory, it is "the glory that excelleth."

"Glory to God in the highest." It overtops all others. Oh, the surpassing infinite riches of the glory of the blessed God, which shines forth in the face of our beloved Emmanuel. The sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the earth, and all that is therein, shall fade, and crumble, and be no more; and all the pomp and glory thereof shall pass away. As it is said of the law, the ministration of condemnation, so of all things else, they have "no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth."—2 Cor. iii. 10. The glory of the Lord in the universe is but transient, but for time, but in the Word, the Son of God made flesh, in Jesus, Emmanuel, is the eternal, immutable, superlative glory of the everlasting God. In this unfathomable mystery is the fulfillment of the eternal, immutable counsel and oath of Jehovah. (Heb. vi. 17, 18) When the Word, the Son of God, came into the world, was made flesh, born of a virgin, made under the law, the covenant head of all the chosen and loved of God, the Mediator of the everlasting covenant ordered in all things

and sure, then was fulfilled the word of God by the prophet Micah: "Thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall be come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." This had been promised and foretold in the prophets, had been signified in the types and shadows under the law, and now "the due time" is come, and the Son of God in the joy of his heart, in his eternal love to his bride, the church, and in loving covenant obedience to God the Father cries out, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure: then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."—Heb. x. 5-7.

"Glory to God in the highest." The will of Christ was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work, and in fulfilling the "all things," (oh blessed be the name of the Lord, not in one jot or tittle did Jesus fail) ordered in the everlasting covenant (2 Sam. xxiii. 5), all the attributes of the eternal Godhead in glorious, sweetest harmony were declared, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."—1 Tim. iii. 16. The Lord Jesus Christ went forth for the salvation of Zion, and in his obedience, suffering and blood he wrought salvation, brought in everlasting righteousness, redeemed his people from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, saved them from their sins, justified them in his precious blood, and reconciled them unto God. He traveled in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. Jesus Christ, our dear Redeemer, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant,

and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”—Phil. ii. 6-8. Thus Jesus went forth for the salvation of his people. “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.”—Hab. iii. 3, 4. It is in salvation that the eternal excellency of Jehovah is revealed. The justice and mercy, grace and love, yea, every perfection of God is declared to the eternal glory of the blessed God of Israel. (Rom. ix. 23; Rev. i. 6) This song which “a multitude of the heavenly host” sang at the birth of Jesus has never ceased to be sung. Even to-day it is the song of the believer in Jesus. While time shall last, and all eternity, all the loved, chosen and redeemed of the Lord will be praising God, and saying, “Glory to God in the highest.” (Rev. iv. 9-11; v. 12-14.)

“On earth peace.” Oh what welcome, soul-cheering tidings is this to the distressed and oppressed child of God. What disorder and discord does the enlightened child of God behold among mankind. In that knowledge that flows from the operating of the Holy Spirit what a terrible and sad condition they realize themselves to be in by nature. It is their bitter experience to feel that “the carnal mind is enmity against God,” though they labor most diligently to have it otherwise. The enmity still remains without abatement, this desperate and horrible plague rages within. It is their experience, and language, as recorded of the woman in Mark v. 26: “She was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.”

Those ministers of Satan, transformed as ministers of righteousness “in preaching” another gospel, which is not

another (Gal. i. 6, 7), urge poor sinners to make their peace with God. Oh what a task! How utterly impossible for a vile transgressor ever to accomplish! Oh what conflicts with sin and Satan, what tossings to and fro, what unrest, what anxious thoughts possess the poor quickened sinner. His sins are as an army of bitter foes in cruel war against his soul, for the manifest child of God, called by God’s grace, being made a partaker of the divine nature, being born of incorruptible seed, cannot be at peace with sin, but possessing spiritual life he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and the longings of his soul are for entire freedom from sin, to see, to feel, to know that all these hateful foes are forever annihilated. No sooner does the poor sinner experience the quickening power of God than the warfare begins between the flesh and the Spirit. (Gal. v. 17.) The new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; there can be no agreement, no concord between them. Wherever these two are found there must be war. The sinner, therefore, in whom the Lord has begun his work of grace feels and fears there is no peace between his soul and the mighty and holy God. Oh how troubled is the poor soul amidst the aboundings of his iniquities. The adversary, the gates of hell, fight against the loved ones of God, and there can be no peace between the seed of Christ and the seed of the devil.

“On earth peace..” Such is the song of the multitude of the heavenly host. Jesus, of whom they sing, is “the Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah ix. 6.) He is the Mediator of the covenant of peace. (Isaiah liv. 10.) “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” The dear Lord is our peace. Oh at what a cost he procured it. He made peace through the blood of his cross. (Col. i. 20.) “The chastisement

of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”—Isaiah liii. 5. God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight. Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Oh, our precious Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, in his obedience and blood vanquished and made an end of all our foes; and the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, reveals in the heart what Jesus is, and what he has wrought in our behalf, then we joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. All our enemies, all our transgressions are purged in Jesus’ blood; death and hell are overcome in the blood of the Lamb. The law, which is holy, just and good, has received at our Surety’s hand full payment of all its righteous demands, and the vessels of mercy in whom the Holy Spirit has revealed the wondrous doctrine of peace with God can indeed with the apostle Paul exclaim, “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, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Oh what sweet tranquility flows into the soul when the poor troubled sinner is experimentally put in possession of the atonement of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul. (Lev. xvii. 11.) It truly is a peace that passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. It is “perfect peace.” (Isaiah xxvi. 3.) It cannot be bettered. There no contingency therein. It is ordered in all things and sure. The covenant of peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee. (Isaiah liv. 10.) How comforting, O believer in Jesus, is this enduring, eternal peace, that not all the pow-

ers of sin and hell can ever mar. Thy warfare is accomplished, thine iniquity is pardoned. (Isaiah xl. 1.) What! mine? Perhaps some poor soul is saying, So I at one time thought my sins were all gone, every voice of accusation was silenced, the devil and all his hosts fled when Jesus in his power and love and blood was revealed unto me, and in my heart his voice was most sweetly heard, saying, thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. But oh what trouble, what wars and conflicts have I encountered since then. The evils in my heart; my sweet comfort and peace in Jesus has been most cruelly disturbed, and now there is warfare. I find I still have a carnal mind which is enmity against God. The old man is not gone, but is lively, and is so corrupt I fear that I shall be utterly overcome by indwelling sin, and prove a castaway. Oh what a mystery is the life of a child of God. The apostle Paul exclaims, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”—Gal. ii. 20. It is by faith that we now experience peace with God. And “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The Lord Jesus has saved his people from their sins in his death. He died unto sins once. We rejoice to know that Jesus rose from the dead, and dieth no more. He rose for our justification, and is now within the veil for us, The Lamb as it had been slain (Rev. v. 6.) in resurrection glory. O, dear people of God, we have hope that we shall be like him, though now sharp conflicts with sin and Satan are our lot. In these things we have a taste of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and if we suffer we shall also reign, when, in the resurrection, we appear with all the ransomed of the Lord. We shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. The Lord

Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) Then no more will the carnal mind, the old man, the lusts of the flesh, plague and distress us. Our conflicts will all be over, for Jesus, in his precious blood, has destroyed all our foes, and this by faith, of the operation of God, we believe. And in the power and goodness of the Lord, even now, by faith, we can sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We shall overcome at last. (Gen. xlix. 19.) "On earth peace." When God giveth us quietness, who then can make trouble? (Job xxxiv. 29.)

"Good will toward men." "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?" Yea, he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. "He will save."—Zeph. iii. 17. Who or what then shall hinder? "Good will toward men." This is "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush."—Deut. xxxiii. 16. Everything provided in the good will of God is precious. There is no lack, nothing faulty. Oh how good! It cannot be frustrated. It contains mercy (Rom. ix. 18), grace (Exod. xxxiii. 19), eternal life (John vi. 40), righteousness (Isaiah lxii. 1). Yea, all that the elect of God need for time and eternity is found in the good will, the covenant, testamentary will of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "Glory to God in the highest."

FREDERICK W. KEENE.

MEETINGS

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST

Richmond Primitive Baptist Church in Conference on September 2, 1984:

The Church voted and it was unanimously agreed to appoint Elder Randall Saunders to serve as their pastor, due to the fact that Elder Simpson is aging and the distance is long for him.

He served this little Church well for twelve years and two months. At times, he filled his appointment when he was not physically able to be here.

His resignation leaves us sad, not only for the members, but for the friends and those associated with Richmond Church. Elder Simpson is highly esteemed with those of us who know him and our love and admiration goes with him and Sister Simpson.

Services will continue to be held each first Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Those of you who are given a mind and will, come and be with us on this Lord's day.

By Request of the Richmond Church

Submitted by the Clerk

SALISBURY AND FOREST GROVE

The Lord willing, the Salisbury and Forest Grove Old School Baptist Churches will hold a joint 5th Sunday meeting on March 31, 1985 and the Saturday evening before at the Salisbury meeting house.

We invite all ministers of our faith and all brothers and sisters and friends to join us.

Where: Route 50 and Baptist Streets
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

When: Saturday - March 30, 1985
Supper - 5:00 p.m.
Service - 7:00 p.m.

Sunday - March 31, 1985
Service - 10:30 a.m.

Lunch served after service

Anyone who would like accommodations, please write to Sister Phyllis Far-

low, P. O. Box 176, Pittsville, Md.21850
or call (301) 835-2130.

Elder Cleo Robertson and
Elder Julian Williams, Pastors
Phyllis Farlow and
Elbert Robbins, Clerks

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting appointed to be held at Danville Primitive Baptist Church the Fifth Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1985 if it be the Lords will.

All Elders, Brothers, Sisters and friends are invited to meet with us.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1984

Mr. & Mrs. Ballard Barker, VA..\$	7.00
Mrs. Audrey V. Dyer, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Carole Leandra, CT.	32.00
Victor H. Laws, MD.....	7.00
Mrs. Mary Messick, AL.	5.00
Thomas C. Simpson, CA.	7.00
Mrs. Judy Wiliams, TX.	7.00
E. M. Reeves, TX.	2.00
Charles Alders, TX.	7.00
Mrs. Elizabeth T. Adkins, VA....	2.00
Mrs. Dianne Young, NC.....	13.00
Alvis G. Beacham, NC.	7.00
Mrs. Harry McNelia, MD.	2.00
Elder. W. D. Griffin, AL.....	10.00
Mrs. H. D. Underwood, VA....	2.00
Mrs. Nora . Largen, VA.	2.00
F. L. Martin, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Ina Hendrix, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. Leonard Nichols, VA....	1.00
Elder J. R. Williams, VA.....	100.00
Mrs. Helen Maxwell, WA.	5.00

OBITUARIES

LOUISE BUCK BITTNER

Louise Buck Bittner was born Jan. 1, 1923 to Asa B. Buck and Curlie B. Buck, both now deceased, and spent her entire lifetime in Morehead City, North Carolina.

She passed from this life March 2, 1984 to go to her heavenly home to be with the Lord. On December 14, 1945, she married Robert E. Bittner of Richmond, Indiana, who survives her. She is also survived by three daughters; Mrs. Nancy Pollack of Morehead City, Mrs. Susan Pond of Cary, North Carolina and Mrs. Becky Dodge of Savannah, Georgia; A son Robert E. Bittner, Jr. of Beaufort; A sister, Lina B. Willis of Morehead City; A brother Asa B. Buck, Jr. of Beaufort, and seven grandchildren: Davey, Robert, Sarah and Anna Pollack and Laura Pond, Gina Bittner and Nathaniel Dodge; An aunt, Mrs. Annie B. Higgins of Morehead City; Two uncles, Mr. E. Parker Buck of State Road, N.C. and Mr. Orin J. Buck of Wilmington, N. C. and so many near and dear relatives, in-laws, cousins and friends.

On May 29, 1982 she joined the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by Elder M. M. Gray. She later moved her membership to Haddott's Creek Church in Carteret county.

Her funeral was conducted on March 5, 1984, at Bell Munden Funeral Home Chapel by Elder J. T. Prescott and Gary Haddock. Burial was in Bayview Cemetery. The ministers spoke very beautifully and with sweet comfort to the family, and the choir sang her favorite songs, "There Is A Home Not Made With Hands" and "When I Can Read My Title Clear," and at the cemetery they sang "Amazing Grace."

All will miss her, but we like to think of our loss as her eternal gain.

Sister Anna Higgins

the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Submitted by
Elder Jimmy Hamrick

IDA ANN COBB

Our gracious Lord saw fit in His Providence on March 1, 1984 to remove from our midst, Sister Ida Ann Cobb, beloved member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Winnsboro, Texas. Sister Cobb was born October 15, 1898 in Franklin County, Texas. She lived most of her life in nearby Wood County in the Pleasant Grove Community. In 1914, she married Ocie Cobb who preceded her in death. To this union were born eight children. They, in turn, were blessed to provide her sixteen grandchildren. Late in life, Sister Cobb's memory began to fail her and she spent her last months at Whispering Pines Nursing Home in Winnsboro. Although her memory had begun to fail her, her gracious Lord, in complete harmony with His glorious nature and His immutable promises, never once failed her, and she fell peacefully asleep in Him. Few have been blessed with such a sweet disposition as Sister Cobb and she will be sorely missed.

Her funeral was officiated by Elder Joe Hamrick and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery by her beloved church to await the resurrection morning. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in

SISTER VERA K. FUTRAL

Sister Vera K. Futral was born May 19th, 1911. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call her home on May 7th, 1984. She was the wife of Lauty J. Futral (Deceased).

To this union was born four daughters and two sons.

She united with Sand Hill Primitive Baptist Church on June 9th, 1951. She was a faithful member and a firm believer in Salvation by Grace.

We at Sand Hill Church and a host of friends miss her so much, but feel our loss is her gain. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers at Sand Hill Cemetary.

Written by: Glennie Houston
Elvia Kennedy

LORENA HILL HOPSON

Sister Lorena Hill Hopson was born July 7, 1882, the daughter of Duncan Hill and Elizabeth Hill. She was called out of our midst on October 14, 1982—having lived 100 years and 3 months. Her husband, James Hopson, preceded her in death many years ago.

Surviving her are several nieces and nephews and one step-daughter -- all of whom were kind and considerate of her needs -- especially after she lost her eyesight.

In September 1923, she came before the Church in Durham, North Carolina and asked for a home. She lived among us a lovely and faithful member for 59 years.

Graveside services were held for her by Elders D. V. Spangler and C. B. Davis at Eno Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery where her body was interned.

Sister Lorena had been rooted and grounded in the Truth by her Lord and she set a lovely example in behaviour, stability and loyalty. She walked in the old paths—not conforming to the ways of the world—either by word or deed.

In her gentle way she comforted and encouraged the other members of the Church.

Though Sister Lorena never had children of her own -- she was truly one of the lovely mothers in Israel and we miss her.

Catherine Humbarger,
Church Clerk

JOHN ALBERT SOWDER

In memory of John Albert Sowder, Brother Sowder was born in Floyd County, June 16, 1904. The son of John and Alice Sowder.

He was married to Ethel Palmer, May 30, 1928.

From this union were three sons and one daughter, the daughter preceded him in death in 1972.

Brother Sowder leaves to mourn his wife Ethel P. Sowder; three sons, Johnnie T. Sowder, Albert Ray Sowder and

Charlie E. Sowder; seven grandchildren, one great-grandson, one brother, E. V. Sowder.

He joined Belview Church, later named Laurel Ridge, the third Sunday in April 1953, and was baptized the third Sunday in May 1953.

A few years later he was chosen Clerk of the Church and served as long as he was able.

Brother Sowder showed love for his Church and the visitors that came from time to time, he would often ask permission to speak at the close of service and he would express his love for the people and his appreciation to the visitors and thank them for coming, he proved his love to the visiting Elders by helping them on their way and also his pastor, he did not want to slight any one it seemed.

I remember very well how happy he was just a few days before he past away, we met at his home to sing and his cup ran over.

His funeral was conducted at Laurel Ridge Church Saturday, September 22, 1984 at 11.00 a.m. The church building was filled with his family and friends, Services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Lane Carter. After which his body was laid to rest in Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens, Roanoke, Va. to wait the second coming of the Saviour.

It was hard to believe that under those beautiful flowers was one we loved so dear and loved us.

But sleep on dear Brother, it will not be but just a moment, then our Lord will come.

Written by request of Laurel Ridge Church, November 17, 1984.

By: Elder Leonard J. Brammer

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

Signs of the Times

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Editors

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

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 EDITORIAL

John's Mission ended, the Mission of Christ is begun, John has fulfilled the mission that he was sent to conclude. There was not any stigma of defeat attached to his coming. Primarily he was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17).

Now let us step carefully. Who sent him? God sent John to prepare the people of God for the advent of their Saviour into the world. Let us get rid of falsehoods to begin with. He did not come to gather together everybody in the surrounding country. Let us be sure that we be careful here and adhere closely to the truth. John was not sent by God to make a people, nor to seduce all manner of people to gather unto the Preaching of the Baptist. There is not any question

about him coming to gather together a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17). Let us rest here, for we have found out that he was an Old Baptist in his preaching.

Unless my eyes and ears and mind has deceived me, this evangelist was sent by the Lord, even sent to a prepared people. Moreover, this preparation was not in any sense of the word a quickening of the dead alienated sinners into living children of God. Such an idea is contrary to the Bible in every conceivable manner. Now since we have been led into the nature of the work of John, let us now see what the work of Christ was to be. His work must be in harmony with the work of John, and His work, when He has come, must be in harmony with what the Messenger of the covenant did.

The prophecies of the Old Testament were all about what would be done in the gospel day. Although the Old Scriptures mentions near a hundred passages in which salvation is ascribed unto the Lord. It is my desire to take a brief look at one passage, to wit, *I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour* (Isa. 42:11). This is the testimony of God, who was the inspirer of the whole of the Bible. Now, in order to verify what I have said, and what has been said by the ministers in the church of Jesus Christ from the beginning is the language of the angel to Joseph when he was disturbed about marrying the virgin Mary. It isn't any of my affair, and I do not have any desire to dispute anyone about what was said to him. The evidence is that all salvation was vested in that unborn infant. If I am not mistaken in my calling, it is to preach the gospel, to preach far and wide, wherever and before whoever the Lord casts my lot, that Jesus saved everyone that God the Father gave Him in a well ordered covenant before the world had a beginning. The business of saving sinners was given into the hands of the Son of God before the world had a

beginning. My Father has had that in mind a long time. If there is one person on the face of the globe that does not believe in the certain salvation of the Lord's People, I do not feel that it is a duty laid on me to dispute with those that does not believe what the angel said to Joseph.

God is Light. In the morning of creation God made three lights. Before He spoke these three lights into existence God said, let there be light, and what was the result? Immediately, there was light even before the sky luminaries had been created. No man or woman is a light within themselves. They are in darkness until the light shines out of darkness. Let us remember that darkness cannot shine; there must of necessity be a Light that is spontaneous.

Let us not lose sight of the fact that John was not the light, but that he was a witness and a bearer of who was the Light. The Light in His spiritual power, had sent John, but when the light arrived, He was the Light before He came, and when He arrived, He was the Light that lighteth every man that comes into the world that God loved with an everlasting love. He was the Word, He was the Light, and without Him there was not, and there is not any light.

Before time's curtains were let down, He was the Light. He was before everything that was created. He was not the beginning, but He was manifest in the beginning or in the creation of all things. The only way that the creation would ever know Him was in and by revelation. In every act, yea in every thought pertaining to this creation. He had to think and act first toward them. Being created things, they had to be taught by their Creator. The greater has got to move towards the created being. You and I are created beings and even in our relationship with every phase of our natural life, we have got to be taught even the most important event in our time life, to wit,

who our parents are. You know, and I know that you know that your knowledge of your earthly parentage has come, and had to come, from your own parents. Anything else, whoever teaches it, is teaching an absurdity; therefore, it is not the truth.

Now did this creation have knowledge to seek Him and to inquire about its relationship with Him? It did not. When Christ came among His own people in the flesh, what was their reactions? Did they warm up to Him? Did they follow Him about begging Him to stay close to them; did they do that? The answer is: they did not. He came to His own people. How did they receive Him? What was their reaction to Him? They did not receive Him as a people. They arose in voice and in manner, saying, we will not have this man to rule over us. That loud railing continued against Him: until, when Pilate would have released Him, His own flesh and blood railed out and said, Crucify him, Crucify him, and release unto us Barabbas (Luke 23:18). If He had turned His nose up against them, as a people, what would have become of them? The doctrine that is often hurled in our face, to wit, if you turn from Him, He will turn from you had of been enforced, there can you tell me what would have become of His people after the flesh?

He came to His own, and His own received him not. Is that all? No, no, mercy has not moved yet. Deaf ears have not been unstopped yet. However, he that unstops blind eyes and deaf ears is in charge. The momentous question with me is this: Will He, because of my unconcern tire of me? Will He turn away in disgust because I am unconcerned? Did the terrible conflict which He was facing cause Him to lose interest in the welfare of His people? No, dear reader, no, not at all. While His people, His flesh and His blood by the relationship that existed between He and His mother did not,

as a whole receive Him, yet let us remember that He did not come in the interest of any nation or nationality as such, that He did come for the salvation of those given Him out of every nation and kindred and tongue. That covenant relationship was not broken in this sad hour. The love of God was not weakened, the covenant of grace was not impaired in the least.

His own after the flesh did not, as a whole, receive Him. Let us remember that. He has not at this critical stage lost a single one of them given Him. The number, the names, the welfare of each and of all is as it was established and purposed whether of them that spends eternity in praise to His lovely name or of those left out of that blissful state.

As many as did receive Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God. If that had been all that was said about these that received Him, then not one of us, writer or reader, would be where we are religiously speaking. If only those that received Him had power to become sons of God, then the Old Baptist church would be futilely beating the bush in a hopeless cause. But it did not say that these had power to become born again men and women. Before these that did receive Him had received Him they would truly have had power given them to become born again children of God. Before He came to them they had already been born of God. He gave these that had previously been born again a gift to walk in obedience.

The dear and precious elder, to wit, G. W. Berry told me that he had a Bible of the Geneva translation that said, Jesus gave them right to become children of God or followers of God. Since, I do not look upon the translators as being inspired of God, but that they were agents of King James, I am saying that I like the Geneva translation which says that He gave them the right to become the followers of Him, instead of they

saying that He gave us the power to become children of God. Power belongs to God. I haven't got any.

Since they were already children of God when they received Him, they could not have been given additional power to become something that they already were by birth, which is the only way of becoming a child of God. That is exactly what we preach, to wit, first, the Children are first born of the Spirit, and each and everyone become ready for teaching, and all of that teaching (as far as salvation is concerned) is of the Lord (Isa. 54:13).

Now John testified to the truth. Christ is truth. He was preferred before John. I must, as God blesses me, hew to the line. John was a minister. He was an evangelist. He was a forerunner. He was the one sent before to announce the coming of another. He always put his preaching and his writing in the right perspective, in the place, with the right meaning. He never did get one step ahead of His Saviour. He never did say, I am of more importance than Jesus Christ. This ungodly world has always said that God's children were beset with an inferiority complex. O no, not that, those that have been put in their place know their place. John said, I am not first, He is first. I am not worthy to stoop down to tie or unloose His shoe latchet. Being with Christ taught him that likewise having been taught by Him that stooped down to the agonies of the rugged cross taught Peter to have his feet washed by the Saviour. I do hope that I have been taught by the dear Saviour, as John was taught, to know that He came into the world to save His people, and that His teaching has been so effectual that I know, as John learned, that He is preferred before me. And I beg, as I hope, on bended knees, that day in and day out, even all of my days, that He come as the one full of grace and truth. That is lovely, that is helpful in the long journey before us. But the

journey is made better and more encouraging and more uplifting to know that all, yes, thank His dear name, all of the family of God have received of that fulness. May God manifest that fulness, and the filling of us in an experimental way while on this journey that is so long and so emptying to us.

Yours (not in assurance) but in a precious and abiding hope of seeing Him as He is, and of being like Him.

Elder W. D. Griffin

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

EDITORIAL OF THE LATE
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

ROMANS VIII. 38, 39.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This chapter begins with a declaration that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, and concludes with the assurance of our text, that there can be no separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This was not only the firm conviction of the mind of the apostle, but the inspired truth of the Holy Ghost. This blessed security from condemnation, and assurance of the immutable love of God, belongs to them who are in Christ Jesus, and to none other. As we are deeply interested in the subject, it becomes us to inquire earnestly, and to search diligently whether we are in Christ Jesus, and numbered with those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. If we

are not in him, we certainly have no part or lot in these great and precious declarations. If we are in him, we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. i. 4, for Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. (Heb. xiii. 8.) The exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God is exemplified in him; all things are put under his feet, and God has given him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 19-23.) Consequently if there ever was a period in time or eternity when any of the members of his church were not in him, then there has been a period when his body was not full. But to imagine the existence of a head without a body, or a body without a head, or a perfect and complete head, and an imperfect and deficient body, does not suit our understanding of the declaration that, it pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. (Col. i. 19.) Again it is written, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye [the saints and faithful brethren in Christ,] are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power."—Col. ii. 9, 10. All the members of Christ are in him, even as the eternal Father is in him. He is the dwelling place (not of one-third part of the Godhead, as some seem to understand it,) but of all the fullness of the Godhead. "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one," &c.—John xvii. 21-23. If the church is in Christ as the eternal Father is in him, must they not have been in him from everlasting? Would Christ be complete if the Father were not in him, or if all the fullness of the Godhead were not in him? Or could the fullness of the Godhead dwell in him bodily, if any part of the Godhead did not dwell in him? Certainly not. Equally certain is it then as

the church is in him as the Father is in him, and they are his body and the fullness of him, that all the members required to make his mystical body perfect and complete, must have been in him as well before the world began, as they will be when this world shall be no more.

We are not contending that our earthly, corrupt and depraved natures were in him, and were a part of his fullness before the world began; for they were not even in the earthly Adam until after the world began, nor did Christ himself come in the flesh until he was made of a woman; until his advent. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise [or in like maner] took part of the same."—Heb. ii. 14. His children partaking of flesh and blood, shows that their relationship to God as *children* was perfect before they partook of flesh and blood; and that participation of flesh and blood no more constituted them children, than Christ's coming into the world and "also himself likewise partaking of the same," constituted him the Son of God, or the Head of Immortality to his body, the church: "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. If that earthly life which was given as in the earthly Adam could be distinctly identified so as to involve us in the guilt of Adam's transgression, almost six thousand years before we were born of the flesh, is it hard to understand the anti-type Adam, that our spiritual, immoral and eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested, (1 John i. 2,) and which was given to us in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son, according to the record borne by the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, (1 John v. 7, 11,) should so fully identify us in Christ, that it could of truth be said of us that we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world? (Eph.

i. 4.) Or as still more expressly stated, Eph. ii. 18: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This term *created* has reference to the new or spiritual creation. It is not like the creation of the natural world, the creation of something out of nothing; but it is the giving of the members of Christ a place, a standing in, and identity with him who personifies their immortality, or their eternal life. This life instead of being called into existence after the manner of the old creation of the natural world, is the manifestation of a life which is eternal, which always was hid with Christ in God. For it was, as we have proven by 1 John i. 2; "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that *eternal life which was with the Father*, and was manifested unto us." "And we know that the Son of God," (in whom the record of Father, Word and Holy Ghost declares that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son,) "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and *we are in him that is true*; even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."—1 John v. 19, 20. Thus to be in Jusus Christ seminally, as the spiritual embodiment and progenitor of a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation, according to Psalms xxii. 30; Isaiah liii. 10-12; 1 Peter ii. 9, involves the Bible doctrine of eternal Union. A union of life, love and immortality. One with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father.

But to be in him manifestatively by a new and spiritual birth, implies that we are, or must be born again; not of a corruptible seed, but of that seed which was in Christ our spiritual progenitor, from everlasting. By the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever—not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of

the will of man, but of God. (1 Peter i. 23; John i. 13.) A birth is not the creation or origination of life, but the manifestation of life by what is called *pro-creation*. Our earthly nature which in christians is called the *old*, or *outward* man, was created in Adam, but *pro-created* by natural generation. But that immortality which is in the christian, and which is denominated the *new*, or the *inward* man, was given us in Jesus Christ, and is manifested by spiritual generation when born of God. As we are, and were strangers in our earthly character, to this spiritual life which is hid with Christ in God, until he who is our life appears, or is revealed in us, so when that revelation is made, we are no more strangers, we are brought forth bearing the image of the heavenly progenitor, as we have in our flesh borne the image of the earthly Adam. Hence, if any man be in Christ Jesus, manifestatively and experimentally, he is a new creature, a subject of the new or spiritual creation, and as an evidence of this, old things have passed away, and all things have become new. His old element, which was sin, darkness and death, is passed away, he is quickened by eternal life implanted, the light of life shines in his heart to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, the love of God is shed abroad in him, he is delivered from wrath, he is taken up out of a horrible pit, his going is established, and a new song is in his mouth. All these things are entirely new to him, for they are not the productions of his flesh, but they are the fruits of the Spirit of which he is now born. He is delivered from the power of darkness in which he was before held, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

As the love of God, from which the members of Christ cannot be separated, is in Christ Jesus, we have dwelt the more particularly on the unity of Christ and his members; for if the love of God is

in Christ Jesus, and we are not in him also, then there is no connection between us and the love of God which is in him; and it would be preposterous to talk of the impossibility of being separated from that with which we are not and never were connected.

We think it will be admitted even by those brethren who dispute the doctrine of eternal Union, that God loved his people *even when they were dead in sins*. (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) That he even loved them as he loved our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he loved before the foundation of the world. (see John xvii. 23, 24.) Admitting then the testimony of our text that this love is and eternally was in Christ Jesus, must not the objects of it also have been in him as anciently as they have been loved of God in him? So we confess it looks to us, and for this blessed assurance we are more than willing to bear all the reproach, slander, abuse and persecution to which we have been subjected for trying to set it forth.

From the foregoing considerations it strikes us that so long as God himself maintains his eternal immutability, there can be no separation of the saints from his love which is in Christ Jesus. Paul was persuaded that death could not effect a separation. Death's boasted power is impotent and weak compared with the love of God in Christ. Our death in trespasses and sins could not abate the love of God, since it is written that, "God, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins," &c. Death could enfold our earthy nature in its cold embrace, but all the dark floods of death could not quench its eternal flame. Again, death and the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, met in dreadful conflict on Mount Calvary, but death was vanquished, and immortality was brought to light in the sequel of the contest, and God commended his love, in that when we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for us.

*"He saw us ruined in the fall,
Yet loved us notwithstanding all."*

Neither shall death in his last assault upon these mortal bodies, tend to separate us; but instead of alienating that love, it shall only remove the intervening curtain, that we may realize its eternal fullness in unclouded glory forever. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, and then, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit which is in us."—Romans viii. 11.

Nor life. Young christians in their early experience of this love, desire to die, to depart and be with Jesus, not only from the powerful attractions they feel drawing them to him, but from fear that their life in the flesh may bring some reproach upon the blessed cause, and that they may by some waywardness on their part lose the sweet and heavenly enjoyment of that love. But although the children of God do not always while here in the flesh enjoy the vivid evidences of the love of God, yet in Christ, where it is treasured up for them, it is immutable, and never can abate. It is among the "All spiritual blessings with which God has blessed them, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world."—Eph. i. 3, 4. He has established our goings; and he controls all things, and causes all things to work together for the good of them that love him, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Nor angels. Holy angels have neither the disposition nor the power, for unto the angels he [God] hath not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak. (Heb. ii. 5.) Wicked angels have tried all their power, but never have, never can possibly produce an abatement of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Nor principalities. Should all the governments of earth combine their forces, as many of them have, they may indeed

be permitted to annoy and harrass the saints, they may, if permitted, torture these frail, dying bodies, chain them to the stake, and consume the earthly tabernacle with fire, but the love of God is in Christ Jesus, and therefore out of their reach.

Nor powers. Of whatever sort or kind, for all power both in heaven and earth, is vested in him in whom this love of God is secured, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. There is no power but that is of God, and perfectly subject to the orders of his throne. The power of sin, the power of darkness, the power of the law, cannot effect an alienation, for Christ has redeemed his people from all these; nor are there any powers in existence that are or shall be able to succeed.

Nor thing present. Although for the present, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, though clouds may obscure our skies, tempests may beat, and thunders shake the world, there is nothing in the present tense that can lessen the love of God to his saints in Christ.

Nor things to come. The coast is clear. O, christians, look ahead. Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith; there is nothing in the impenetrable future to fear.

*"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread,
Are big with mercy, and shall break
With blessings on your head."*

Should the mountains be uprooted and hurled into the midst of the sea, should the waves thereof swell and roar, should death sweep over the earth, the sun forget to shine, the moon turn into blood, and the pillars of the universe totter to their fall, there is nothing in all that can come to pass that can separate you from the love of your God and Saviour.

Nor height. Look upward then, and trace the fearful omens of the heavens. See blazing comets approach with seven-

fold speed of lightning; if your God commands them so they may come in contact with this little dwelling-place of worms and dash this world to atoms. Pestilence, like winged warriors, may come on every wind, thunders may shake the earth, lightnings may bear the bolts of almighty vengeance far and scatter death abroad, but no heights, with their infinity of space, can possibly deprive you of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, treasured up for you.

Nor depth. No hidden fires in secret caverns burn beneath your feet, nor volcanic terrors which may tear the earth, can change the love of God towards you; and could your eyes unbar the doors of death, gaze into the gloomy chambers of the grave, and sepulchres of the mighty, or could you ever penetrate the deep confines of hell, and scan the horrors of the damned, still undismayed let faith lay hold upon the infallible assurance, it cannot separate you from the love of God.

Nor any other creature. Death and life, angels and principalities, powers, and things present and things to come, and heights and depths, are all the creatures of God. He has created them not in vain, they shall accomplish his purpose and do his pleasure. Neither these nor any other creature is to be regarded by the saints as having power to dispossess them of what God has given them in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If then there is nothing in death nor life, nor in principalities nor powers, nothing high nor low, nothing present nor to come, that can remove the saints from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, may the Lord pity the graceless wretch who dares aver that the children of God may fall from grace, lose their interest in the love of God, and sink to hell at last.

CORRESPONDENCE

M E P H I B O S H E T H

I remember the oath that David made to my father (1 Sam. xx. 14-17). How that for my father Jonathan's sake he would show him the kindness of the Lord, and would show it to his house forever; and, also, when David was in hiding for his life, from my grandfather King Saul, how my father visited him in his stronghold in the wilderness of Ziph, and there they renewed their covenant. Since then my father was slain with my grandfather in the battle on Mount Gilboa. David escaped the sword of my grandfather, King Saul, and has succeeded him to the throne. Will now David the king remember his oath to my father, that he will show the kindness of the Lord to my father's house? But am I worth remembering? Here I am, lame, cannot walk, a lifetime cripple, an object of charity and a charge on the hands of my friend Machir in Lodebar. My life is but a trial of the patience of my friend; he would be the better were I dead. I know that I can be but a burden. But, notwithstanding all this, oh how I love King David for my dear father's sake, because he loved him as his own soul. Is it not that love that made the oath? Will David keep it? Why should he? I am not worth the keeping of it. Were I one of the valiants in David's kingdom it would make the oath a matter worth keeping. Does David love me for my father Jonathan's sake? I cannot see why he should. It would be a mystery, and yet I know that love is also a mystery, seeking and resting on the most unworthy objects. It is for this reason only that I can be remembered of David for the oath's sake. But now the king is too busy with the great affairs of his newly acquired kingdom to think on the oath, or I on

whom the covenant rests; and should he, it would be the least of his kingly interests and undertakings. Although the covenant guarantees David's favorable consideration of myself, yet I would not regard the king as unfaithful should he annul the oath he made to my father, because I am sole survivor of my father's posterity, and am but a dead dog in the sight of the king. Thus Mephibosheth thinks of himself, debased himself and esteems himself quite unworthy of any favorable consideration that the covenant secures to him from his father's inseparable friend. But, as Mephibosheth thinks so of himself, David, the king, esteems Mephibosheth in a wonderfully different way. The covenant that went out of his mouth straight to Jonathan's heart he resolved to perform. He will make it the weightiest matter in the conduct of the kingdom of Israel. The Kingdom would sooner fail than this his oath. So David sends for Mephibosheth. He falls on his face and does reverence. David breaks to him the unexpected and glad tidings that he is now to receive at his hands the kingdoms of the Lord for Jonathan his father's sake. Oh thou faithful friend of my father, does that unbroken friendship rest upon me? It surely does, yet I can be no better than a dead dog, yet thou hast bestowed this honor undeserved, that I shall eat bread continually at thy table the remainder of my unprofitable life. Accept my thanks, King David; it is all I have. My love and my devoted heart are thine; but what is that to thee? In and of myself alone. But as I cannot recompense thee, it affords me the greatest joy that thou art so doing unto me for my dear father's sake, in memory of the covenant between him and thee, and founded upon the love that passes the love of women. I know, therefore, with what cheerfulness and with what freedom I shall be served at thy royal table all my days. No slackening or diminishing of the love that sustains

that covenant. Neither shall the dainties of thy kingly board be less bountiful and free, for could this come to pass, the fountains of the oceans and the springs of the seas could more surely cease to flow.

Now, dear readers, do you find yourselves about like Mephibosheth in his relationship to his fast, protecting and sustaining friend, King David? He is your faithful literal type. Your spiritual David took you up when you could not take another step. He brought you to his banqueting-house. His banner over you bore the insignia of love. Although unprofitable and lame, you are the blest offspring of God and the beneficiaries of his covenant of love, grace and mercy. It is good for you, dear readers, that you descended from a covenanted stock. It is serving you better than your feet could do, or you as a sinner deserve, for when you lost your self-supporting, walking ability then, and not until then, you became a real, lowly, mourning Mephibosheth. You can now receive the graces and benefits of your spiritual David's house in real true godly humility. Do you see your likeness in Mephibosheth as if he were a mirror, completely disrobed of all your unrighteousness? That is God's work, that his grace and glory through Christ, your spiritual David, may rest upon you as the meek of the earth. You must become impotent in the loss of all your fleshly abilities, so that you cannot carry yourselves another step, and then David's house is yours. Now that all the good of Israel's kingdom is secured to Mephibosheth he meditates thus: Not the least of all these royal favors have I merited, none of them do I deserve, yet how greatly I need them all. They are gracious gifts, undeserved and unsought. Incomparably more pleasant and soul-satisfying than was my temporary abode with my kind friend Machir in Lodebar. Here that covenant of love has made me a lifetime resident of the city of David.

There, it was at best, but a time of waiting to see what tomorrow might bring to me. Succession of days brought me no assurance of future bliss, the present day was all I could claim as my own. The next, and my stay in Machir, though kind and welcome, might be ended. But here assurance forever. David, kind friend, nourisher and preserver of my soul. Let no grateful anthem ascend with sweeter chords of solemn praise than mine for thee. Readers, Mephibosheth portrays your travel from the wilderness to your exalted abode in the Zion of your God, the militant church of Christ which he set up on earth. Wisdom builded this house (Proverbs, ninth chapter) over nineteen hundred years ago, and her maidens (gospel ministers) have been preaching good tidings to the simple (Verse 4) ones, the little children, since that time. Jesus is bringing the Mephibosheths from the uttermost parts of the Gentile world and adding them to the churches, that they may be saved from this present evil world. You Mephibosheths are the people that God has formed for himself to show forth his praise. (Isaiah xliii. 21.) Mephibosheth was David's special care. The riches of David's kingdom contributed to his support. The riches of God's kingdom supply your every need as you eat the bread of the broken body of Christ and drink his blood, for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. He has washed you from all your filthiness and clothed you with his robe of righteous-

ness. Having done all for you, you find yourself asking this question, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"—Psalms cxvi. 12.

Dear Editors, I had to write on this subject to get it off my mind. It may not be worth its room in the SIGNS, if not, consign it to the waste-basket and I shall be satisfied.

Yours very unworthily,

J. I. FOSTER

VISIONS

I want to write on visions that I have seen and heard:

Before I began to speak in public I saw a bush with lightning flashing near the ground where I had to walk. As I walked this thought came to me, that no man could go through this and live without the faith of God. I walked through and I was not harmed, I heard a voice say, surely Jim has seen the hand of God.

In the same night I had another vision, I saw two men come up in front facing me, they did not speak to me but just looked at me, turned and went back to where they came from. I heard the same voice over my head up in the elements, saying, thou shalt have two children by thy wife before you can see my face, I had already only seen one, her name was Peggy. In 1955 my wife died in Duke Hospital. This gave me much trouble because I knew that the Lord said two. I went about 35 years wondering what this meant, one day this dream came fresh in my mind and the interpretation with it. The two children was my two grandchildren, I rejoiced to know what he meant by saying two children. I knew that it was the word of God that said this to me. Then I thought that my time was near at hand. God gave this dream to keep me looking to him.

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In another dream, I saw myself standing in a field, and I was looking at a hill covered with hardwood trees. I heard the wind coming over the trees, the wind had a sweet sound and was very strong, every tree bowed under the pressure and not even one leaf fell from the trees. I heard the Lord speak from the trees, He said a God born man cannot sin, you don't know who they are, but I do. All this was before I began to speak in public, although I had been preaching to myself for about three years. After this I went to the General Hospital, I was greatly concerned about my future, afraid that I would not continue to be faithful. Two nights before I was released from the hospital, these words were placed on my lips: Go now, go then, I will be with you until the end! That room was a heavenly place to me.

The year of 1962 was a trying year for me. I prayed continually most of three days and nights for the Lord to tell me what to do, the third night about 12:25 a.m. I heard the God of heaven saying to me, be still and know that I am God. I awoke, shouting, praising and thanking God. I felt that God was with me. I am now 81 years old, and my eyesight is very good.

May God bless the Editors and the readers.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth

BRETHREN EDITORS:

I will pen a few lines for publication. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. If Christ be in you the hope of glory the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. There is one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father of all, who is above all,

through all and in you all. He ascended up on high, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. He first descended unto the lower parts of the earth and was seen by five hundred of the brethren. We are not our own keepers. We are kept by the power of God through faith, therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, unto whom we have access by faith into that grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the Lord. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Who knoweth the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? The wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the heavenly Father, the Prince of Peace, he rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. John said in Revelation, "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." He must reign until all things are put under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He arose triumphant over death, hell and the grave, giving us the greatest victory that has ever been won, all for his people. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen our of every kindred, tongue and nation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I am God, and there is none beside me. Be still and know that I am God. Art thou not he that divided the Red Sea and made a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass through dryshod? Which the Egyptians assayed to do and were all drowned. Pharaoh and all his host. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you. It seems to me that these things

are his goodness, his mercy, his power, his loving-kindness, his everlasting love. We love him because he first loved us and gave his only begotten Son that the world might be saved: those who love his precious name. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, glory, dominion, power and majesty. He is a God of truth. He is the rock, that rock is Christ. Jacob was the lot of his inheritance; he kept him as the apple of his eye, and led him about and instructed him. As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, taketh them, beareth them, so the Lord alone did lead Jacob and made him suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock. That rock surely was Christ, he was a man acquainted with grief, and as a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so he said not a word. If it be possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not my will, but thine, be done. Those wicked men cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. They did not know what they were doing. He is too wise to err and too good to be unkind.

I can hardly realize as I pass into my ninety-fifth year that I have lived twenty-four years beyond the allotted time of man. I have been greatly blessed in being able to attend our meetings quite regularly for fifty-seven years, and it has been one of my greatest pleasures to meet with the brethren for so long a time. There have been many changes in that time and many have been removed from our midst. We miss them, but it is far better to be with Christ, where there will be no more pain, to be like him, to abide with him. If ye abide in me I abide in you. Think of those who are afflicted and not able to meet with us, pray for them that they may be restored to health again, if it be his will. Can I say with the psalmist David, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in paths of right-

eousness for his name's sake. His rod and his staff they comfort me. He prepared a table before me. He anointed my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy will be with me all the days of my life?

As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, and as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy. The outward man perisheth, the inward man is renewed day by day. As thy day so shall thy strength be. "Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

From your unworthy brother,

D. L. BLACKWELL

JOHN XVII. 22.

"That they may be one, even as we are one."

Could it be the pleasure of the Lord I would like to pen a few thoughts on the subject matter contained in the Scripture here quoted. Realizing my weakness and inability in this, or anything good, I would beg the Lord to guide me in the right way: the way of truth. There are several very important things to notice in these words of our Saviour. First, this is a part of his prayer to his Father. Second, the people he is praying for. Third, the oneness in the Godhead. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. For a long time I have read and reread this memorable prayer, and I hope with much interest. It seems this prayer was uttered but a short time before our Savior was crucified, just a short time before he received the vinegar and said, "It is finished." This prayer therefore seems to be his last one before he was crucified. He was praying for people, his disciples. "I pray for them," he says. There were also people he did not pray for. "I pray not for the world," those who were not his by the gift of the

Father, "but for them which thou hast given me; for they are mine." Well, some tell me this was only his disciples he was praying for. Very well, we will suppose it was. "They [the apostles] are thine." Then what about his next words in this memorable prayer; "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine"? Surely we all believe the apostles were his, then equally all for whom he shed his precious blood are his. All for whom this memorable prayer is made to his Father. "That they are one, even as we are one." Now as to this oneness. He prays for his disciples, his people whom he came to save from their sins. We feel sure they have it in the sense they are all taught of him, for left alone to answer for themselves they would answer with the man who was made whole and the one whom he blessed with his sight, so that he followed Jesus in the way. So I believe they would answer as did these were it not for those judiazing teachers teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. This doctrine of God our Savior is not now nor ever has been popular with the learned and rich of the earth, but to the poor and needy, the lame and the blind it is sweet. They know it is not for anything good in them they receive such great blessings, but attribute it alone to Him from whom they know the blessing came, and left without so much carnal teaching they follow Jesus in the way, and in this sense they are one. But in a nobler and higher sense they will be one with him in heaven, there their praise will be one to the triune God in all eternity. No big "I's" or little "u's," but all one in him. I in you and you in me and I in the Father. One indeed! Our heavenly Father calls Christ and his members one, we the dear children of his love and he the firstborn Son.

I feel now that I have missed almost the whole of what I thought to write. I hope the good Lord will put this subject in the mind and heart of some able writer so he may write more fully of

what it seems to me it contains, and that I, a worm of the dust, may get to read it.

With the sweet hope that I am embraced among that people for whom the Savior prayed, I am, yours in hope.

JOHN R. WILSON

DEAR BRETHREN:

The "blueprint" is to the building about what the pattern is to the garment, and serves the architect as the pattern does the tailor. We read in the Scriptures of types, shadows and figures; in fact, the Lord's way of teaching is in a great measure by this method. In the first chapter of Genesis we have the following: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." We are persuaded that the word "image" not only means that Adam looked like the Creator, but it reaches beyond that, it simply means that in every leading act of his life he was the figure of his Creator. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v. 14. "Him that was to come" is Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. I cannot agree with those who teach that Adam lost this "image" of his Creator when he fell under the curse of the law. If Adam was the figure of Christ he was not the real Adam, any more than a natural Jew is a Jew, or circumcision in the flesh is the real circumcision, and Paul tells us there is not anything real about either. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a

Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Therefore the first Adam was not the real Adam, he was of the earth, and earthy, and the second Adam was the Lord from heaven, a quickening Spirit. The first shall be last and the last first. First in manifestation, but last in duration and honor, glory and majesty. So according to our modern way of expressing it, when God formed Adam of the dust of the ground he could have said truly, there is going to be an Adam that will come into this world in a future age, and I am going to give you a real figure, or blueprint of him. When the Lord breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul, he gave us a figure of that eternal life which was hid with Christ in himself before the world began. When God caused that deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and performed that operation, and formed a helpmeet for him, he prefigured that deep sleep that fell upon Jesus Christ, and the sword thrust by the wicked men, which is God's sword, and men of earth are his hand (Psalms xvii. 13, 14), by which came out blood and water, the only means by which the second Adam could have a helpmeet, or bride, and if Adam was the figure of him that was to come, surely Eve was the figure of her that was to come, the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. If it was not good for the first Adam to dwell alone it evidently is not good for the second one, "the Lord from heaven," to dwell alone. When Eve was beguiled by the serpent and fell under the curse of the law, she prefigures the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, in the same condition, and when Adam voluntarily went under the same curse for the love for which he had for his bride, and thereby justified her, by becoming as guilty as she, he beautifully portrays the second Adam, as made under the law, and made a curse and sin

for his bride. I wish here to call attention to the fact that in studying the types and shadows in the Bible we should remember when the type is set for the paper it reads backward, but when it is imprinted upon the paper it reads from left to right, so when God created Adam (the figure) he was "upright" and a "very good man," but he represented his posterity in sin and ruin. The second and real Adam was made under the law, and under its curse; in fact, he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So in the creation and lifework of the first Adam the type was set, and it reads backward, or directly from God. The bringing in of the antitype, Jesus Christ, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a life-giving Spirit, the imprint reads right, for he, Jesus, assumed the responsibility of the sins of all the world and in all ages of the world. He lived for them, kept the law for them, suffered all its penalty for them, died for them and rose again from the dead for their justification. If Jesus was "made sin for us," and a curse for us, and died and rose for our justification, will we stand justified before God? Or will he punish two persons for the same crime when there is but one guilty? In other words, if Jesus stood in his people's place before the judgment bar of God and suffered the vengeance of his holy law in their stead, will his people have to stand there and suffer the same sentence? No, in no wise.

G. W. BERRY

Columbus, Georgia

DEAR BRETHREN:

If I could feel as sure that I am worthy to thus address you as I am that the doctrine set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the doctrine of the Bible I would have no fear and trembling in claiming this sacred kinship. Sometimes

when I look back over my past life I feel that I have deceived the dear people of God in asking a home with them, but where would my peace and happiness be if they had no fellowship for me? I can find no spiritual comfort outside the fellowship of this peculiar people. The God they worship is the God I love to talk about and meditate upon. With Ruth I would say, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. He has all power in heaven and in earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? All things are under his control, and whithersoever he will he turns them. The world lieth in wickedness, but God's power is over all; and we read, The wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he shall restrain. The God we hope we worship is sovereign over all worlds, dominions and powers. Omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient is our God, and he is Israel's strength, the Rock of Zion's habitation. He has been our dwelling-place in all generations, and says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Fear not what man can do unto thee, for I am with thee, no harm shall come to thee. My grace is sufficient for thee. Oh what precious promises for our comfort and uplifting. Like Jacob's staff, they strengthen us in the way, and, dear ones, if God be for us who can be against us? Persecutions and fiery trials may assail us, but Jesus the Master suffered these, much more than are sent upon us, and we must suffer if we would reign with him. Paul was a persecutor of the saints until Jesus took up his abode in him and killed him to the love of sin, and afterwards we hear him saying "that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my live dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which

I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." So we find Paul the persecutor becomes the persecuted, like the humble Nazarene he learned obedience through suffering, and obedience even unto death. See the power of God manifested in this miraculous change. Yea, we are told to rejoice in persecution for truth's sake, for great is our reward in heaven. We often think over the miracles our Lord Jesus performed while here on earth, raising the fallen, cheering the faint, healing the sick and leading the blind, but the grandest miracle the Master ever performed while his feet trod the streets of earthly Jerusalem was when he gave eternal life when he bade a wretched sinner live. All the way down through time we see the same miracles wrought before our eyes when we see the blessed Son of God working mightily in these temples of clay. We see the old man with his deeds cast down and the new man rejoicing gloriously, singing the new song put in his mouth, even praises to God. Like Abraham of old, have we not longed to see His day, and have we not seen it and are glad? Though we walk through a fiery furnace the Son of God will be with us, and like the three Hebrew children we shall be brought safely through and not even the smell of fire on our garments, "For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress." We read how that the old apostles were sanctified in fires of persecution: they were reviled and learned not to revile again. This is why the martyr Stephen could pray, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. He had learned it of his royal Master. It was not of the flesh, but by the grace of God that he could pray this prayer. Grace all the work shall crown through everlasting days. What a long array of martyrs we read about, who said over and over again that in their flesh there dwelt no good thing. What a legacy of comfort

Jesus left behind for us, not only in his own life of holiness, suffering and in his atoning even unto death, but it pleased him that he should have many witnesses from the sons of men, making his power known in working miracles in earthen vessels. We thank our Lord for these spiritual gifts to the church by which God so wonderfully and graciously manifests himself as working and abiding in his chosen vessels, and by which they are made to so live that others seeing their good works may glorify their Father in heaven, and hereby are rich in comfort to the scattered flocks as they journey through the wilderness toward that city not made of hands, eternal in the heaven. May the Lord keep and bless you editors in your labor of love, and bless each and every one of his loved ones.

Yours unworthily, in love,
(MRS.) F. J. NORRIS

DEAR BRETHREN:

I feel like expressing some of my thoughts on the wonderful works of God recorded in the Scriptures of eternal truth. I understand the Scriptures to be a record of the truth of God to his chosen people, or church, and the truths there recorded are as unchangeable as God himself, and not one of her cords can be broken nor her stakes be removed. This being so, we can with delight and much comfort read its sacred pages. We read in the fifteenth chapter and twenty-first verse of Paul's first letter to the saints at Corinth, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Now we have the plain truth recorded that death came by man, also that the resurrection from death came by man. We understand that this is the word of truth that the apostles commanded to be rightly divided, and in order for this we must know that the

apostle is setting forth the fact that there are two men under consideration, and in following him on to the forty-fifth verse we see the division: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." I have given the above testimony in order that we can divide the truth here recorded. Jesus says we are to know the tree by its fruit. A corrupt tree cannot bring good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth corrupt fruit. We understand it is as impossible for this first man to bring forth life or divine fruit as it is for the corrupt tree to bear good fruit, because the very heart or life of this first man has been so corrupted by sin that there is no good thing in the flesh, says the same apostle, and we only have to go back to the beginning to learn how and where this first man Adam lost or forfeited all claim on anything but death. In the day that thou eatest of the fruit of which is forbidden, thou shalt die. This being a fact, we can see by the disobedience of this one man many were made sinners, for it was by the disobedience of this one man that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death has passed upon all, for all have sinned. Such is our awful state by nature, but blessed be God, by man came the resurrection of the dead. By man, which is the Lord from heaven, and is called the man which is my fellow, the lion of the tribe of Juda, which is Shiloh that was to come, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. It is through the obedience of this one man many were made righteous. It is through the death and suffering of this man that our sins were put away,

and it is by this heavenly man, by his having all power over death and the grave our redemption is sealed. The apostle continues this sublime subject by saying, As we have born the image of the earthy we shall also bare the image of the heavenly. So we who have tasted of the grace and mercy of the heavenly know and feel what the greatness of sin is which is condemned in the flesh, and we with Paul can and do groan within ourselves as we are bearing the image of this earthy man by which all these pains of heart come. We find this same law in our members warring against the law of our mind, so we cannot do the things we would. We are often made to say, Father, here is the wood and the fire, but where is the lamb for the offering? In this we are bearing the image of the earthy, but blessed answer of the father, God will provide the offering. Yes, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he, the heavenly, shall appear we shall be like him. for we shall see him as he is. Oh Glorious thought, bear the image of our dear Lord. When I awake with his likeness, then will I be satisfied. This is my hope and my all.

May the dear Lord bless and keep his dear and afflicted people in this blessed faith and hope until the true light cometh and the darkness flees away, is my prayer.
Yours in gospel bonds,

J. T. BARNES

“LET US HOLD FAST OUR PROFESSION.”

This language is found in Hebrews iv. 14, and in the same book (x. 23) we have, “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.” The word “profession” is found only a few times in the Bible, and means a declaration or announcement, a confession. In this connection it seems to refer to our expressed

faith in Christ as our Savior. It points out that we have embraced and declared in a public way that we hope and believe Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners. In Hebrews iii. 1, Paul says, “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” Here the people of this calling are said to be holy brethren, and that Christ Jesus is the High Priest, or Intercessor, for this profession. So we see again that Christ is our only hope for reconciliation with God and the remission of our sins, for he is the only one to make the atonement. Now, friends, if Jesus Christ is the High Priest of our profession, for there can be no other so good. Christ is not the High Priest of any other profession, and there is but one people who has a holy calling or a heavenly calling. They are a holy people in the sight of God, therefore were given a heavenly calling under their High Priest, even Jesus Christ. If the people of this calling and this profession should fail to hold fast to their profession they would have nowhere to go. “To whom shall we go?” There are other high priests who make a different offering, and to another god, and over a temporal priesthood. We cannot go there, for we have an eternal priesthood. Paul tells us that Christ witnessed a good confession before Pilate. Christ did bear witness that he was the Son of God. He also witnessed that Pilate was in God’s hands. This is the same profession that Paul recommends to us, that we should hold fast to it and not deny it, nor forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. We are also admonished to walk worthy the vocation wherewith we are called. It seems that there is a vocation, or state, whereunto God has called his believing children. They are called to be soldiers of the cross; even made “prisoners of hope.” In this we must surely conclude that our profes-

sion will hold fast to us, and if Christ Jesus is the High Priest of our profession, it will hold forever.

In the fourth chapter, first verse, of Ephesians Paul says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Here Paul claims, or admits, that he is a prisoner of the Lord. He is held fast unto the profession, even made a prisoner of the High Priest of his profession. He is bound up in the belief in Christ. Are we so bound that we cannot accept the reproaches of Christ? Some people are. In one sense the word "profession" means the body of people engaged in a certain vocation or calling. In this sense I believe Christ to be the High Priest of our profession. He is the High Priest of the class who believe in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. That is the belief he tells us to hold fast unto. Now I must admit that if I am not bound up as with bands and chains, the ends and links of which will not open, this poor man will never hold fast to any good profession. You all know me, from the least unto the greatest, for the Lord has taught you the frailness of the flesh. I do desire and must desire the love and fellowship of this profession. It is a good and true confession, but who can attain unto it? Only the holy brethren who have the heavenly calling, unto whom Christ Jesus is made the High Priest of their profession. No other can ever receive the atonement or hear the calling. May God ever accept the offering as made in our behalf.

Your unworthy brother in hope,
E. G. WEBB

Jan. 23, 1985

Dear Bro. & Sister Spangler:

Do hope you both are doing fair this cold weather. We are doing al-

right I hope. We missed going to church last Sunday, of course, I go so many Sundays and come back so lonely and empty. Looks like I am not blessed to get much out of the preaching unless the loud speakers are on. If I know anything about receiving a wonderful hope in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ it was before my first little boy was born, the one that you went to see in Reidsville Hospital. I wonder sometimes if there was as many thunder storms that spring before he was born as there was in April. I would be cooking and washing dishes and it would thunder and lighten. I was so afraid it would strike me and kill me and I'd go to hell. One night I dreamed of a deep pit in my front yard and I fell in it and I could smell my flesh burn. I could go to the spot right now and put my foot on it, oh, I was so worried over it. I would lie down at night and felt like I would never see my husband and babies again. I dreamed one night that I went down to our hog lot and there set the prettiest woman I had ever seen. She had a huge book in her lap and she had already wrote my companions name down and was writing mine down. Green grass was all around her feet and the most pretty little children around her feet. I didn't worry too much after this about where I was going and when my little baby boy was born, we like to have lost him, he was in the hospital for nine weeks and three days. We had give up on him when he entered the hospital, the nurse carried him up on the elevator and I was with her, she told me if it was the Lords will that he would live and they could do something for him, if not they couldn't do anything for him. I was made to believe long before this and the Lord blessed me with faith to believe he had all power both in heaven and earth. When this same little boy was nine years old, I had two serious operations, supposed to have been serious, but the Doctor said I got along better

than any patient he had ever done surgery for or on, but I was so afraid the night before I was to have surgery that I started to get up and slip out and go home to my husband and children. I was in a private room and the Lord spoke to me and it sounded from one end of the hall to the other and said, Fear not, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. I feel like he has blessed my husband and me both, to raise 4 wonderful children and live together 53 years. But I get down and out so many times, I know he has all power and sometimes I hope I feel thankful to be able to go to church. Seems like I can't be the same every time I go to church, but hope in heart I am the same and I hope we love them all. Robert looks for you every Sunday to come through the church door. He dearly loves to hear you preach and I do too.

You will preach every sermon that's intended for you to preach, but how lonesome it will be without you. We will miss you so much, I want to come to see you and set and talk with you just a few minutes. I have tried so hard to pray that you would get better, not my will but thine be done. I have never felt like this world was my home. I hope the Lord will bless you both.

Love,
Sister Rena Smith

Elizabeth City, N.C. 27909
August 1, 1969

Dear Sister Griswald:

I returned home safely from the associations which I enjoyed so much. I felt that it was good to be there and hear the everlasting Gospel preached with power by able ministers of the New Testament, to mingle with the saints, and hear the songs of Zion sung with the Spirit and the understanding. As I sat and listened to the singing one morning, I felt quite happy and the tears of joy

welled up in mine eyes as they did under the joyful sound, which is the Gospel of the Son of God. In Psalms 89:15, we read: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance." I hope I know this sound from the effect it has on me.

We were talking about the moon turning to blood, and I want to quote from the Commentary of John Gill, of London, the soundest, the most learned, and the most able Baptist theologian since the death of the Apostle John, according to Hassell in his Church History, which you probably have. On Rev. 6:12, "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood," he had this to say: "By the MOON (referring to the opinion of others) they understand the church, which receives all its light, grace, righteousness, and holiness, from Christ, and which, like the moon, is changeable as to its outward form and circumstances, and this (the church) became as blood, through the persecutions; massacres, and cruelties of the Romish antichrist, who has been made drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. AND THE MOON BECAME AS BLOOD; as when obscured." So it does not appear that the moon literally or actually turned to blood, but that the church composed of the saints whose blood was shed by or at the instance of the Romish antichrist (the pope and his followers) figuratively became as blood. When we speak of the dear Redeemer being a Rock we do not mean that he is literally a rock, but that He is in a figurative or metaphorical sense a Rock. He is the solid, unmovable, precious Rock upon which He is building His church. In Matt. 16:18, He says, "... upon this rock (meaning Himself, and not Peter) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against

it." The devil with all his cohorts can never destroy the church of the living God. In the dark ages many were burned to death because they would not bow to popery, but I believe that when Christ comes again without sin unto salvation to gather his elect home the church will be standing and looking with joy for His glorious appearing in the clouds, and the dead will be raised in His likeness, that is the ones that sleep in Jesus. He will not leave Himself without a witness on earth, for some will be found contending for the truth when He comes again, and they will be caught up to meet Him in the air, according to the Scriptures of truth. I dreamed one time of looking for Him to appear in the clouds, but I did not see Him. It seems that I had hold of one end of a cord that reached to Christ within the veil. I could not see Him, but I could distinctly feel Him at the other end of the cord, which I hope represented the cable of faith. And hope is the "anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus...." In 1 Tim. 1:1, we read that the Lord Jesus Christ is our hope. Dear Elder King in his sweet introductory sermon spoke of Christ being the anchor of the soul and faith being a cable, or something to that effect, and it touched me sweetly.

With best wishes and kindest regards to you and yours, I remain

Yours in that blessed hope,
C. W. Vass

MEETINGS

MALMAISON SONG SERVICES

Beginning in April song services at Malmaison Church will be held on 4th Sunday evenings at seven

o'clock instead of 3rd Sunday evenings as previously held. Everyone is invited to attend these services.

Elder Julian Williams

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

If God be willing, the next Union meeting of the South Ouachita Association will be held with Rehobeth Church beginning the Saturday before the Second Sunday in April, 1985. (April 23-14). Rehobeth Church is located at El Dorado, Ark. five (5) miles north on Hwy. 7 and one-half mile west on Hwy. 335. All who love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are welcome.

C. C. Wilbanks,
Clerk

Presbytery Meeting

At the request of Richmond Primitive Baptist Church, Chesterfield County, Virginia, a Presbytery composed of the Following:

Elders: W. R. Saunders
Clyde Daniels

Deacons: George Conner
Cleveland Coleman

met with the Church on December 2nd, 1984 for the purpose of inquiring into the qualifications of Brother Ray Ellis for the office of deacon. The church had agreed on the first Sunday in November to call for a presbytery to meet with them.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder W. R. Saunders, as Moderator. Cleveland Coleman was elected

Clerk. On motion, second, and carried, the Moderator was authorized to appoint the members of the Presbytery to the various tasks.

The Moderator appointed Elder W. R. Saunders to question the candidate. The Moderator appointed Clyde Daniels to pray the ordination prayer. The Moderator appointed W. R. Saunders to deliver the charge to Brother Ellis.

W. R. Saunders questioned the candidate and church according to the scriptures concerning the qualifications of a deacon and the Presbytery being satisfied then proceeded to the ordination prayer and laying on of hands by Clyde Daniels.

The charge was then delivered by W. R. Saunders. After which, Brother Ellis was returned to the church an ordained deacon. On motion and carried, the Presbytery disbanded.

Elder W. R. Saunders, Moderator
Cleveland Coleman, Clerk

Elders: W. R. Saunders
Clyde Daniels

Deacons: Cleveland Coleman
George Conner

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST
FOR JANUARY, 1985

Jerry P. Cockman, NC.	\$15.00
D. H. Richardson, FL.	2.00
Mrs. H. W. Jones, AL.	2.00
Elder J. C. Townley, AR.	1.00
Lloyd C. Spikes, OR.....	7.00
Larry G. Conner, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Phylis Snyder, VA.	2.00

Mrs. Ella Cline, OH.	15.00
Marion N. Meeks, NC.	2.00
Mrs. Lora Smith, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA.	15.00
Mrs. Margaret Quesenberry, VA.	2.00
Thomas H. Sladky, NC.....	5.00
Mrs. Ilene Clifton, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Hallie Griswald, NC.	15.00
Conrad Key, NC.....	7.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER NETTIE RAYNOR HORNE

We, the Church at Cypress Creek, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, in taking from our midst, Sister Nettie Horne.

She was born December 25, 1900 and departed this life on June 28, 1983, making her stay on earth almost 83 years. She left to mourn her passing, one daughter, one son, a number of grand-children and also great grand-children.

She joined the Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church, September 28, 1972, and was a very active member as long as she was in good health.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes and she was laid to rest in the family cemetery beneath a beautiful

Look on your address label.
If the expiration date is
4/85
it will expire with this issue. Please
send renewal in the mail today.

mound of flowers.

Done by order of Conference that this obituary be written, for a copy to be given to the family, one sent to the Signs of The Times for publication, and one be placed in the Church records.

Written by: Rovean Horne, Member
Albert Manning, Deacon
Elder Harmon Brown,
Moderator

SISTER LOTTIE ETHEL SIMMONS

It becomes my sad duty to attempt to write a memorial of a departed Sister in Christ. It is a burdensome duty, for I am so unworthy and fear that I cannot write worthy of the deceased.

She was born Dec. 8, 1897 and passed from this life Nov. 1, 1984 at the age of 86 years.

She leaves to mourn her passing two sons, E. Lynn Simmons and Allen E. Simmons; one sister, Mrs. Myrtle Burch; three brothers, Jesse L. Setliff, Earnest W. Setliff and John E. Setliff; 6 grandchildren, 14 great grand-children, and 4 great, great grand-children.

Sister Simmons was married to Mr. Earnest Simmons in the year of 1917.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church January 27, 1929 and was a faithful member to attend her meetings as long as her health permitted.

I believe Sister Simmons was made reconciled to her illness and to death, because she bore her afflictions without murmuring.

She was well cared for by her family and I would comfort the bereaved ones if it were in my power, but this must come from God.

Her funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Home on Saturday, November

3, 1984 at 2 o'clock, and due to illness of her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, Mr. J. C. Raper conducted her funeral by reading what she had prepared to be read at her funeral.

We express our deepest sympathy to all who were near and dear to her.

Done by order of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at her conference, Dec. 22, 1984.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Coley S. Strader, Committee

PERRY LEE STONE

We, the members of Liberty Church, note with much sorrow the passing of our dearly esteemed brother and deacon, Perry Lee Stone.

Brother Stone was born on June 26, 1903 in Franklin County, Virginia, to the late Rufus Franklin and Mary Cahill Stone. On the 19th of February, 1928, he was united in marriage to Miss (later Sister) Majie Odell, by the late Elder Dan P. Helms. To this union were born five children, all of whom lived to mourn his departure. Four sons; Hampton, Clarence, Ralph and Robert Lewis Stone, all of Bassett, Virginia; and one daughter, Mrs. Norman (Thelma) Dodson of Fieldale.

By profession, Brother Stone was involved in furniture manufacturing. For many years he was an employee and foreman of Bassett Furniture Industries. Many people, both inside and outside the church, have given testimony that he was good to work with, and under his direction.

A number of years ago Brother Stone united with an Old Baptist Church which disbanded in later years. While with that body he served as a deacon and church clerk. On the first weekend in July, 1967 he joined Liberty Church on

confession of faith. At his request, he was then baptized by the pastor, Elder Bennie Clifton. On the first Saturday in September following, he was ordained as deacon by the same presbytery which ordained Brother Clement Washburn and Brother Lester Adams to the same office. In this capacity, Brother Stone served faithfully and well for the balance of his earthly life.

Brother Stone suffered with declining health for about the last three years of his life, although he continued to come to church as often as he could. Around the middle of October, he suffered a severe heart attack, from which he never really recovered. He passed away at Martinsville Hospital on October 28, 1984.

Funeral services were conducted at Liberty Church by Elders Bennie Clifton and John Wingfield, after which, Brother Stone was laid to rest in the church cemetery. Among the many who were left to mourn his passing were two brothers, Daniel and Albert Stone; one sister, Mrs. Clara Akers and six grandchildren.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that we submit three copies of this obituary: one to be placed on the church record, one to be presented to the family, and one to be mailed to the Signs Of The Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference the 5th day of January, 1985.

Prepared by: Elder John Wingfield
Brother Joseph Cahill
Sister Lucy Cahill

SISTER ETHEL WITT G. THORNTON

In memory of our dear Sister Ethel Witt Gilley Thornton. Born April 17, 1908 in Patrick County, Virginia.

Ethel was the daughter of Charlie Peatress Witt and Mary Ellen Taylor Witt.

Ethel passed this life January 29, 1985, making her stay on earth 76 years and 9 months. She was married to Oscar B. Gilley. To this union was born three children: Two sons, Malcolm D. Gilley, address unknown, and Oscar Benton Gilley, deceased. One daughter, Mary Sue Gilley Ferguson, Eden, N.C. Three brothers, Richard W. Witt, Patrick Springs, Virginia, James R. Witt, Bassett, Virginia and Charlie P. Witt, Martinsville, Virginia. Two sisters, Lillian Witt, Martinsville and Maude Witt Godshell, Orlando, Florida.

After the death of Mr. Gilley, Ethel married W.J. "Bill" Thornton. After his death she remained a widow the rest of her days.

Ethel united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on November 25, 1962. She was faithful to her church and attended regularly as long as she was able. She was a strong believer in Salvation by grace and grace alone.

She was blessed to stay at her home as long as she lived. Her dearly beloved daughter and husband went there and cared for her until her death.

Her funeral was held at Fair Funeral Chapel by Elder Haywood Wray. Her body was laid to rest at Patrick Springs, Virginia beside her first husband, to wait the second coming of the Saviour. Our loss is her heavenly gain.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

By Charlie Hopkins
and wife Ethel

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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POETRY

MY BEST DREAM AND THE BEST ROBE

Job 33:15-17; Isa. 61:10

*Face to face in a precious dream,
Indeed, so sweet to me,
Yea, in a vision of the night,
I did the Saviour see.*

*With a smile, He appeared to me,
In slumberings on the bed;
And on me laid His hands three times,
Though not a word He said.*

*Then with the King of Kings I stood,
And mine eyes did behold
An emblem of His righteousness,
Which now He did unfold.*

*One end of a robe Jesus held,
Whilst I held the other;
O how favored to be thus found
With our Elder Brother!*

*Next He took the garment from me,
As about Him I hovered,
And the scene that shortly followed
Showed my sins are covered.*

*He solemnly dipped the vesture,
And around me it placed;
O Happy thought that surely I
Was in His love embraced.*

*This symbolized my being clothed
With th' robe of righteousness,
And when it was revealed to me,
I did a hope profess.*

C. W. Vass

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 EDITORIAL

Hebrews 12: 27, 28, 29.

"And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For God is a consuming fire."

It seems to be very clear according to the scriptures as well as the experiences of the Lord's people, that stability is not to be found on this earth; yet it seems that carnal nature is forever attempting to build upon earth's quicksand as if it were a substantial rock. There is no abiding city here upon earth, and it is all in vain to attempt to build

one for the "world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." I John 2:17. It seems to be necessary at times for the God of Providence to give the world of His elect a warning shake in order to enforce this important truth upon them.

First, let us look at the Lord's voice in shaking the earth on Mount Sinai. "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that was in camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Exodus 19:16-18. The quaking of the earth here was to impress with greater emphasis upon the minds of the people the terrible force and authority of the law, and that the Law Giver was as a "consuming fire."

"The removing of those things that may be shaken." May we be blessed to look upon some of the natural things that may be shaken to better illustrate the spiritual significance of being shaken. Take an old building whose foundation is cracked, whose walls are leaning, would we want to build upon this type of structure? No, surely not, because this type of foundation and building would not be secure enough to build upon. But is this not what many of us were attempting to do at one time in our lives? Is this not what the Apostle Paul was attempting to do while on his way to Damascus before the removing of it took place by the power of God? Is this not what all worldly religious minded people are attempting to do today? Were not some of us involved in the same thing if we professed to be religious when we were

going about, "In time past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2:3.) Were we not building upon a foundation that could be shaken?

Beloved friends, this principal, which is true in a natural realm, is much more true in a spiritual realm. There is a set time in the mind and purpose of God toward his elect people to bring them out of whatever false refuge they may have been involved in. We must be given spiritual life and light in order to feel and see our undone and lost condition. Our sins must appear exceedingly sinful. When Mount Sinai quaked by the power of God, it was typical of the shaking of the hearts and consciences of God's elect people under a fiery law. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezk. 18:4.) And "cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3:10.) When the above killing "sentence of death" comes into our hearts and consciences, it slays us as to salvation by the works of the law. See how this shakes to pieces all of man's own righteousness? God's purpose is to remove everything which can be shaken. Take our own self-righteousness, were we not at one time attempting to gain the favor of God by our deeds of righteousness, but was this righteousness shaken to become but as filthy rags? Our creature wisdom was such we thought to gain eternal salvation through our own efforts. We thought we knew much, which was nothing more than boastful ignorance. We found this to be only a fool's dream when we were given by the grace of God to learn the real source of salvation. Our creature strength is demolished when we find by the same grace of God that we are without strength to serve the living God.

Some of you (as I was) may have been involved in a worldly or false religion,

believing in the good efforts and works of man together with the grace of God (a mixture of work and grace) and we felt comfortable towards our assurance of salvation. But the shaking of Mount Sinai is typical of the law shaking to pieces our false religion; self-righteousness, wisdom, and creature strength. Why? because these do not constitute a sufficient foundation to build eternal salvation upon and they all must be removed for whatever things can be shaken are to be removed. Everything then that man feels he can do to gain heaven by his own exertion must be shaken and removed. Everyone building upon the above, "Shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the wind blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7: 26, 27)

Why did God shake your heart and conscience with the earthquake of his holy law? To remove the false heaven you had built up for yourself through your own righteousness, wisdom, strength and good works. He did this by discovering to you the evil of your own deeds and to remove the false heaven which you would have been pleased with until you sank into hell.

The whole of man's miserable abodes must be completely removed, for there can be no union between nature and saving grace. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14). Salvation must be of grace from first to last. "And if by grace, then it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. 11:6). "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9)

What has been the result of all the shaking and removing of things which we have experienced? Surely we have had much removed from us which we highly treasured at one time but which would have led us to fall into the ditch of eternal destruction. Can we now, by the grace of God, say with the Apostle Paul, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffer the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phil. 3:8, 9) We were not all brought along the same way. While in our natural state, some of us were involved in a natural religion, and some of you may not have been, but surely we can all say we were involved in things that we can "count as dung." Blessed are the ones whose God has revealed these things to us. Beloved friends, you have this precious truth that whatever you may encounter along your pathway of life, that all things shall work for your good.

"That those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

We shall attempt to mention only a few of the things which cannot be shaken.

1. The divine wisdom and foreknowledge of God. "Known unto God are all his works from eternity." Acts 15:18. The foreknowledge of God cannot be uncertain or else he would cease to be an all wise God. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13.)

2. His will cannot be moved because "all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and we 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.)

3. The counsel of the Lord shall stand and cannot be removed. "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:10) "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations." (Psalms 33:11)

4. The unchangeableness of God and his decrees must remain. "I am the Lord, and I change not." (Mal. 3:6.) "With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17.)

5. His justice, his mercy, his absolute predestination of all things, his election of a certain people in Christ Jesus, the finished work of Christ in the complete salvation of his people cannot be removed. "It is finished." His was a perfect work, a finished salvation and complete redemption for his people.

We may now view from a more personal standpoint what cannot be removed: the inward, holy, divine, and effectual calling of his people at an exact appointed time from nature, darkness, and ignorance into his marvelous light. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (II Tim. 1-9) This call can never be affected by what we have been, what we are now or might be, but according to his own purpose and grace. Neither can this call be rejected, refused, or resisted as to become void and of no effect. "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, whom he called, them he also justified." (Rom. 8:30). This call springs out of eternal predestination accompanied by justification and future glorification. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved." This kingdom in the scriptures is called the "kingdom of God." "The kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21). It is a heavenly kingdom, a kingdom of grace, a kingdom of divine teach-

ing and work of the Holy Spirit within. It is called the "kingdom of God" to distinguish it from all other dominions and kingdoms of the world. One aspect of this kingdom is the rule of Christ in and over the gospel state of the church which the apostle declares to be more excellent than that of the law. The very nature of this kingdom is indestructible. Man did not set it up nor did God establish it for any temporary purpose. He established it for an eternal purpose, and has guaranteed its perpetual existence by his solemn oath. This kingdom will remain unshaken and secure. Yes, "the Lord has sworn and will not repent."

The kingdom is also a personal matter: "We receiving a kingdom" having been put in possession of it, and what a blessed kingdom it is. What a glorious work it is indeed by the Holy Spirit in establishing the kingdom of grace in a poor unworthy sinner's heart. You may have wondered, as I so often have, (if we be the children of God) why, O, why, did it please God to shake and remove all my false refuges that I was involved in and set up his kingdom of grace in my unworthy heart? "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and it shall not be left to others, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Dan. 2:44)

When the work of grace is set up in the heart of a child of God, it brings about many changes "as unknown, and yet well known; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (II Cor. 6:9, 10.) This pathway is unknown to the world, only the chosen of God experience the sorrows and joys of this path. "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools,

shall not err therein. No lion shall be there; nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there." (Isa. 35: 8, 9). Those who travel it together know each other, they speak the same language, they have the same Father, the same Christ and the same Spirit. A precious love is made manifest among the sojourners of this narrow pathway, love that binds the people of God together for they are of one family, of the same household of God. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2:19, 20). Is it not beautiful to see how God calls his chosen to be members of the same household? To sit at the Master's table feasting upon the bread of life; to nourish that inward life, that inward kingdom which God has set up with you. Jesus says, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." (John 6:51.) It is a glorious thing indeed to see members of the household of God sitting in a meeting together feeding upon the words of God through a God called minister preaching "Jesus Christ and him crucified."

This new kingdom, which the Holy Spirit has used to shed abroad the fruits of his Spirit cannot be shaken or removed. Faith, hope, and love may be deeply tried. Faith by unbelief, but faith will abide, even though at times it may seem to be almost enveloped by unbelief; yet, this spark within cannot be quenched. It must abide because it is centered in Christ who is the giver of it. It abides in him and trusts in him; it cannot be moved. Hope by dependency or despair; but despair cannot remove hope that is wrought by the Holy Spirit, for it anchors into that within the veil.

“Hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.” It is therefore said to be sure and steadfast. Love must labor against enmity; but love will abound for “many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.” “We love him because he first loved us.” True faith, hope, and love cannot be completely removed; if so, a person could be saved then lost which we know is not true. You may be shaken at times as to your possession of them; yet, these stand not in the power of man, but in the power of God. “He works and who can hinder.” You may be ready to say, I am often shaken as to the reality of the work of grace in my soul. This may be true, but if the work is real, the shaking which you may feel does not shake the reality of the thing itself. “Being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Phil. 1: 6.)

Those receiving this kingdom into their hearts, will experience many wonderful changes and at the same time, many fearful changes. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new.” (II Cor. 5:17). There is a new creation, and there is an old creation, and by our own experiences we can say there is a great distinction between the two states. The old creation is for the world; all its desires, happiness, etc. are derived from this world. The new and old are not to be joined together. “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” (Luke 16: 13.)

When you are born again into this new state or existence, many wonderful

experiences may take place in your heart and conscience. You may have found yourself dropped into a complete new existence. Old things began to pass away and new things began to appear before you. You began to realize how foolish you have been concerning your past and now begin to wonder, “What must I do to be saved?” Everything that you had been holding on to to gain heaven by merit you found to be only a false foundation, or a foundation that could be moved. The world began to pass away from you with all its connections, with all its glory so far as becoming the pursuits and delights of your new regenerate soul. The Holy Spirit reveals to you that you are indeed a sinner. He brings you to see and feel that you have no right to heaven at all; but as a sinner, you have a right to hell and you greatly fear. What a vast change takes place in your mind. As the Holy Spirit has led you on through many trying experiences, can you look back with some hope in your heart and say, What a mercy that the Lord has made all these things new to us putting us upon a foundation that cannot be removed?

This is a big subject. I feel it has been too big for me and must acknowledge I have only skimmed the surface.

May God bless you all is my prayer,

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

If you have enjoyed knowing of the various Churches all over this Country, please help us by sending us a picture of your Church with a brief history, location, date and time of your meetings and the name of present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Copper Hill, Va. 24079
February 19, 1985

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Greensboro, N.C.

Dear Elder Key,

You will find enclosed a copy of my experience, that I hope and believe, by the grace and mercy of God, treats on the dealings of the Lord with me in the pardoning of my many sins.

Should you consider it worthy of space in the Signs, you will please publish it in same.

Should you for any reason see cause to not publish it, it will be all right.

My regards to Sister Key.

Now may the loving spirit of the risen Lord abide with you and yours.

Unworthily yours,
Gaye A. Thompson

EXPERIENCE

By way of introduction, I was born April 3, 1895, to J. D (Jeff) Akers and Della Cannady Akers, Floyd County, Virginia. My mother received a hope before she was married in her eighteenth year. My Dad received a hope several years later.

I have attempted several times within the last several years to write something concerning what, by the grace and mercy of God, I believe to be the dealings of the Lord with me in the pardoning of my many sins. Each time I have attempted to write it has been thrown into the wastebasket.

It is not so much what I did, but what I am within—a hell deserving sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

When I was in my thirteenth (13) year I had set the table. We had the food ready to put on the table when my Dad and the

work hands come in from the field. A small still voice spoke within me saying, "Go read". I knew what I must read. I went into the living room. I thought I will open the Book and read where it opens. When I did my eyes fell on the scripture treating on the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was as if I had never heard of it before. Prior to that time it had been nothing more than history. I thought, O, what a cruel thing was done to the Lord? I began to weep; I went out the front door, to hide behind the grainery, in the back lot. I fled out there to hide, because I did not want anyone to know anything about this. I heard mama calling me to come to lunch, I did not answer. I wanted nothing to eat. However, I knew I must go to the house. I thought I will wash my face and bathe my eyes.

When I went in to sit down at the table my brother, Rice, said, "Gaye has been crying." I replied, I got water in my eyes when I washed my face. Ready to lie rather than be questioned why I was crying. I remember so well how I was so deeply hurt over telling a falsehood about it. My trouble was so great over the suffering of the Lord, I was like Peter, I could not realize, "It must needs be."

I desired to live a better life. Yes, fleeing to the law for justification, in which there is no justifying. I liked to dance. Would skip across the floor as I went from room to room. I became condemned over dancing. Would go to friend's homes to dances, take part in the dancing. Would suffer over it and vow I would never dance again.

I would get a break from this condemnation, go a long time at ease. It would return, seemingly, heavier than before. I found I had no strength within myself. About this time I dreamed I would live only two weeks. I checked the calendar for the day I would die. Words are inadequate to express how I suffered. I knew

hell would be my doom. Sometime later, I dreamed I would die on a certain day. Checked the calendar again, I thought it will surely happen this time. O the agony I suffered. The dread of hell I was facing. Only those who have had a like experience know anything about it.

Sometime after this, I dreamed I was standing in the back yard at our home, when suddenly I began to soar upward. I went up, up and up with the most ease. No effort whatever on my part. I suddenly realized I was going up within an enclosure like unto a wooden grain box, about six by six feet square. I continued to go upward; a voice spoke to me saying, "If you can reach the top, you will be saved." I reached the top which was like the top of a box. I swung there with both hands clasping the top of the box. I beheld a large room full of people. It was so dark in the room I could not recognize any one. At the far side of said room there was a door that opened into another room. It was the most beautiful place I have ever beheld. It was so light in this room. Brighter than the noonday sun. Everyone in there was the same size. They looked so happy.

I was the second child born to my parents. The first little girl died, age about three years, when I was a baby. Another little Sister (third child) died about two and one-half years of age.

Another Sister died, 1940, age thirty-eight. In the dream I recognized my Sisters. I said, those three little Sisters are mine. A voice said, "No, they are mine."

There was only one entrance to this beautiful place. The door was closed to this beautiful place. The people in the large dark room were going around in circles, trying to reach the entrance to the beautiful place. They were like unto cattle in a stall pushing, going around each other, however, making no progress to reach the entrance.

O, that I could find words to describe

the peace and happiness of the one and the anguish and torment of the other. It just can not be done.

My Daddy died in 1937. Twenty years before he died, I dreamed I saw him tied to a stake. His body was wrapped from head to foot with a rope a few feet from the house under the window of the room where he died. It seemed almost unbearable for me to witness this; I was begging God to let me take his place. In retrospect, I was reminded of this from time to time down through the years; always wondering what it could mean. When he was dieing, I fell on my knees beside his bed and asked God to let me go instead of him. Suddenly I saw him tied to the stake as I had seen him in the dream. Then I realized what the dream meant, his death. My Daddy and I were very close; even closer than my Mother and I were.

In my nineteenth year, I married B. Odell Thompson. He had employment in Roanoke City, Virginia, where he took me to live.

He came home from work and found me crying. When he asked what I was crying about, I replied, O, it is nothing. He was greatly concerned; fearing I was unhappy with our marriage. He asked, "If he were not as good to me as my parents were." I assured him he was and that it was not that I was troubled over. I told him I was troubled over my sins and could get no relief. He said, "That is easy, I will take you to hear Mr. _____." He preached at the Round House where he worked for the Norfolk and Western Railroad Company. At that time my husband knew nothing about preaching other than the law worship.

I did not want to hurt him. I told him, if I ever want to go I will mention it.

Some time after that a child died whose Daddy worked where my husband did. He asked me to go with him to the child's funeral.

I did not know the Minister that had

the funeral. However, I knew he was a Primitive Baptist by the doctrine he preached. I told my husband I would like to go to his church some time. He said, he would inquire and take me to hear him. He was pastor of Roanoke Church.

On our way home from church I ask Odell how he liked the preaching? He replied, "It was all right, I guess." As a matter of fact, he knew nothing about it. I became heavily burdened to beg God to remember him in mercy, to show him he was a sinner in need of mercy.

I had another dream. I was in bed in our room. My husband was at work. (He worked at night.)

I was whipped with a whip like a buggy whip; one lash after another, each whip becoming a hoop like a barrel hoop, and rolled off of the foot of my bed into a closet. After the whipping I became so happy; words are inadequate to describe the peace and happiness I enjoyed. Love flooded my soul. The feeling of condemnation and fear of hell never returned.

My husband became dissatisfied with his work. He said, "My foremen are nice to me, my helpers are good men to work with, I just do not know why I have become so restless." After we moved back to the country, we lived almost a year with my parents. Odell helped on the farm. It pleased God to show him he was a sinner. His trouble was so great he said, "Sometimes he would walk behind the wagon and weep when they went to the field to work." He did not want my Daddy to know he was weeping and was in so much trouble. We purchased a grist mill near my home. Later he tore the old building down, erected another, a merchant mill, manufactured flour, meal and hops.

He said, "One day when he started to milk the cow, his sins stood before him, he felt he was going to die and hell would be his doom." After reaching the

milk barn he thought, "If only he could pray." Suddenly a bright light shone about him, just enough to cover him. He said, "The brightness of it was indescribable." He expected that burden of sin to return. In meditating over it, he remembered the bright light that had shone about him. He was by the grace of God, made to realize he had received a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our hope, our redeemer, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. We loved the church and had a great desire to ask for a home with them, however, our feeling of unworthiness was so great we could not offer, in other words, ask for a home with them. When we were discussing it we always agreed we would like to offer on a Saturday, when there would not be many people present.

Many were the times when I would plan to go. I recall once when I felt so sure of myself, when I arrived at church the children of God, that I loved so much, did not look good to me. I thought if I always feel like this, I shall never want a home with them. The Lord knows how to handle us, to teach us how weak we are, how helpless, and where our strength comes from. I desire to thank him that He taught me how dependent I am on him for everything, even the air that I breathe.

I recall once when I was meditating on offering to the church, I thought how could they receive one feeling so unworthy as I do? I had another thought, Lord if I am turned away, I hope I will still love them. It seemed to live without that love would be unbearable. He has blessed me to have that same feeling all these many years. Praise His Holy Name!

If we have any worthiness it is in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord deals graciously with us. He knows how to keep us at his feet.

I believe there is a time and a place. Evidently the time came the first Sunday in September, 1925, when the Smith

River Association was adjourning, that had convened with the church, West Fork, Floyd County, Virginia.

I was standing on a slab we had sat on during the service, when suddenly, I became impressed to offer to the church. I was saying within myself, I will not! I will not! The Ministers were shaking hands in the stand. I noticed one that was so homely, I thought you old, ugly man, how I love you. My breath became so short, and I became so weak I would have fallen, if Odell had not caught me. He asked what was the matter, I said, "Let us go up there." He said afterwards he had never felt farther from wanting to offer to the church than he did at that time. Therefore he said, "We could never get through the crowd of people." I said, "Let me go in front."

If I had to ask anyone to let us pass I have never remembered it. When we reached the stand there was a pew placed in front of it, that had been put there probably for the benefit of the elderly to use. Suddenly Odell became impressed to ask for a home, in other words, to tell some of his experiences. Someone noticed us and ask that the pew be removed. In the meantime, Odell being so anxious, he stepped over the pew into the stand. Soon as I was seated he began talking. That was alright with me. Such a peace and satisfaction enveloped me, I was at ease. I was among the people I loved; I hoped for Christ's sake.

*The Lord works in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform,
He plants his footsteps on the sea
And rides upon the storm.*

We were baptized a month later by our pastor, Elder J. H. Cummings. I was so happy. I thought I would never have any more trouble. Monday morning I was ask, is there anything to all of this? O how I was let down. Only the day before I had thought I would never see any more troubles. From time to time during the month prior to our baptism

when we would awake in the mornings, Odell would ask what was the first thing you thought of when you awoke this morning? We were so happy, however, that happiness had to come to an end.

Some time before this I was told my husband would have to preach. I thought of all things, that would be the most impossible. I, in my weak way, tried to show God it could not be. How weak I was to undertake to show God how to manage his business.

Isaiah 14:24 *The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying: Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand.*

I suffered over this, telling no one about it. Sometime later, I feel safe in saying, "The Lord visited me, made me reconciled to his will." Then I begged the Lord to go with him. To give him grace to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. I long have been a beggar at the feet of Sovereign mercy.

I dreamed of seeing the most beautiful white horse, running toward Paynes Creek Church. I was told it represented the power of the gospel. Odell would, by the mercy of God, be given to share.

We had company to spend the night with us. Odell was in so much trouble he said he could hardly wait until they left the next morning. When we had seen them off. We went back into the living room. He took me in his arms and said, "I want you to promise me you will never tell anyone what I am about to tell you." I said, "I know what it is." He did not think I did. When he told me how he was so burdened to preach and that it could never be. I told him I had been suffering over the same thing. We stood there and wept together, feeling so helpless. He told me later he decided he would rather die than make the attempt to preach. Therefore, he took the gun, hoping he could end it all, and went up into the woods near the house. I knew, or thought I did, why he had taken the

gun and gone out. He told me he saw where a squirrel had been cutting and was going out to see if he could get the squirrel. I was not uneasy. The Lord had told me he would have to preach, and had made me reconciled to it. By the grace of God, I believed God. I pray He may keep me in a way that I may have the fellowship of his children, while I sojourn in this world of sorrow and disappointment.

Psalms 25:4, 5 *Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day.*

The Lord is so good to me. I can witness with the Psalmist **90:1** *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.*

Psalm 91:1 *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I have had other sweet experiences I must withhold, since this manuscript is becoming too lengthy.*

Gaye A. Thompson
Copper Hill, Va. 24079

Route 3, Box 294
Eden, N. C.

Dear Brothr David,

I am so sorry you are ill, my heart goes out to you & Sister Spangler. I missed you both at the Reidsville Meeting Sunday.

Over the years you have been very faithful to the church, a good leader and kept the church in peace. May God be praised. How often Brother David while uner the sound of your voice, has this scripture come to me. "As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10-15.

I have always wanted to tell you a

dream I had years ago. I have been burdened for days to write, but fearful of worrying you. This dream has meant a lot to me. I hope it is of God.

I saw the most beautiful white line across the heavens, there were three large white balls on the line. They rolled off the line one at a time, and burst into a bright light and with a noise like thunder. To me the first one was God. The next one was the Moon (law) turning to blood. Jesus fulfilled the law when he shed his precious blood on Calvary. This is the Moon turning to blood. Then the last one rolled off which was the Sabbath. When we are blessed to see our sins are hid in the blood, we are at peace with God and can rest in his love. That is your sabbath.

Brother David, I hope this was a revelation from God. If so we don't learn it from man or reading the Bible. There has to be a great spiritual awakening from God. Sometimes I long to go home where Sabbath's never end. I hope this hasn't worried you. This dream has meant a lot to me. May God bless you to be back with us soon is my prayer.

Love for Christ Sake,
Ruby McGuire

March 3, 1985

Dearly Beloved Brethren,

When a child of grace is left to himself, when God turns his face away for a moment, then all is dark, dreary and wild. There is no light and we grope blindly. If this continues for a while, we are prone to start our own fires; our carnal nature tells us there is something we have not done or something that we must do to put us in favor with God again. But our instruction is, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." We have been through these

dark, depressing periods before, but because of our short memory, the temptations of our sinful flesh and satan, we must be taught again and again as was John when he was shut up in prison. Are we not just as imprisoned and doubtful as John? And is not our Lord as gracious to teach us as he was unto John?

But I do not now desire to write about the dark and dreary experiences of our lives, but what we are blessed to see when our Maker causes his face to shine upon us, and gives us ears to hear and heats to understand what the Spirit says to the churches. I do not know that I am a child of Grace, but I believe that I have been given a hope that extends beyond this time world, and I am made to rejoice exceedingly when I am given a glimpse of the blessed Savior and the salvation he hath bestowed upon the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world. There was a time when I believed that Christ died for all the Adamic race and that all would be saved if only they would believe and accept his offered salvation: but praise His Holy, glorious and blessed name, I have been given to see and understand that the only offering Christ ever made was to God the Father. As our High Priest, he offered Himself once unto God, the offering was accepted, and he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. But, say some, "Everyone who will accept him will be sanctified." This can in no manner be true. What God hath done is forever. Nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it. The word "hath" is a verb of past-tense and can in no way apply to the present or the future. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh to me." If a man is taught of God, that man must be born

again, for the natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. "He that cometh to God must believe and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life." If we believe in God we have this life, for a dead person can believe nothing: and all of us were at one time dead in trespasses and sin, and by nature children of wrath even as others: but he hath quickened us with that life that was given us in Christ in eternity, for God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: and this life that is imparted to us is a spiritual life. If we have been blessed in Christ, then are we in him, and chosed in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. O, how beautiful! how rapturous! is our hope that we were chosen in him, that we shall be raised from the grave in his glorified image and dwell with him in immortal glory forever.

According to the riches of God's grace we have been redeemed by the precious blood of His holy and righteous Son. Because of his love, he hath laid down his life to redeem us from the curse of the law under which we fell in Adam. We have broken God's just and holy law and His perfect justice demands our death. In all of God's attributes He is equal: one is not stronger than the other for they are all perfect. Love nor mercy can be extended at the expense of justice. Would justice be satisfied if an innocent live was taken instead of a guilty one even though the innocent one would gladly die to save the guilty? No! In no way! Murder would be the result of taking the innocent life, and the guilty one would still be deserving of death for his transgression. Then how, in justice, did Christ, the innocent Son of God, die in the room and stead of guilty, death-

deserving sinners? The answer is amazing, yet vital, to us mortals. God created man in His own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. In what way did God create man in his own image? God is a spirit, an infinite being; and man is flesh and blood, formed from the dust of the earth, and mortal. An image is a likeness of an object. It can never be the object, but only as a resemblance thereof. When God breathed into the nostrils of Adam he became a living soul. Let us remember, however, that God made them male and female. Eve was in Adam when he formed him and breathed into his nostrils, but she was not yet made manifest. Then the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her to the man. (We will note here that he made the rib a woman and did not make a woman out of the rib. To me this indicated that the church was complete in Christ). And Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man was of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. Adam is the figure of him that is to come. And being a figure implies a perfect likeness. We cannot see the figure without beholding the true body. Eve was in Adam, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, as a type or shadow of the church which is in Christ. He is the head and we are members of his body, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. As Eve was the bride of Adam so is the church the bride of Christ. The

two in each case are one flesh. Adam, being a figure of Christ, was not deceived, but the woman was in the transgression when she partook of the forbidden fruit. As a figure of Christ Adam loved his bride and willingly followed her into death, though he had no power to redeem her. This death was sure, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam is the Federal Head of the entire human family, for in him was the seed of all natural men; and we are but Adam multiplied. Christ is the spiritual Head of the church, which is his body, which is also his bride. Because of his great love for her he would die for her, and redeem her from the curse of the law. For the love of his bride Adam died, though he had no power to redeem her as did Christ who had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again.

Justice was satisfied when Christ died, for justice can demand no more than death: and when he died his bride died with him, for me and she are one flesh. Not a bone of him was broken, for his bride, his church, can never be broken. All of the kingdoms of the world shall be broken in pieces, but his kingdom shall stand forever.

If we died with him, we were also buried with him in baptism, and we are also risen with him thru the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Christ knew no sin, but God laid our sins upon him, where unto he died that we might live. And his righteousness hath God imputed unto us. Now are we dead unto the rudiments of the world, but alive unto Christ. We are dead, yet we live, and our life is hid with God in Christ. O, what a glorious salvation hath our Savior wrought for us poor sinners! The wise and prudent of this world know nothing of this salvation, and go about seeking their own salvation thru works, but it is of grace and not of works lest any man should boast.

God hath hid these things from them and hath revealed them unto babes, even so for it seemeth good in his sight.

This is written in love for your prayerful consideration. May God bless it to his praise, honor and glory and to the comfort and edification of a little one or ones. Charge all errors to me, and ascribe all truth unto him. When he comes again to gather his jewels and take them home to glory may we be blessed to hear these gracious words from his lips, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Your prayers for me are greatly needed and desired.

Clifford Wilbanks

JONATHAN AND DAVID

The history of Jonathan and David in their relation to each other has a very peculiar interest. Even to the natural mind it is a wonderful and touching story; but, as is the case with all the Scriptures, its far deeper, its real and true interest and value, lie in its spiritual meaning. All that was written aforetime was written for our learning in spiritual things in this gospel dispensation. (Romans xv. 4.) This history has a striking gospel significance, which I wish to speak of briefly.

It is undoubtedly true that David was an eminent type of Christ, and that in most if not all of the incidents of his life recorded in the Scriptures there is set forth in a figure some truth concerning Jesus in his work of salvation. Jonathan appears to represent the Lord's spiritual people as they appeared under the law, while Saul as the anointed king represents Israel after the flesh, with the authority of the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, and all that pertained

to the first covenant. Saul and Jonathan were related in the flesh, and were both under that legal covenant, as the carnal Israelites and those who had divine life were all together under that law, and under its carnal service, and could not be distinguished from each other by anything peculiar to either in that legal work. But when David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Saul hated him from that time, while from that same time 'Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul.' So when Jesus appeared, even in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the conqueror of death, the enmity of the carnal mind was ever excited against him, and those who testified of him were persecuted.

I will dwell somewhat upon this battle of David. He was in the house of Saul after he had been anointed king, of which Saul was ignorant. Although anointed to be king, the kingdom was not to be given to David until Saul's death, then it was to be established to him and his seed forever. It was probably to signify the permanence of the kingdom to him and his seed that he was anointed out of a horn, while Saul was anointed out of a vial for the opposite reason. David always acknowledged Saul as king while he lived. Jesus was in the legal house, and subject to both parental and legal authority, but was not known as the anointed King by the legal rulers and princes of this world. He was not under their displeasure as a man, but only when by act or word he declared his sovereign power, and the work of salvation which he came to do.

When David was sent by his father to see his brethren, who were in the army of Saul fighting the Philistines, a champion of great size had come out of the camp of the Philistines forty days in succession, and each day had challenged Israel to choose a man to fight him. Upon his appearance all Israel were dis-

mayed at the sight of him, and fled from him. Nevertheless Israel each morning, seeming to forget their fear of the previous day, went forth to the fight again, in the same armor, and again shouted for the battle, as though confident of the victory. But again they were afraid at the sight of Goliath, and fled from him.

The Philistines were gathered at Shochoh, (a thicket) which belonged to Judah, and pitched between that and Azekah (a cultivated ground). To my mind they, who were the great and constant enemies of Israel, represent our sins, and all the vileness of our fleshly nature, and it is in the wilderness of the flesh, between the flesh and the cultivated soil where grace reigns, the battle is waged. The great and fearful champion that comes forth from that camp of our enemies is death. Of him the Lord's quickened people must be afraid, for in the armor of the law they cannot overcome him, but must fall before him. Sin reigns unto death.

It was on the fortieth day of the champion's appearance that David appeared and accepted the challenge. So on the fortieth day Jesus overcame the evil in the wilderness. David could not go to fight Goliath without the authority of Saul, so Jesus must be recognized by the law as having the right to go into the conflict with death. He was authorized by the law, and put forward by the legal authorities as the one man who "ought to die for the people, that the whole nation perish not," though the high priest who uttered that prophecy by the Spirit did not himself know the power of the words he uttered. (John xi. 50-52.)

Saul armed David with his own armor, but David put it off. The law armed Jesus with the flesh. By being made flesh he came under the law. He could not meet and overcome death until he had taken upon himself and put off again that flesh in which sin had been committed, and thus had condemned sin in the flesh. It

was only by first being overcome himself that he could overcome the great enemy. He must first die in order to abolish death. The law must first be satisfied by his death, which makes an end of sin, and then death has lost its power. "He that is dead is freed from sin." Then the Son of God, who took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, in order to die the death due for the transgressions of his people, can no longer be holden of death, but comes forth victorious over him. "Death hath no more dominion over him."

All this must be shown in a figure by the action of David, while David must remain alive. So having put off Saul's armor, he chose five smooth stones from the valley. These stones represent an accursed death inflicted upon an Israelite. When a man became accursed he must be stoned to death. David threw one of these stones and brought down the giant. Jesus by his own death under the curse of the law, represented in this figure by the smooth (perfect) stones with which David armed himself, brought death down at his feet, and "destroyed him that had the power of death." He must first die, and then meet death with his own death, and thus overcome him so thoroughly that he can never make any one from whom Jesus died his captive any more. Jesus fought the battle so effectually in the valley of Elah, the bitter valley of death, that when he came forth out of that valley he even "carried captivity captive."

To make the figure more complete David took the champion's own sword to cut off his head. It was the sword of justice which death held over all who were under the curse of the law. But when Jesus through his own death "finished transgression, made an end of sin," and so laid death low, deprived of all his power, then that sword of justice was taken from death and turned against himself to bring his existence to an end.

It was not simply absolute power, as abstractly considered, by which Jesus overcome death, but the power that justice and judgment give, for they are the habitation of God's throne, or the foundation of his power as against death. His people are not simply snatched from death, as a stronger man may take away a lawful captive from a weaker, but they are legally delivered. They are justified. No charge can ever be brought against them, for God has justified them. "It was Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, and is now at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for them." His intercession is felt to be effectual, for with the sword of justice justly taken from his conquered enemy he has destroyed him forever.

"The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them." "And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron." And when the Lord's people see the victory of Jesus over death they arise, and shout, and pursue their enemies, and rejoice in the victory that is given unto them through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When David went forth to fight the Philistine Saul inquired who he was. No one seemed to know. Upon his return Saul sent for him and asked him, "Whose son are thou, thou young man?" David with modesty and meekness answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite." When he had thus spoken to Saul, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and he loved him as his own soul." "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his

bow, and to his girdle.”

What can this act of Jonathan signify unless it be the fact that all of the Lord's people in all dispensations do ever ascribe their robe of righteousness, and all their garments of salvation, and all their weapons of war and their strength, to Jesus? They recognize and testify that all they have belongs to him, and is his gift to them. This is as clearly declared by the holy men in the legal dispensation as by those now in the gospel day.

To the sight of men, Jonathan and Saul were alike as warriors. They fought with carnal weapons, and must both fall upon that same battlefield, overcome by the Philistines. That is the end of all who are under that dispensation. It is the end of all flesh. It is only by faith that a future is seen for Jonathan which is not seen for Saul, in which he and his seed shall be remembered in covenant love and salvation by David. Upon this earthly battlefield he and his fathers fight side by side with equal courage and zeal. David classes them as equals, and speaks of them with equal praise. “From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.” “How are the mighty fallen.” That legal covenant could not furnish any weapon to those under it wherby they could overcome their enemies. “How are the weapons of war perished!”

For Jonathan, David had some words of love and tenderness which he had not for Saul. “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.” The love of the Lord's people to Jesus is wonderfully described in those few words. In all ages, in all dispensations,

in all lands and among all people, it is the same. It is indeed wonderful, a “love that passeth knowledge.”

“Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father,” and defended him at the risk of his own life, and saved him out of his father's hand, who sought to kill even Jonathan his son because of his defense of David. In this Jonathan may well represent the prophets and holy men of old, who testified of Jesus, and declared his coming and kingdom, and who were hated by the carnal Israelites and their rulers, and were persecuted and killed, because they spake good concerning the spiritual David who was to be the Ruler over Israel.

And Jonathan said to David, “And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as his own soul.”

This promise was not literally fulfilled to Jonathan, for he died with Saul in battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Nor were the promises which were given to the prophets to declare among the people literally fulfilled to them. They, with all the Lord's spiritual Israel under the old dispensation, “having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”—Heb. xi. 39, 40. The “everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure,” which was made with them, and which was all their salvation and all their desire, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) was not made to grow or be fulfilled in their flesh, nor in the sight of men. Its fulfillment was ex-

perienced then in the manifestation of Christ to them through the Spirit, who has now appeared in the flesh, and has openly fulfilled all that they spoke of him, revealing himself to his people among all nations by faith, and showing unto us that his people both under the old and the new dispensations are made perfect only in him.

As we see the heart of Jonathan turned toward his children far in the future, with a longing desire that David would show the kindness of the Lord to them, so we see the hearts of the fathers (the prophets) turned unto their children in the gospel dispensation, and rejoicing when it was made known unto them that the things they declared were to be fulfilled unto us. (Luke i. 17; 1 Peter i. 12)

Silas H. Durand

Dear Brother Lefferts:

What a blessed relation! To think that we are heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, is a thought that I can scarcely claim for myself at times, yet I have that hope that was given me when Christ revealed himself to me as the light of my life, the chiefest among ten thousand. Dear one, I know you are passing through that part of your soul's journey that is not traveled but once; the first love; the sweet faith that follows the obedience of God's command to enter into that rest that remaineth to the people of God, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." How true it is, we cease to work when we receive a hope. The church is the resting place of the saints. What a glorious thought to think that Christ is the chief corner-stone of this glorious resting-place. Peter says, He is a precious stone and the poor saints find it so. "Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him

shall not be confounded." Peter also says of the church, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." We are of the same people, the same nation, so we may thank God together that he has shown us the way, the church, the home of the saints, and made us of that near relation that the world knows nothing of, and is above all earthly relation.

We were glad to receive a letter from you, and we should have answered it long ago, but we have not these things in our own hands. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, so we cannot have the things to tell, nor the impression to tell them, only as the Lord gives them, and we must wait on the Lord, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

"Let us love, and sing, and wonder;

Let us praise the Savior's name;

He has hushed the law's loud thunder,

He has quenched Mount Sinai's flame;

He has washed us in his blood;

He has brought us home to God."

"Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Your sister in hope,

E. P. FETTER.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

Dear Brethren:

This rainy day I have a desire to write on a text that has been as badly misunderstood as any part of the Bible. I know I have to face a proposition that has been rooted and grounded in most people's minds for ages, and a great many may think any one who would deny the erroneous idea that has been instilled into the minds of the people on this language is a presumptuous, silly person. The text is "Train up a child in

the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.”—Proverbs xxii. 6. This has been written on by our people, and some have said, this is not to teach a child to be a christian, nor to become a child of God, but to teach it to be a moral, truthful person, honest and upright. I beg leave to differ on this point. It is all right to try and teach your children to be truthful, honest, honorable, virtuous, &c., but this text is not on that subject. If it means you must teach your children honesty, morality, &c., and they will not depart from it when they are old, Solomon was mistaken, for a boy I went to school with was the model for all the boys in the town. His parents took him to Sunday-school and preaching nearly every Sunday, and did their best to train him right, and after I began to try to proclaim salvation through a once crucified but now highly risen and exalted Savior, I met this boy, then a grown man, and he said with an oath, “I don’t believe there is any such thing as religion.” There are hundreds of thousands of cases where the parents did their best to train their children up in the way they should go who did depart. Then the text must refer to something you have not seen. At that time Solomon was not writing to the Gentiles, but to Jews, and telling them to train their children up according to the Mosaic teaching. Teach them to observe the law and keep it, to go once a year with their offering and give it to the high priest, and he offer it to God, and if it was accepted by the Lord their sins were forgiven for that year. But the Scripture says there was a remembrance of sin every year. Hebrews x. 3: “But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.” Teach them they must be circumcised, they must be purified according to the custom of the law; train them up in the doctrine of the Jews and they will not depart from it. You never knew a Jew to depart from the teaching

of the priests and the fathers unless God taught him Jesus was his Savior and he learned the law was only a shadow of things to come. Heb. x. 1: “For the law having a shadow of things,” &c. Again, “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”—Col. ii. 16, 17. When a child was born to Jew parents if it was a boy it was circumcised the eighth day, and all of them, both boys and girls, were taught the doctrine of the Jews just as soon as they could understand what their parents meant when they talked to them. Their parents never tried to teach them before they were born, like people do now, trying to teach their children the things of the Spirit before they are born of the Spirit. Paul says, “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”—1 Cor. ii. 14. Just as soon as a child of God is born of the Spirit it has an understanding and can hear and understand the gospel. 1 Peter iv. 6: “We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us.” What does he mean by this language? He means, if you are not born of God you cannot hear “us,” the apostles. “He that knoweth God, heareth us.” Now turn to John xvii. 3: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hath sent.” Then if they can hear they have eternal life, and can both hear and see. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Then if he is born of an incorruptible seed he is ready to be taught, and trained up in the way he should go. God teaches all of his children they are sinners, lost, ruined and helpless, but evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving

and being deceived. When the children of God are born of the Spirit and taught by a sound ministry they do not depart. I heard an Old School Baptist preacher say, When God gives a church a sound preacher it is a sign he is going to establish that church in the doctrine. Paul says, Eph. iv. 11-14, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the fullness of Christ: 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." Then the true ministry train them up in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it. Peter says, "As new born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Peter ii. 2. Paul says, 1 Cor. iii. 2: "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." First verse, same chapter, Paul says, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes." So if we have babes among us, do not set up bars, but feed with the sincere milk of the word. 1 Cor. xiii. 11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Hebrews v. 11-14: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful

in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." When I became a man, if I was ever anything, I put away childish things. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" I learned that God predestinated to build a world and built it, and that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and you by wicked hands crucified and slew him. I learned God determined before the world this should be done, and that the wicked men who killed him were wicked before they crucified him, and it made them no worse to do this, the wickedest thing that ever has or ever will be done; that their hatred of him, with the devil to aid and influence them, caused them to do this awful thing. My Bible says they hated him without a cause. Isaiah says, "He is despised and rejected of men," and Jesus said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Herod and Pontius Pilate were enemies before this, but when the Savior was to be killed they were made friends. They will all be made friends, and the Gentiles were there to help, when it was unlawful for the Jews to have anything to do with the Gentiles. "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." Train up a child born of the Spirit in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. So many little ones are like our little baby girl was. She went into our sitting-room, looked into the closet, ran out in the center of the room and began to scream. Her mother ran in, and said, what is the matter, Mary? She

said, Oh there is something in the closet; there is something in the closet. Her mother looked, and it was a striped kershaw, or squash as some people call them. Her mother took her by the hand to lead her up to where it was, saying, Mary, that is a kershaw, we make pies out of that. Mary took a step or two and then pulled back, and said, "Yes, kershaw; yes, kershaw." She was a little baby girl then, but she grew up and her mother taught her how to make pies out of squash and kershaws. Then when she had learned there was no harm in squash, or kershaws, she could sit up to the table and eat the pies. So it is with the children of God, when they find out how glorious and how wondrous the doctrine of predestination is they can feast upon it, for it is found on God's table he prepares of his people and for his little babes. If my wife had not known what a kershaw, or squash, was no doubt she would have told Mary to run, and she would have come after me to get me to kill the thing, like a great many of our brethren do in regard to predestination. Train them up in the way they should go. When some go too far, and say, The lust was in Adam, and he was a sinner before he ate the forbidden fruit, and the bad seed was in the dirt when God made Adam, and lust caused them to eat, they certainly need a little training. One thing sure, I am not going with them in that path, for God only knows where it will lead to. The first command given Adam was, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Marriage is honorable in all, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. (Heb. xiii. 4.) Lust is sin, and if Adam and Eve lusted after the forbidden fruit before they ate God created sin in them, and I am sure our great preachers never taught any such thing. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—Rom. v. 19. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;

and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. v. 12. Here we are told positively how sin came into the world. Elder Gilbert Beebe never said or wrote that God created a sinner when he created Adam, or rather that Adam was a sinner before he ate the forbidden fruit. I have his editorial published in Hassel's history before me. He says on page 948, "Men act voluntarily when they commit sin." Page 949: "If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come?" But he never taught God created lust. Lust is sin, for James says, "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." Eating the forbidden fruit was not raising children, as many think, for God married Adam to Eve, for God said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife," &c. If Eve was Adam's wife and God did not join them together in the holy bonds of matrimony, please tell me who did. Love is as high above lust as heaven is above earth, as God is purer than the devil, as light is brighter than darkness, as righteousness is better than sin. When God made Adam he was upright, for Solomon says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." There is not an upright man on earth since the fall, except so far as the grace of God causes them to walk uprightly. "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Long years ago Baptist wrote, "Man by reason of the fall hath lost all ability of will." Again, "By the transgression of the law **** so that

man has not only become dead in sin, and incapable to keep the law, or to restore himself to the same state of moral uprightness, but wholly unable to accept of salvation by Jesus Christ." Do not say, God created us like we are, for if you do, you had better ask wisdom of him who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not. He can train you in the way you should go.

Your brother in hope of mercy,
Isaac R. Greathouse.

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IT IS TIME TO RENEW

If the date before your name and address is marked 5/85, or an older date, it is time to renew. We would appreciate you looking at the date and renew as soon as you can.

Editors

OBITUARIES

ANNIS BATCHELOR BROWN

I will attempt to write the obituary of my dear Mother-in-law.

Annis Brown was born March 19th, 1889, and was called to rest, July 5, 1983. She joined Muddy Creek Primitive Baptist Church May 1918 and was baptized by Elder Isaac Jones. She was a True and Faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by the grace of God.

Sister Annis had a stroke 23 years before she died that left her partially paralyzed. For almost a year she was unable to attend her meetings. She improved enough that she could bo back with the help of her sons. She had three very faithful ones that saw to it that she got to her meetings. The last seven years of her life was spent in a nursing home due to another stroke that left her helpless and unable to talk. Her afflictions were great but she never complained.

Her mind was well enough that she recognized the Elders when they visited her and she would greet them with a smile that lighted her whole countenance like a candle.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder William Everett. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious morning of the resurrection when our Lord and Saviour shall come to take his chosen ones home.

Written by request of her son, Stedman Brown.

By One Who Loved Her:
Nettie Brown

ELDER ORA DAVIS

Elder Ora Davis, age 83, of Maynardville, Tenn. passed away

Thursday, February 21, 1985, following a short illness. He is survived by wife, Mrs. Sarah Davis; daughter, Mrs. Beulah Nicely; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Sisters, Goldie Gose and Lorene Dyer. Brothers, Fred, Murphy, Auston and Verlin. Several nieces and nephews.

Brother Davis joined Union Primitive Baptist Church June 8, 1932 and was ordained an Elder Sept. 15, 1935. He was pastor of Union and Dotsons Creek Church and assistant pastor of Mountain Creek and Friendship Churches. He served as moderator of the Powell Valley Association for ten years (1972-1982).

Brother Davis experienced many adversities in his life but he never faltered in his belief and defense of a Sovereign God and a Complete Savior. His words were, "One who has already completed the saving." He served his churches faithfully for over half a century. We believe he could say as Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Brother Davis would say he had been KEPT in the faith.

It is with a sense of great loss we bow to the will of God. His calling of our dear brother, teacher and friend. We thank the Lord for his life and his long service to our churches.

Brother Davis' funeral was conducted by Elder D. R. Cabbage and Elder Rush Hendrix. The body was laid to rest in the Monroe Cemetery, Maynardville, Tenn. to await the coming of Jesus.

Written by request,
Bernard Monroe

MISS EFFIE SMITH GOAD

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst my Aunt and our beloved sister, Effie Goad, February 18, 1985. She was born January

23, 1903, in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to Albert S. Goad and Ida Dalton Goad, making her stay on earth 82 years.

She asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church the fourth Sunday in September 1964 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, the second Sunday in October 1964. Aunt Effie and I were baptized the same day. She attended her meetings regularly as long as her health permitted. She loved her church and some of her greatest pleasures in life was to cook and prepare meals and invite the brethren and friends into their home to visit and talk of the goodness and mercy of God our Saviour. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and Grace alone.

Back in her younger years, she and her sister would walk down to the church once a month before the fourth Sunday and clean the Church. They did this for many years. She said sometimes some of the members would bring them a piece of material to make them a dress to let them know they appreciated them cleaning the Church.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad, her nephew, at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church, February 20. She was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery, waiting for the day when God will call His Children home, where trials and tribulations will be no more.

Those left to mourn her passing are two brothers, Russell and Lloyd Goad and one sister, Nolie Goad, and a number of nieces and nephews.

Written by one who loved her and misses her very much.

Her Neice,
Mabel Hedrick

BROTHER WALTER C. HAMLETT

It is with sweet memories that we think of Brother Walter C. Ham-

lett. Brother Hamlett was a member and deacon at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va. He was received by experience and baptized, April 10, 1966. Brother Hamlett was faithful to his church and loved the Brethren. He traveled many miles to hear the gospel.

Brother Hamlett was the son of the late Jessie Hubbard and Carrie Taylor Hamlett. He passed from this life December 5, 1984. His funeral was held by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Mr. Randy Bridger at the Bethel Baptist Church, Phenix. His body was layed to rest in the family cemetery near Phenix.

Brother Hamlett is survived by his step mother, Mrs. Mozell Hamlett of Phenix. Five daughters; Mrs. Carrie Gutheries and Mrs. Joyce Harris of Evington, Mrs. Jannie Sapp of Chesterfield, Mrs. Jean Phelps and Mrs. Dorothy Foster of Phenix. Three sons; Walter C. Hamlett, Jr. of Phenix, Herbert Hamlett of Evergreen, and John Hamlett of Keysville. Two brothers; Otis L. Hamlett of Pasadana, Md. and Clifford Hamlett of Salem. Three half-brothers; Carter Hamlett and Watkins Hamlett of Richmond, Richard Hamlett of Evergreen. Four half-sisters; Mrs. Bernice Sprinkle of Charolette Court House, Mrs. Elsie Harris of Madison Heights, Mrs. Shirley McCluster of Phenix, and Mrs. Glenn Casell of Richmond. Twenty-two grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Brother Hamlett will be sadly missed by all. May we all be reconciled to God's will.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Pickral

ELDER DANIEL AARON JENKINS

Elder Daniel Aaron Jenkins was born October 26, 1906, at Chipley in Washington County, Florida. His parents were Elder Green Berry and Senny Ann Jenkins.

Elder Jenkins' family moved from northwest Florida to south Florida in 1917. He worked as a farmer, then during World War II, was employed by Tampa Shipbuilders. In 1946, he started with the Hillsborough County Road Department and retired in 1968, as a Motor-grader operator.

Elder Jenkins married the former Zola Parrish on May 20, 1926. They were the parents of four daughters, Lorraine Joiner, Naomi Miley, Dean Koch, and Reitha Smith, and two sons, Harvey and Daniel. His loving and faithful wife preceeded him in death on July 17, 1974.

The eternal God called Elder Jenkins into the fellowship of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church on November 24, 1934. The church set him at liberty to the full function of the Gospel Ministry on January 26, 1946. The Presbytery was composed of Elders T. M. Hughes, T. P. Webb, and G. B. Jenkins. Elder D. A. Jenkins faithfully served the churches of the Mt. Enon Association for almost 37 years. He was a brother to many and a friend to all. At all times, Elder Jenkins gave praise, honor, and glory to the eternal God who has all power in all things and faithfully preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ, "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints."

It pleased the God of all Grace to call Elder Jenkins from his labors here on October 3, 1982. Memorial services were held at Bethlehem Church and he was laid to rest, at the side of his wife, in the church cemetery to await the glorious resurrection of those with a hope in God our Savior.

Elder and Mrs. Jenkins are survived by their sons and daughters, 22 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

Submitted by:
Elder J. A. Albritton



ELDER DAVID V. SPANGLER

"Through the years of my ministry, if I am in it, I have had great wrestling with the flesh, and but for His great grace would have fallen by the way, yet I have that blessed hope

that I will someday see the King in his beauty, and praise Him as I ought." (A quote from Elder Spangler's book, "Amazing Grace".)

We are saddened to announce the death of Elder D. V. Spangler, at the age of 83 years. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1918 and was ordained as an Elder in 1921. He served faithfully until his death April 18, 1985. His funeral was conducted at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church where he was member and pastor. A host of friends attended this service and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers, there to await the coming of the King of Glory, whom he loved so much and spent more than 64 years in His service.

He served as pastor for Dan River Church for over 50 years, along with other churches in North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland.

He was married to Nannie Turpin who was blessed to walk close by him as a lovely ministers wife and as a very precious mother in Israel. All who know

Sister Spangler, love her dearly. To this union was born four children: Elinor Hodnett, Mildred Graham, Rebecca Smith and David M. Spangler.

From 1936 to 1950 Elder Spangler was associate editor of the Signs of The Times. He was president of the board for 33 years and was serving as contributing editor at the time of his death. The Signs of The Times was founded in 1832 and no one ever served more faithful than did Elder Spangler. He gave much of his time and money to this cause, believing it to be of the Lord and a means where many of the Lords people have received comfort and His name has been exalted.

On behalf of the entire staff, we wish to thank God for the life and service of Elder Spangler and pray His presence continue to be with us as we try to carry on.

Editors

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REJOICE

Rejoice, The Lord is King;
Your God and King adore:
Morals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph ever more!
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice, the Saviour reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains,
He took his seat above:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail;
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

He all his foes shall quell;
Shall all our sins destroy:
And every bosom swell
With pure seraphic joy:
Lift up the heart, lift up the voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope,
Jesus the Judge shall come,
And take his servants up
to their eternal home;
We soon shall hear the Archangel's voice;
The trump of God shall sound, Rejoice.

C. W.

One of Elder Spangler's favorite Hymns.

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EDITORIAL

ADAM AS A FIGURE OF HIM
 THAT WAS TO COME

Of all the types and shadows listed in the Bible there is not any one of them that gives as much enjoyment and satisfaction and peace of mind as this does. Before we venture too far into the subject, let us remember another outstanding fact. The salvation of the people of God was determined in eternity. This beast, this power, this enemy of the saints of God arose in time, out of the sea and then still another beast arose up out of the earth. These powers were limited in power, a line was drawn between them and their followers. They were to have a lot of worshippers. Oftimes this can be a terror to hear about. But let us remember that the Bible is a revealed book to the people of God. It tells us the whereabouts and final destination of every person on the earth. All of one class is to worship these beasts or false gods. Old Baptists are accused of preaching

selfishly; that they do not preach to nor give the destination of everybody. That is a mistake. We do preach the final destiny of all people. God's people had a Saviour God who inscribed each and every name of His people in the book of life of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. If anybody doubts this, if there is any question to be raised, let them tell us who has had access to that book to erase one name from it. I maintain that what God does that it is done forever (Eccl. 3:14), that should settle it, but carpers are always finding fault, therefore the Holy Spirit led Solomon to add a few choice words to the matter. That flow of words from Wisdom, to wit, nothing can be put to it, and nothing can be removed from it. He fixed it that way to keep men fearing Him, but since there is a wicked nation before whose eyes the fear of the Lord is not found, it follows that only those whose names are inscribed in that Book fear Him. The balance of the creation worship beast. This is preaching TO the saints of God, and it is preaching AT the others, for there is not any way for a creature to add to the bookkeeping of the Creator. What a rich display is this of the mystery of Godliness. There is not any way in which the language of the Bible can be tampered with to change the fixed purposes of God in regard to His creation of the human race. And yet, men at large (that is, men in general) continue to worship the beast, and those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world, will sometimes in this present life, will worship the Lord Jesus Christ—will bow down to Him, will confess that He is the Lord and that He is the Master.

There are two personages that we desire to notice. Beginning at the created Adam, he was a figure of Him that was to come. This being a figure of Him that was to come, we must insist that he, the man Adam, his whole life, whole work,

whole number of days on earth, ALL were a part of his being a figure of Him that was to come. In short, Adam was a figure of Him that was to come. As such, let us examine the sense in which he was a figure of Him that was to come. A figure can never be the object of what it is a figure of. It never is anything except a figure of something else. The figure never becomes the thing itself. Let us also note very carefully that the figure did not make himself that. Some other power made him the figure of He that was to come. Men, do and would, if they could, become as God; such is impossible and equally so. It is impossible for a man to be a figure of God, or of Christ, because it is not customary for the lesser to become still lesser, but rather for him to become greater. It is enough to say that man will not, of his own will, become a figure of somebody else. Thus, the wisdom of God is displayed in Adam being the creature.

Now in that habitat in which he was created in, Adam was a figure of some one else.

Let us remember that while Adam and Eve were one, yet, let us remember that each of them had a place in society, a place in the marriage picture, a place in the family life, a place in the parental work of begetting and bringing forth a family, of instructing that family, and the care and responsibility of it, as well as each of them had certain things that were allotted to them to do and to bear toward each other.

The relationship between them was a close, as near and as dear as divine wisdom could make it, and let me urge that this is not to imply that she was limited in how good that it was, but it is to urge that it was perfection in conception and execution. In the first place, divine Wisdom put the man to sleep before the operation of taking the rib out of his side. God has put more than Adam to sleep, that they might all be non-plussed about claiming

any part of the glory. God gave His beloved sleep before He revealed to him that the Holy Thing in the womb of Mary was by the Holy Ghost. God also takes away sleep, and in such a way that no man has control of it either way.

The gift of Eve to Adam was from God. Do not come to me with any iffy doctrine, for salvation in every phase of it is by the gift of God. Adam knew where the gift of Eve to him as helpmeet came from. He recognized her as coming from God, and he did not ever go back on her. I want to urge that. I call on the universe to note what I say. He did not go back on her. After the removal of the rib from Adam and the making of the woman from it, God brought her to Adam. He said, she is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man, therefore, shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh (Gen. 2: 21, 24).

The figure of Christ has sentenced himself to a life of servitude to his wife. Ah, how the figure takes on importance. I am not worshipping Adam; I am not paying any homage nor adoration to him: I am not placing Adam in partnership with Christ in saving sinners. I am not extolling the name of any man nor any set of men, but I am in my small way desiring to extol the name of our God that sent before Himself a figure that would do for his wife what the blessed Potentate, the all powerful One of all Deity (I Tim. 6: 15, 16). If I am not mistaken in my calling, I am laying down before you my dear precious members of the body of Christ, the saving doctrine of God our Saviour.

Men may, yea, even my readers may hold in disdain what I am presenting, but that doesn't matter; that doesn't change anything. The figure of Him that was to come is being placed in a certain set of circumstances in which the glory of God is exalted in them all to the high and

exalted praise of Him with whom we have to do. How closely are these two bound together? How harmoniously are the affections of Adam being forged for Eve. They have been so closely united in love that the man is determined not to let any one nor anything come between him and his wife. They are one flesh.

In no sense of the word is an attempt being made to say that Adam is conscious of being the figure of Christ. He is doing what he is doing without any restraint on him save that which was created in him, and consequently passed on to her. So interwoven were their affections that a man was to leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife. We must not lose sight of that. Somebody may be ready to say that you are mixed up for Adam did not have a father and mother. What! Where did he come from?

He certainly did have a mother and a father. Wisdom was his mother and God was his father. He had the best characteristic of a husband. None of us would advocate paying all homage and adoration that is due to our parents. We are deeply indebted to them. However, when a man marries a woman his first allegiance is to that wife. Admitted, that times will undoubtedly come when a wife might be wrong, but the marital ties would compel a husband to stand up for his wife, That is exactly what Adam said that a man should do; that is exactly what God has commanded. That is exactly what Adam did do. God was Father and Wisdom was his mother, and yet he did not forsake his wife. She was unfaithful, but she was still his wife. She was still his bone and his flesh.

Several years ago someone sent out literature among the people of God, advocating that God was the author of sin, and among the blasphemous things, that was attempted to be palmed off on the Signs readers was that God worked the lust in a man or woman for each other, therefore that it was lust that

caused Adam to follow Eve in eating the forbidden fruit. My remarks at the time were not complimentary about that theory, and I have not changed my opinion. It was love for his wife that sent Adam into disobedience. That is all that it was. If it could be proven that it was lust that caused Adam to follow his wife, then, He of whom Adam was a figure of, was not filled with love, but with lust for the church.

As we look in upon the dismal scene back in the morning of time it is amazing what a lovely picture is shown to us. They were happy in the arms of wedded bliss. How closely bound together were they as they shared the pristine holiness of the paradise of the early morning of creation. There was not an enemy that they knew about; they had not felt any chilling wind of adversity, or had not heard a dividing voice that would disturb their marriage nuptials from the Lord.

Types and shadows and pointers can never assume the authority nor can they ever have the wisdom nor the power to stem insurmountable or unseen enemies. Regardless of the fact that Adam was a figure of He that was to come, yet he was not aware of what was coming, nor of what his actions portended. He was in love with his wife, and love is blind as to responsibilities that are going to come or as to dangers that might arise.

An enemy was also in the garden. This enemy had been evil from the beginning (I John 3: 8). It is his way to ever be walking up and down in the earth, seeking whom he may devour (I Pet. 5: 8). Into that paradisiacal garden came that slipping, sliding, sneaking evil one.

Also in that garden came He that owned the garden, the world, and the fulness of it all. There is not now, nor there was not then a voice that could deny that Creator to do as it seemed good unto Him to do. At least, in the time

of the Christ man, none questioned His prerogative to do what he would with His own. If divine Wisdom overlooked someone that has the right to call Him in question about what he owned, let them speak up now. If not, we will, as given grace, proceed with our investigation of these sublime matters. This divine Law-giver gave to the newly created progenitors a law. Let us remember that God cannot do wrong. Therefore the law given them was holy, just and good. It carried a heavy penalty. But let us think, first, on how good that it was. It was holy, just and good. The penalty for disobedience was death in the day of transgression. It is not my desire nor my intention to deal with the technicalities of the transgression except that our mother Eve, the bosom companion, the Woman who was bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh was deceived by the cunning approach of Satan. She was deceived, and one that has been subjected to the cunning approaches of this sinister influence is bewitched and does not realize the consequences of what they are doing. Thus she forgot the commandment of her Maker; she forgot the direful consequences of that careless moment.

When the Lord approached our mother Eve, the deceived wife of our father, Adam, she had the lamest excuse. Not a justifiable reason for having listened at the misleading, deceptive voice of Satan. But she was deceived; she did not realize what she was doing, but her husband was not deceived. He knew what he was doing. He did not count the cost, he knew the cost. He did not go into disobedience because that he loved sin, but he went into disobedience because he loved Eve.

There is not any exception to the laws of love. Whatever you love, that thing or that person you will serve. It was not in a finding fault attitude that he said unto the Lord, "The woman that thou gave me, gave to me and I did eat." It was not

to blame his Maker, but it was to acknowledge the good gift that He had given him in the person of his wife. He owned up to her belonging to him. He received her as a gift from His Maker. He also knew what she had done; he knew what the penalty was for having disobeyed. She was dead to all that was godly, she was separated from all that had been given her. There was not any way in which she could turn back. There was not any way for him to buy or redeem her from what she had brought upon herself. She could not undo what was done. Yet the love and devotion for her was overwhelming. He still knew the penalty for transgressing. How strong it was before him. She had listened and had died, had become separated from their Edenic abode, love listened to the cries of his wife, but most of all, strongest of all powers, he listened to his heart. He knew the penalty; he knew the sorrow that it would bring, but he knew that in that way he could be with his wife.

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors:

My mind is on the Spiritual world that Jesus prayed for in John 17. Also the world by wisdom knew not God. There is a great difference in the two. The spiritual world is the one, that Jeus said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; 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. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shoudest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." **The whole chapter is so lovely, concerning the spiritual world, that Jesus prayed for. The Lord's little ones rejoice in him. Who is the way, the truth, and the life. He is a spirit, he that seeks to worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. The truth shall set you free. I believe that the born again, called, and chosen ones of God, are of the spiritual world. It is by revelation of Jesus Christ, that they are taught of him to know the truth. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 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. The truth is hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes, even so, Father, for it seemeth good in thy sight." The Apostle Paul said in one of his epistles, "The world by wisdom knew not God, I received it not of man, neither was I taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." The preaching of the true Gospel of our Lord and Saviour by his dear ministers, to his little children is so precious to hear the truth preached as it is in Jesus to them. II Cor. 2: 14-17 "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth**

us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the Saviour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are a savour of death unto death: and to the other the savour of life unto life, and who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." The Lord's people was chosen in him from before the world, and to them, that are blessed to hear the true gospel preached or published. It is the life of Jesus in them that are saved, the saviour of life unto life, and in them that perish, death unto death, is how the true gospel affects them. The ones the Lord has revealed his precious truth unto, when blessed of him to hear, what the spirit saith unto the church. At times, it is so precious to our souls, the living waters springing up within us. The still small rain that falls on the tender herbs, that distills as dew in our souls. It is a time of rejoicing in our Saviour, God, and Husband, prophet, priest and King.

We desire to worship Him in spirit and in truth, praising, honoring, and giving glory, to the only true and living God, whom our souls love, looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith; who promised never to leave us or forsake us. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." These words are precious, when the Lord lifts up his poor sinful worm of the dust, from time to time to rejoice in the Lord of Lord's, and King of King's, whom my soul loves and adores. I hope, and believe, he is my righteousness and clothes me with His robe of righteousness each day, because I have no righteousness of my own to plead. My righteousness is as filthy rags in his sight, I am so vile and prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again. These words come to mind, "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." How I desire to be with Jesus when from this low ground of sin and sorrow I pass, to appear with him in glory, now my remnant of days would I spend to his praise, who hath died my poor soul to redeem; whether many or few, all my years are his due, may they all be denoted to him.

This comes to mind:

Glorious things of thee are spoken,
 Zion, City of our God;
 He whose word cannot be broken,
 Formed thee for his own abode.
 On the rock of ages founded,
 What can shake thy sure repose?
 With salvation's walls surrounded,
 Thou mayst smile at all thy foes.

See, the streams of living waters,
 Springing from eternal love,
 Well supply thy sons and daughters
 And all fear of want remove,
 Who can faint while such a river
 Ever flows their thirst assauge?
 Grace, which like the Lord, the giver
 Never fails from age to age.

Deut. 33: 27. "*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*" Tears of joy fill my eyes as I wrote, when the scriptures came to me, "*The eternal God is thy refuge.*" My love to all the dear saints of God, may the Lord continue to bless you dear Editors and Ministers of the gospel, to publish, and preach the truth as it is in Jesus.

Yours in hope, Lula Fox

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

VALLEY VIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH



Pictured here is Valley View Primitive Baptist Church located two miles from Riner, Virginia. Established at Meadow Creek in 1785, it was moved to its present site in June, 1904 on land furnished by William Altizer.

Some of the first Elders to serve at the present location were Elders Cum-

ings, Moran, B. O. Thompson and Roy Agee.

The meeting time is on the third Sunday of each month. The present pastor is Elder Raymond Goad. We have been blessed to meet and hear the word of God throughout the years.

 ARTICLES

THE CREATIONS OF MAN

Gen. I:26. And God said, Let us make man, in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

“These words are spoken by God the Father to the Son and Holy Ghost, who were each of them concerned in the creation of all things, particularly man; because we read of divine Creators and Makers in the plural number. Job xxxv. 10: But none saith where is God my maker who giveth songs in the night. Psa. cxl. 2: Let Israel rejoice in him that made him and let the children of Zion rejoice in their King—see Eccl. xii: 1. Philo the Jew acknowledges that these words declare a plurality and are expressive of others being co-workers with God in creation; and man being the principal part of the creation, for whom the world and all things in it were made, which being finished, he is introduced into it as into a house ready prepared and furnished for him; a consultation is held among the Divine Persons about the formation of him; not because of any difficulty attending it, but as expressive of his honor and dignity; it being proposed he should be made, not in the likeness of any of the creatures already made, but as near as could be, in the likeness and image of God. *And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*”

Gen. I: 27. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he

them.

“Which consisted both in the form of his body and erect stature of it; different from all other creatures and in agreement with the idea of that body, prepared in covenant for the Son of God, and which it was therein agreed he should assume in the fulness of time; and in the immortality of his soul, and in his intellectual powers, and in that purity, holiness, and righteousness in which he was created; as well as in his dominion, power and authority over the creatures, in which he was as God’s vice-gerent and resembled him. *In the image of God created he him; which is repeated for the certainty of it, that it might be taken notice of, as showing man’s superior glory and dignity to the rest of the creatures. 1 Cor. ix, 7. Male and female created he them; God first made man, or the male, out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into him the breath of life, and then made a female or woman, out of one of his ribs, who was presented to him as his wife. One male and one female were created, to show that hereafter a man was to have, at a time, but one wife—see Mal. xx, 15; Math. xx: 4.*”

Gen. I: 28. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

“The man and the woman he had made, with all the blessings of nature and providence; with all the good things of life; with his presence and communion with him in a natural way, through the creatures and particularly with power of procreating their species, as follows: *and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth; if this is not an express command as the Jews understand it, for marriage and procreation of children, it seems to be more than a bare permission; at least*

it is a direction and an advice to what is proper and convenient for the increase of mankind, and for the filling of the earth with inhabitants, which was the end of its being made, Isa. xiv. 18. This shows that marriage is an ordinance of God, instituted in paradise and is honorable; and *subdue it, the earth; not that it was in the hands of others, who had no right to it, and to conquer it, and take it out of their hands; but it is to be understood of their taking possession and making use of it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over everything that moveth upon the face of the earth; which was giving them an universal and unlimited dominion over all the creatures, of which see an innumeration in Psal. viii. 6, 7, 8.*"

Gen. I: 29. And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

"That is, to Adam and Eve, whom he had made in his image and likeness, and to whom he had given dominion of the earth and sea, and all things in them: *behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth; every herb or plant, which had a seed in it, by which it sowed itself again or being taken off, might be sown by man, even every one that was wholesome, healthful and nourishing, without any exception whatever; in any part of the earth, be it where it would: and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; all but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, afterwards excepted: both these take in all kinds of vegetables, herbs, plants, roots, even corn, wheat, barley, peas, beans, &c., and various fruits of all sorts of trees, but that mentioned: to you it shall be for meat; which is generally thought to be the food of the Ante-*

diluvians, it not being proper, at least very soon, to kill any animal, until they were multiplied and increased, lest their species should be destroyed."

Gen. I: 30. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

"Wild or tame beast, the cattle upon a thousand hills; all God's creatures are provided for."

Gen. II: 7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Gen. II: 8. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

"*And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; or had planted; for this was not done after he had made man, but before, and so the word translated eastward may be rendered, before, for the plain meaning is, God had planted a garden before he made man, even on the third day, when all herbs and plants and trees were produced out of the earth.*

The whole world was a garden in comparison of what it now is; what then must this spot of ground, this garden; have been, which was separated and distinguished from the rest, and the more immediate plantation of God, therefore is called the garden of the Lord, Gen. xiii. 10; Ezek. xxiii. 13. This garden was planted in the country of Eden."

Gen. II: 9. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

"That is out of the ground of the garden of Eden this was done on the third day, when the whole earth brought forth grass, herbs and trees; but a peculiar spot of ground was fixed on for man, and

stocked with trees of all sorts for his use, not only to bear fruit, for his food, but others also which would yield him delight to look at, &c. These trees may be emblems of the saints, the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord: and made to grow by him through the influence of his Spirit and grace, whom he plants in his garden, the churches, and transplants into the heavenly paradise, and are often compared to palm trees, cedars, olive trees, pomegranates, &c. *The tree of life, also, in the midst of the garden; set there as the most excellent place, where it might be most conspicuous, and to be come at, for before Adam sinned there was no prohibition to his eating of it, so there was no obstacle to it; and as he had a grant to eat of it, with the other trees, it was designed for his support, and maintainance of his natural life, which would have continued, had he persisted in his obedience and state of innocence, and probably by means of this chiefly; and it might be also a sign and token to him of his dependence on God; that he received his life from, and that he was preserved by his blessing and providence and not by his own power and skill, and that this would be continued, provided he transgressed not the divine law, and it seemed to have a future respect, even to eternal life by Christ, for though it might be a symbol of that life to Adam in his state of innocence, and it became so after his fall; hence Christ is sometimes signified by the tree of life. Prov. III, 18; Rev. II, 7, who is not only the author of natural and spiritual life, but the giver of eternal life, the promise of it is in him, and the blessing itself; he has made way for it by his obedience, sufferings and death, and is the way unto it; it is his, his gift, and he bestows it on his people, and it will lie greatly in the enjoyment of him. The situation of this tree in the midst of the garden well agrees with him who is in the midst of his church and people, Rev. I,*

13, and II 7; stands open, is in sight, and accessible to all now, who may come to him, and partake of the fruits and blessings of his grace, which are many, constant and durable, Rev. xxii, 2, and who will be seen and enjoyed by all, to all eternity; *and the tree of knowledge of good and evil; so called, either with respect to God, who by it tried man, when he had made him, whether he would be good or evil, but this he foreknew; rather therefore with respect to man, not that the eating of the fruit of it could really give him such knowledge, nor did it, for by the law of nature inscribed on his heart, he knew the difference between good and evil, and that what God commanded was good, and what he forbid was evil, but either it had its name from the virtue Satan ascribed to it, chap. III, 5, or from the sad event following on man's eating the fruit of it; whereby he became experimentally sensible of the difference between good and evil, between obedience and disobedience to the will of God; he found by sad experience what good he had lost, or might have enjoyed, and what evil he had brought upon himself and his posterity, and what evil he might have avoided."*

Gen. II. 15. And Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.

"This is observed before in ver. 8, and is here repeated to introduce what follows; and is to be understood, not of a corporeal assumption, by a divine power lifting him up from the place where he was, but that he ordered and directed him thither; perhaps no more is intended by this expression, than that God spoke to him or impressed it on his mind, and inclined him to go, or stay there: *to dress it and to keep it; so that it seems man was not to live an idle life in a state of innocence; but this could not be attended with toil and labor, with fatigue and trouble, with sorrow and sweat, as after the fall, but rather for recreation and*

pleasure; though what by nature was left to be improved by art and what there was for Adam to do, is not easy to say: at present there needed no plowing, nor sowing, nor planting, nor watering, since God had made every thing pleasant to the sight; and good for food, to grown in it.

Gen. II. 16. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.

“Commanded the man over whom he had power and authority, and he had a right to command him what he pleased, being his Creator, Benefactor and Preserver, and this is to be understood not of man only, but of the woman also, whose creation, though related afterward, yet was before this grant to eat of all the trees of the garden but one, and the prohibition of the fruit of that, for that she was in being and present at this time, seems manifest from chap. III. 2, 3: saying, *of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat*; a very generous, large and liberal allowance this; or *in eating thou mayest eat*; which was giving full power, and leaving them without any doubt and uncertainty about their food; which they might freely take and eat of, wherever they found it or were inclined to, even to any and every tree in the garden, excepting one, next forbidden.”

Gen. II. 17. But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

“Of the name of this tree, and the reason of it, see the note on ver. 9: *thou shalt not eat of it*, not that this tree had any efficacy in it to increase knowledge, and improve in science and understanding as Satan suggested God know, and therefore, forbid the eating of it out of envy to man, which the divine Being is incapable of, or that there was anything hurtful in it to the bodies of men, if they had eaten of it, or that it was unlawful and evil of itself, if it had not been expressly pro-

hibited, but was previous to this injunction, a quite indifferent thing whether man ate of it or no, and therefore was pitched upon as a trial of man's obedience to God, under whose government he was, and whom it was fit he should obey in all things, and since he had a grant of all the trees of the garden but this, it was the greater aggravation of his offence that he should not abstain from it: *for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die; or in dying, die*; which denotes the certainty of it, as our version expresses it, and may have regard to more deaths than one; not only a corporeal one, which in some sense immediately took place; man became at once a mortal creature, who otherwise continuing in a state of innocence, and by eating of the tree of life, as he was allowed to do, would have lived an immortal life; by the eating of which tree, sinning, he was debarred, his natural life, not now to be continued long, at least not forever; he was immediately arraigned, tried and condemned to death, was found guilty of it, and became obnoxious to it, and death at once began to work in him, sin sowed the seeds of it in his body, and a train of miseries, affliction and diseases, began to appear; which at length issued in death. Moreover a moral death immediately ensued; he lost his original righteousness, in which he was created, the image of God in him was deformed; and the powers and faculties of his soul were corrupted, and he became dead in trespasses the consequence of which, had it not been for the interposition of a Surety and Saviour, who engaged to make satisfaction to law and justice, must have been eternal death, or an everlasting separation from God, to him and all his posterity; for the wages of sin is death eternal.” See Rom. vi. 23.

Gen. II. 18. And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help-meet for him.

“Not at the same time he gave the

above direction and instruction to man, how to behave according to his will, but before that, even at the formation of Adam; which he said either to him or with himself; it was a purpose or determination of his own mind, and may be rendered, he *had said*, on the sixth day, on which man was created, *it is not good that man should be alone; not pleasant and comfortable to himself, nor agreeable to his nature, being a social creature. I will make him an help-meet for him, one to help him in all the affairs of life, not only for the propagation of his species, but to provide things useful and comfortable for him, to dress his food and take care of the affairs of the family; one like himself in nature, in temper and disposition, pleasing in his sight, with whom he could converse and be entirely agreeable to him, and answerable to all his wants."*

Gen. II. 19. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name there of."

Gen. II. 20. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help meet.

Gen. II. 21. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

Gen. II. 22. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

"It is commonly observed, and pertinently enough, that woman was not made from the superior part of man, that she might be thought to be above him, as being below him, to be trampled on by him, but out of his side, and from one of his ribs, that she might appear equal to him; and from a part near his heart, and under his arm, to show that she should be affectionately loved by

him, and be always under his care and protection; and she was not *created* as man, out of nothing, nor formed as Adam was, out of the dust of the earth, being in the same form of man; but made out of refined and quickened dust, or the flesh and bones of man, and so in her make and constitution, fine and lovely: *and brought her unto the man; he brought her as the parent of her, at whose disposal she was, and presented her to Adam as his spouse, to be taken into conjugal relation with him, and to be loved and cherished by; which, as it affords a rule and example to be followed by parents and children, one to dispose of their children in marriage, and the other to have the consent of the parent in it, as well as it is a recommendation of marriage, as agreeable to the divine will, and to be esteemed honorable, being of God; so it was a type of the marriage of Christ, the second Adam, between him and his church, which sprung from him, from his side, and was given by his Father—See Eph. v. 29, 32."*

From "*Footsteps of The Flock*"

IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

This is where the Lord's people are when the dear Saviour makes his love known to them. "O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." This also is their safe hiding place while they remain in this mortal state. But how may we know that we are in the clefts of the rock? What kind of an experience is this? If the gracious and loving words of Jesus to his dove are sweet to our souls, then it is sure that we are of those to whom they are spoken; but it may be far from sure to us at the

time, because of our feeling of great unworthiness, and because we cannot see that we are in that secret, safe and sacred place, where the dove is said to be. The clefts of the rock, being the sure dwelling place of the dove, the bride of Christ, must be, as we think, a place most sweet and pleasant, free from trouble, and especially free from trouble on account of sin; and when we feel ourselves full of unrest, hedged in, afflicted, cut off from our desires, unable to do what we would, finding evil present with us when we would do good, how can we think that we are in the clefts of the rock, and that the dear Savior can find any sweetness in our complaining, supplicating voice, or see any comeliness in our sorrowful countenance?

I have had some precious comfort in some experiences and thoughts upon this subject of late, and have for some time felt a strong pressure upon my mind to express, as I may be enabled, some of these things for the comfort of those who have been tried as I have been.

Moses said unto the Lord, "If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight." And again, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory."—Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18. Such desires to see the Lord's way, and to behold his glory, are not from presumptuous curiosity, as we sometimes fear, but are the solemn actings of faith in the soul, preparing us for such revelations of himself as he designs to favor us with. He will hear all such questions, all such longings and pantings of the poor soul after him, and will answer them, but it will be "by terrible things in righteousness."—Psalms lxxv. 5.

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I

will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."—Exodus xxxiii. 19-23.

When all this took place (Exodus xxxiv. 1-7), Moses was alone with the Lord in that desolate mountain. "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." What goodness and blessedness are here in this name, as thus far proclaimed! What a garden of delights, filled with most lovely flowers and richest fruits. What more could be desired by a poor sinner who hates sin, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Well might we say, if permitted to enter into this wonderful name, and enjoy its rich blessings, "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee; which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."—Psalm xxxi. 19.

But there is another syllable in this mysterious and glorious name, which a sinful man cannot hear and live, unless hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered by the hand of the Lord. "And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." This part of the Lord's name is full of terror, and is fraught with death to every guilty soul. It as surely bars every

sinner from the safety and beauty of that holy name, as the flaming sword prevented the return of Adam and Eve to the garden of Eden, and kept from them the way of the tree of life.

Whether Moses was literally put into a cleft of a rock or not, we have in this cleft a figure of the absolute safety that was given to him while the awful name of the Lord was proclaimed. The Lord's hand that covered him while his glory passed by, is not a literal hand, to be discerned by our natural senses, but expresses to us his sure and absolute protection from a danger which is not to the body merely, but to the soul.

As this great experience came upon him, "Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped."—Exodus xxxiv. 8. In the proclamation of this terrible name Moses' prayer was answered. This name is the revelation of the Lord's way, of his goodness and his glory.

This rock represents Jesus. "There is a place by me," the Lord said, "and thou shalt stand upon a rock." Here is the only foundation upon which a sinful man can stand before the Lord. That sacred Rock was smitten in order that the Lord's chosen people might be safely hidden while his name is proclaimed before them, and while his glory passes by. When Christ was crucified the guilt of his people was atoned for and removed, justice and judgment were executed for them, and the Lord's name was honored and glorified. That part of his name which declares that he will in no wise clear the guilty, still remains, but it does not exclude his people any longer, for they are free from guilt, being crucified with Christ, and thus hidden in the cleft of the Rock.

When "the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger" against sin, and "his lips are full of indignation" against the workers of iniquity, "and his tongue as a devouring fire" (Isaiah xxx.

27-30), none of all the sinful race of man can stand before him. No man can see his face and live. "Who may abide the day of his coming?" None but those whom the Lord has put in a cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. These were safe in Jesus while the wrath of that holy and terrible name was visited upon him. He was able to endure the stroke of the sword of justice, to die and rise again, and thus to "finish transgression, make an end of sin," and by satisfying the law to take the sting from death, and destroy that terrible enemy.

And as the Lord's people were saved when the glory of his name was proclaimed in the crucifixion of his dear Son, by being in him in that death in a wonderful and mystical sense, so that they are dead with him to the law and to sin (Romans vi. 7-11), so ever after, while in this mortal state, his sufferings and death are their only safe hiding place. In their flesh they cannot stand before the Lord, nor endure the glory of his name, for in their flesh "there dwells no good thing." Those who have been quickened by divine life, realize that they cannot of themselves do one spiritual thing, any more than a dead man can do a natural thing; as the apostle says, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."—Romans viii. 10. And, as he further says, it is only as the body is quickened, or moved, by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, that any man can do anything that is acceptable to God.

The experience of being in a cleft of the Rock must therefore be always crossing to the flesh. It must be an experience full of sore trials and afflictions. We ask the Lord, as Moses did, to show us his way; we beseech him to show us his glory. We want to see and understand more of his goodness. It seems to us that if he should be pleased to grant our desire, we should be at the height of

bliss. How little we know of his wonderful ways. He does answer us, but it is "in such a way as almost drives us to despair." "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." We "are shut up and cannot come forth." We find ourselves more and more unable to do the good that we would, and we are left to doubt at times even whether we have a desire to do good. We are hedged in by our sinfulness and utter weakness, and by the judgments of God which seem to go out against us. We cannot do what we would in providence. Poverty holds us in its dire embrace. We cannot succeed in our work. We hate and dread to be in debt, but debt comes upon us, or danger of starvation for those dependent upon us. Or we do prosper in worldly affairs, and find wealth, but with it there comes leanness into our souls. There is a famine even in the midst of plenty. What we have will not feed our souls. We cannot enjoy the temporal prosperity that comes to us. If we would help others we fear our motives are base and selfish, and that we are only hypocrites. There seems to be a searching power within and about us, and we fear we are found wanting. A tempest is going by, and we tremble; yet cannot see what destruction it is working. We are like those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. They could feel the terrible power of the winds and waves, but could not see what it was. They felt the beatings and tossings and shakings of the ark, and afterward the quiet and peace, but could not know the meaning of it all until the cover was taken off the ark. Then it was all made plain, and the beauty and glory of the rainbow showed to those who had passed through the storm, and who now stood on Ararat, holy ground, a blessed purpose of God in the flood.

In the cleft of the rock, covered and held down by the Lord's hand, how terrible must have been the experience of

"Moses, the man of God." Not another soul in all that desolate mountain. The Lord was there, but not visible to his mortal sight. How long he was in that cleft is not material to know. The power of fear and pain is not measured by time. In a moment the soul maybe overwhelmed with terror. In what way the power of that name came by, we do not know, whether there was a literal quaking of the mountain, with fire and smoke and thunder, as when the law was given, or whether the awful power of the Lord's name was felt only within his soul, we do not know. What we do know is that a cleft of a rock must be a most uncomfortable place to be in. We also know there must have been a terribly destructive power in the passing of the Lord before Moses, if he must not only be put into that cleft, but must also be covered by the Lord's hand in order to be saved from destruction.

But O, what a blessed time that is when the Lord's hand is taken away, and we are enabled to see his wonderful works which he has done, and to behold the glory of his name which has already been proclaimed. We could not see his way before he had passed by in it. We could not know what he would do before he had done it. We cannot see his face as he comes toward us in his work of salvation. To see him coming in those "terrible works in righteousness," by which he saves his people, would kill us with terror. But after he has passed by in the fulfillment of all that terrible work, by which his glorious name is honored, the law magnified, and his people saved, then it is joy unspeakable to see his back parts, to see the glory that follows him. We cannot see him working, but we see the work when it is done. Even then, while in that experience of fear, of inability to see, like those in the ark, what caused the great commotion; in that experience of sinfulness and condemnation, and utter inability to do any good

thing, even then the secret of the Lord was with us, though we did not know it. We were far from the thought that this was God's work in bringing us to himself. We could not then have believed that this affliction, this inability to move in any way of righteousness, was because we were in a cleft of the Rock, because we were being crucified with Christ in our experience. We could not have believed that this tribulation in our souls was because the Lord had put his fear in our hearts, which "is to hate evil." But all this fearful exercise in our souls was the secret of the Lord, and when he removed his hand from over us, and showed us his covenant, then we understood that this was his wonderful work of salvation which he had begun in us, working in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew unto them his covenant."—Psalm xxv. 14.

Job was in that cleft of the Rock when he said, 'O that I knew where I might find him.' "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 that I cannot see him." The psalmist was there when he said, "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth;" and Jacob when he said, "All these things are against me." Jeremiah was there when he said, "He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer."—Lam. iii. 7, 8. And Paul was there when he was blinded by the light from heaven, and could see no man; and also when, long afterward, he said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Those who are in the clefts of a rock all of the time can do no work upon the earth. They cannot run to and fro in the sight of men; they cannot join in work or

worship with those who are not with them in the clefts. They are helpless for themselves, and they cannot extend help to any who are abroad upon the earth. They will often feel their confined, shut-in, cramped position so keenly, that it seems to them that they cannot endure it. They want to get out into the midst of the world and do something, do some good to themselves or others, do something to show that they are not altogether nothing. But if they seem to be able to get such desires gratified for a little, they are so utterly ashamed of their works that they want to shrink away out of sight. They find of themselves what the psalmist said of everyman in his best state, they "are altogether vanity." Then, in the Lord's own time, they learn the blessed meaning of this sad experience. They have not really been allowed to go out of that safe dwelling place at all, though they seemed for a time as one in a dream, to be working with the proud and wise of this world. They have been all the time, and yet are, held firmly by the hand of the Lord, notwithstanding all the rebellious lustings of the flesh against the Spirit. Now and then the gracious hand which covers them, and holds them in that narrow, confined place, is taken away for a little time, and they see the Lord's way, and behold his glory, and gaze with rapture upon the rainbow beauty and brightness of the everlasting covenant. And how they thank the Lord, and praise his glorious name, for his preserving power and mercy. How glad they are that he has overturned their plans, and broken down their strength, and disappointed them in their earthly hopes, and shown them that their works are vain, and that their days are vanity and are as a hand's breadth. Now they are rejoiced to see that the works of Jesus are perfect, and that they are all-sufficient, and cover all the ground of their needs for evermore. O, how beautiful and glorious the Lord's

works are! How thankful they are for the sure protection they have had in that secret place of the Lord, from the windy storm and tempest which has been abroad in the earth, while they were so eagerly struggling to get away from the controlling and restraining power of God. Now they rejoice in their afflictions, for they see that salvation was in those afflictions. Now they rejoice in the tribulations that made them murmur and complain at the time, for through them they have been brought to "stand before the great white throne," from whence the river of the water of life proceeds, and have entered more and more into the experimental knowledge of the kingdom of God. And now they are called by the sweet voice of Jesus. O, these blessed seasons, when faith prevails, when the hand that held and covered them is removed, and they see the back parts of the Lord, and realize the blessed effect of his passing by in this terrible works of righteousness, by which he has answered us. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."—Isaiah xxxii. 17. And the soothing, comforting, joyful effect of that precious voice of Jesus, not heard by the natural ear, but felt in the heart; how sweet it is: "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!" His voice speaks not in vain. "My sheep hear my voice," he says. When he speaks, then we know that we are his, and that we are dwelling in him, and he in us, and this by no work or wisdom of ours, but by his own power and grace. Those are the times when that voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, is in our souls, that we can say, while our hearts throb and overflow with love. "My beloved is mine and I am his." The power of that voice removes our fears, and causes us to see that our afflictions have been light, and but for a moment, compared with the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,"

which they have worked for us. We see now that these sufferings, which we sometimes felt sure were evidences of the Lord's wrath, were really the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, and that to feel them was to be in the clefts of the Rock.

It has been truly wonderful to me, when I have felt adversities of every kind pressing so heavily upon me, and have been sure that they were evidences that God had turned against me, and that I must certainly lose the fellowship of the saints, if ever I had really had it, and must be cast out; when I have seen not only spiritual comforts gone, but all worldly prospects failing, and have felt not only physical strength failing, but have feared that the little mental ability I had was going, and that I was of no account, either in the world or in the church; when blankness was upon my life, and darkness was settling heavily down upon my spirit; at such a time how wonderful it has been to find some words of the dear Lord in my soul with power, and light, like the morning rising upon me, and to be shown in a moment that all this was but an experience of being in the clefts of the Rock, and a sure evidence that I was one of the Lord's hidden ones, crucified with Christ; that this was "knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made conformable unto his death."—Phil. iii. 10. To be assured that this is the way the Lord separates his people from the world and self; that this was "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh;" dying with him, that I might live with him, even here; suffering with him, that I may reign with him, even while yet in the flesh, through the power of faith.

Then a constraining power is felt, making us turn our faces toward Jesus in love and praise, and causing our voices to "break out in unknown strains,

and sing surprising grace." It is the voice of the Lord, which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, which divides the flames of fire, which maketh the hinds of calve, and discovereth the forests, and causes every one in his temple to speak of his glory. (Psalm xxix.) It is the voice of Jesus, speaking with the holy, compelling power of his own unspeakable love, which removes the curtains of night, and lets in the morning upon our souls; which turns our thoughts and faces toward him in praise and holy expectancy, and causes us to make melody in our hearts unto him; for he says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

Elder Silas H. Durand

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

Elder F. A. Chick

Dear Brother In The Lord:

By your request, and that of others, I will try to pen my experience in passing from nature's darkness to the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I tremble at the attempt, fearing that it will crowd out much richer and better pasture than has grown in me, but if God has planted his word in my heart, and I am made to feed upon it, and be nourished by it, why should I be ashamed of his workmanship? I hope that I never shall, although at times it seems but a dream and almost gone, yet I cannot forget that wonderful change which I was made to feel most thankful for. It was plainly shown to me that I had no part in this work, and it could not be taught by human knowledge, but it is given from above, and is of the free mercy of God. Words spoken by the apostle

long ago suited my case, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." It is the gift of God, free and complete, and I saw that I could do nothing but gladly accept his mercy, and walk in humble submission to his will.

It might be well for me to go back to the time of my birth of Adam's race. I was born at Yardville, N. J., April 5th, 1873, and spent my childhood days with my twin brother and three sisters there on my father's farm. I seldom went any on my father's farm. I seldom went anywhere to church, as my father was not a member of any church, and my mother was a member at Hopewell, twenty-one miles distant. She could go but a few times in a year, and the most of the time we children were left at home, to keep house when we were old enough. Sunday afternoons Sunday School was held at our district schoolhouse. and against our mother's wishes we children would sometimes go. I was not interested in the Sunday school lesson, but went to see my schoolmates. I well remember one of the teachers telling me about little children in heathen lands without the gospel, and that they without it would be lost, and she said that I with others should bring some money the next time with which they would send a preacher to save them. I did not know what being saved meant, and so did not take the money the next time.

Mother would quite often talk to me about Jesus, who died to save his people from their sins, and of how sinful we all were, and I would get much interested in her talk, and thought it would be dreadful to be destroyed, and in burnings forever, yet I would soon forget all about it.

At the age of ten years I had a strange dream: I thought the world was coming to an end; I was going to school it seemed, and I could plainly see the devil, as I thought it was, gathering up the wicked

and throwing them into a large furnace on wheels, red with the heat, and I was greatly alarmed, and feared that he would take me, and longed for my mother's presence. Instantly she was by my side, and I told her what I was afraid of, and asked her that I might hide under her shawl, and then it seemed that we both crept under the fence out of sight as the devil passed by. This childhood's dream left such an impression on my mind that I never forgot it entirely, and to-day I can go to the very spot where it seemed that we hid. But soon again my mind was upon fun, and a good time, as I then called it. I can well see myself as I look back, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, loving the world and its vanities, laughing at other people's calamities, until the Lord spoke and said, "Thus far shalt thou go and no further." And truly I was ripe for a fall, for sin was my all. I had now reached the age of fifteen years, and was slender and very tall. I remember well thinking what a man I was becoming, far ahead of my twin brother and others of my age. Now my fall came; trouble knocked at my door and walked in upon me. That summer my father had a large hay crop, and some of it we sold right from the field. One day I drove a load of hay to market, and while I was waiting for my father to come and unload it, there came a very heavy shower, and fearing the hay would spoil I went at it in great earnest, unloading it alone. That was the last of my work for the summer, I had suffered a strain, and for two long years I was able to do but little work. I now realized that pleasure and health were taken from me, and this worried me greatly, and so at last I thought it would be best for me to starve myself to death. My oldest sister coaxed me hard to eat, but I told her that I would not, for I wished to die, and she left me out of patience. When my mother heard all this she told me that I must not think of such a thing, and that in time I would outgrow

this weakness and be all right again. I obeyed my mother, but was discouraged in getting well, as the doctors said it would take a long time. Thinking over my condition, and of what would become of me if I did die, I spent many, many nights crying, desiring no sleep.

At that time I cannot tell just how my past life would come up before me; thoughts like this would come, what an evil, wrong, wicked, sinful, vile life I have led, and soon I would forget my bodily affliction, and began to grieve over my sins, which had now become my chief trouble; I knew not what to do nor where to go; I spent my time in sore distress, crying and weeping week after week, and month after month, until I was compelled to seek the Lord for forgiveness and pardon. My poor heart prayed earnestly and constantly that my sins might be blotted out in his sight, but instead of any relief I grew worse and worse. While in this miserable state, one day I picked up one of mother's papers, the Signs of The Times, and I became interested in the reading, as it told of things which I had passed through. I was amazed, and did not know how to believe it, for I thought my case was an outside one, and that none could be half so vile as I. From that time until this I have been greatly comforted by the rich things contained in that paper.

About this time sister Lawshe and other Old School Baptists arranged to have meetings at their homes in Trenton, and would send us word, and sometimes mother would ask me to take her, and the preaching did me much good. The Elders spoke of the Lord's people being poor and afflicted, vile and sinful, so that they hated their own nature. This was the very way that I felt, yet I did not want it known by any one. I felt a great desire to know the truth, and resolved to read the Bible, but the more I read, the more it seemed to condemn my wicked ways, and my feelings became such that I can

never describe them, for I saw again that I was lost, and that I could not help myself, and what to do I did not know, yet I was begging God for mercy all the time, but as yet no relief came; sorrow, grief and afflictions seemed my only friends, for they were with me day and night. Truly I longed for a ray of light.

One morning while caring for the horses, the words came to my mind clearly and forcibly, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word," and there came a smile on my face, for they seemed to take me in. O, how sweet to my soul these words were; I never can forget them. For days I seemed to live upon their richness. But joy brings sorrow, and sorrow brings joy, and soon I sank more deeply than ever in gloom and distress, and doubted all that I had passed through. About this time we received a card saying that Elder Vail would preach in Trenton, and father, mother and I went. I do not remember the text, but every word went to my heart and condemned my whole life, and my wicked ways. So weeping was all that I could reap from it, and this was what I needed, though then I could not see it so. When we reached our gate on our way home I told my parents that I would open the gate and walk down the lane. As soon as they had passed through I lay down on the ground and cried bitterly, because I felt so badly and so condemned. When I arose my eyes were fixed upon the sky, and it seemed that walking among the stars down towards me I saw the form of a man with large white wings, and in his hand he carried a sword. Speaking to me by name he said, "Willie, you are my child," and disappeared. It was most wonderful to me, but I said nothing about it.

The friends in Trenton were so kind as to let us know about the appointments there, and we got to them quite often. My excuse was to take mother. Several times

that we went there was no preaching, but this did not discourage either of us. I dearly loved the doctrine which they proclaimed, but thought such mercies could not be for me. These thoughts would bring fresh tears down my cheeks, and then I would seek the Lord in prayer, but while praying such thoughts as this would come into my mind. You know that you do not deserve what you are asking for; be still, and bear what belongs to you; do not place your wrong upon the innocent. This I could not deny, and I would get up and leave the place. O, how I feared the Lord because of my sins. I felt that I was lost, and lost forever, yet I begged the Lord that he would save me from hell and destruction, which path I had all my life been walking in. But the way of God is in himself, and what he does is ever best.

Now the meetings and the Signs had become a great comfort to me, they never failed to bring a sense of peace to my troubled mind when bowed down in distress. As I look back over those then dark, sad days, I now count them the best and happiest days of my life, and can see that they were good for me, turning my thoughts toward Christ Jesus, setting my feet upon the Rock, establishing my goings, and putting a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. At the age of twenty-one years, and through the kind of providence of an all-wise God, we move to my mother's old home at Ewing. How glad I was that we were near Hopewell, yet I thought, what can I do with my sin? For they have grown like mountains before my eyes. I seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the miry clay. Many, many times I wished that I was dead, and several times I dreamed of my own funeral, but would awaken disappointed.

I tried to get relief from my burden and sin, and I went into young company, but soon found it a task to enjoy myself; the things they cared for I did not, and so

instead of relief, it but added sorrow to my heart.

One Sunday night Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached at sister Lawshe's, in Trenton. It being a stormy night, I went down alone, and after the meeting, sister Lawshe spoke to the Elder about me as one interested in the word, and asked him to talk with me about it. He spoke many lovely and comforting words to my mind, but I felt afraid to open my mouth. At last I expressed my feeling as being in the hymn 1022; "I am so vile, so full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again." he took the book and read the hymn, and turning to me said, "If these words express your feeling you should make it known to the church, for in that hymn there is a rich experience of a child of God." This was in the winter of 1895, and this winter had brought more sorrow to my poor soul than any time before. Truly I had come to hate myself, and felt that I was not fit to sit at the table and eat with the rest of the family. I asked constantly that the Lord would take away my sins, and guide my wayward feet in the paths of righteousness. I do not think that I could get into a much worse hell than my ownself seemed to me to be. I slept but few nights that winter without my pillow being wet with tears. One night I slept but little, and had a wonderful dream, in which I saw the end of time, with the heavens on fire, and above the sky I saw a great white throne made of white marble. It was long and narrow. In the center Jesus stood, and his twelve disciples around him, and at one end was a door, which was also of white marble, and I could plainly see his people going in. I was so happy walking on the clouds in heaven, and I soon came to the door, then the thought came, You are not fit, you are that wicked one. I cannot describe the feeling. I started back as it seemed, to everlasting punishment. Going down I seemed to meet my father and mother,

and they told me that was the only way to enter in, at the door, and I broke out weeping. At this moment these words were spoken to me in a loud voice, which awoke me from my sleep, "Thou shalt be made willing in the day of my power." I wondered and felt to praise God for such a token, for it made me so happy, and relieved my sorrow.

At different times that spring these words out of the Bible, that I never remembered reading, or of having heard read, would come upon my mind, as though I had known them by heart: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "The world by wisdom knows not God." It was in the school of Christ that I was taught these things. I now began to feel and know that the Lord was shining round about me, and had become merciful to my unrighteousness. O, how happy I felt because of his love. One morning at the table my sister Lizzie about her work was singing a gospel hymn: the words touched my heart, and I left the table crying. My father followed me into the shop and inquired what was the matter. I asked for my mother, and begged him to forgive me all my wrongs. As soon as I could I told my mother all the trouble of heart that had been mine so long. My mother broke down crying with me, but said she was glad the Lord had led me thus, because it was a true christian experience, as she believed. She said if I felt like telling it to the church, it would be right for me to do so. I felt to ask all the family to forgive me all the wrong that I had ever done them. My love for the people of God grew stronger and stronger, until I asked my parents if they would not ask you down to see me the next time you came to Hopewell, for as you know they were without a pastor at

that time. I thought I would like to talk with you when you came. You spent the night at our home, and quite a number came in, and in a weak way I told them what I have here written. You deemed it a good experience through grace, and that it was not mixed with creature goodness or self-righteousness. Some of the hymns that were sweet to me were sung, and they seemed very sweet that evening. I will mention the numbers of a few in Beebe's collection: 751,461, 1022, 671, 881. The next morning I took you to the train feeling much better. When I bade you good bye I hoped that I would be able to come to the church before long, and I told you to arrange a time, for I longed to be with them, and the second Saturday in June, I came and related what I trusted had been the dealings of God with me, and that I had been made to trust in him alone for salvation, that Jesus was the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved. I was received as you know. But while I was so glad to be numbered among them, I do not think that I ever felt so broken up, and unworthy, and out of place, as I did standing there asking favor from so good a people. This Saturday was a clear, beautiful, balmy day in nature, but the next was cold, and it rained in torrents, nevertheless three others as well as myself were baptized. I shall never forget the hymn that was sung before we went down into the water, 1129, "Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?" Also the words that you spoke to me when you gave me the hand of fellowship; they sank deep into my heart. It all seemed too good for me, but I was happy, and I could not help it.

Happiness is like the wind, it comes and goes without our control. Before dawn the next day the devil seemed to take possession of me. and doubts and fears and blind unbelief filled my mind. When I got home it was a very dark, sad

night spiritually to me, and I prayed earnestly that I might know if I had done wrong in uniting with the church, for I thought that perhaps I had deceived the people of the true and living God. Some time the next day the Scripture came sweetly to my soul, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Instantly my fear was gone.

Dear brother, I have been trying ever since to walk in the way in a becoming manner, but I am so blind to spiritual things that I go stumbling, falling, fearing, and am so faint and weak that at times I am almost persuaded that I am not a saint at all. Then the word comes as an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, holding me up to praise his great name, through faith, hope and love, which are the foundation of any experience of grace.

Now in closing, I wish to say that I feel that the dear Lord has been very merciful to me all the days of my life; I have nothing with which to repay him, but desire to be thankful and submissive to his will. Since I have been in the fold I have seen many brought into the banqueting-house of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Two of them are very near to me by natural ties: one my twin brother, and the other the wife of my bosom, for which I feel very thankful indeed.

I give this to your hands imperfect; after reading it and correcting it, if anything is left that you think would comfort one of the dear children of God, you are at liberty to put it in print, not to the honor of my name, but alone to the glory of God.

Wm. T. Yard

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

 CONTRIBUTIONS

MARCH 1985

T. R. Pullig, TX.....	\$ 2.00
Mrs. W. W. Haynes, AR.....	2.00
Mrs. Dorothy N. Barnes, TX....	2.00
Ms. Annie Pearson, MI., In memory of Mother Mrs. Mary M. Pearson	50.00
Mrs. Ruth T. Smith, LA.....	5.00
Harold Sisemore, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. Myrtle Black, NE.....	10.00
James W. Brown, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. D. A. Law, VA.....	5.00
Mrs. J. D. Neely, AR.....	2.00
Sanford R. Fanning, TN.....	2.00
Mrs. Bernice Dailey, VA.....	2.00
O. P. Murphy, TX.....	100.00

MEETINGS

 STAUNTON RIVER UNION

Next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Mount Ararat or Old Mountain Church on the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in June, located on Route 750.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

OLD PINE CREEK

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the fourth of July, 1985. The church is located off highway No. 221, five miles north of Floyd, Virginia. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to road No. 682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road No. 682.

All lovers of the Truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and

order.

Elder Hale Terry

HOPEWELL

The eleventh annual Fifth Sunday meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, June 28, 29th and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road 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 Joe Hamrick, Pastor

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The Fifth Sunday meeting of the West Country Line Union will be held with the Greensboro Church the Fifth Sunday in June. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us. A special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order. The church is located on the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, North Carolina.

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

VALLEY VIEW

In celebration of their 200th anniversary there will be a 5th Sunday Meeting at Valley View Church in Riner, Virginia June 30, 1985. Valley View is located from Christiansburg toward Riner off Route 8 through Riner turning left on to Route 616, then turn right on to Route 678 to the church. If you come through Floyd, come on Route 8 toward Riner and turn right on th Route 678 to the church.

We would like to invite our friends in like faith and order to come be with us in this meeting.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Brother Donald L. Agee, Deacon

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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POETRY

SALVATION

*I am a sinner saved by grace,
If ever saved at all,
And if I am, I'm sure of this:
From grace I'll never fall.*

*'Tis sure that Jesus Christ has done
All he need ever do,
To save poor, fallen man from sin;
He's saved the chosen few.*

*O of those whom he has saved from sin,
Not one will e'er be lost;
That they might live the Lamb was slain
Upon Mount Calvary's cross.*

*What need that man should try to do
This work which Christ has done?
The Spirit must our souls renew,
Since we are dead in sin.*

*Sure man's a creature helpless, lost,
Of earthly soil his nature;
By sin and Satan driven, tossed,
He cannot change one feature.*

*Then fear thou not, O little flock,
Though thorny be the road,
Ye live, for your dear Savior lives,
Redeemed from sin to God.*

G. B. Bird

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EDITORIAL

Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: Old things are past away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us: We pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God.

I have read the above scriptures many times, as I am sure you have and never really realized the extent of the doctrine that was set forth by the Apostle Paul in these few verses of scripture. Actually all of the emphasis in prior readings had been placed on the 17th verse. "Therefore, if any man be in

Christ, he is a new creature: Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." Certainly this is the doctrine of God and is experienced and rejoiced in by all who have been brought from nature's darkness and blessed with the marvelous light and liberty of the Saints of God. The newness of this spiritual life that they embark upon and the beauty and glory of it is more than they ever dreamed that man could experience in this life. The old things that pass away are the pride of this natural life, the vanity of the flesh and for the first time they see them in the proper perspective and realize that they are worldly and temporal at best and that they have no lasting value. While this is all true and of very great significance to each one, the Apostle Paul goes on to greater depths of the doctrine as experienced by the saints of God. As they run the race that is set before them. These things work for the good of the whole body and will be worked out over the all-settled time each is assigned to in this veil of tears.

And all things are of God who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. In the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God hath forever reconciled his children unto himself and any or all of the combined force of the universe cannot alter or change that fact in any degree. He chose his people from before the foundation of the world, determined the price of their redemption from Captivity and sent his son into the world to reconcile them unto himself and this forever settles their salvation and place of eternal abode. The Apostle Paul then goes on to say that God hath given unto his children the ministry of reconciliation.

This new Creature, even though born of the spirit of God and blessed to behold the beauty and glory of this heavenly kingdom as through a glass darkly

will never be completely reconciled to this fact as long as they dwell in this tabernacle of flesh. This ministry of reconciliation is a process that will occupy the remaining days of their life as they grow in grace day by day, year by year experiencing a little here and a little there, line upon line and precept upon precept. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he said, "But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." This ministry of reconciliation is given to each as is pleasing of God to enable them to occupy their place in the body of Christ. All are members of the body but all have not the same function. Just as the natural body had eyes to see, ears to hear and feet to walk so that the body can function as it was designed to do, even so, each member of the body of Christ fulfills the place assigned to them. "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." As each is called out of nature, manifesting their true heritage they embark upon their ministry of reconciliation, unaware of it, but it will be a perfect work. It may be a long and difficult adjustment to become reconciled to the fact that they are a chosen vessel of God, an heir of promise and a child of the heavenly King. This is not to infer that it is difficult for God, but rather some individuals endure more refining for the rare beauty of the jewel to be evident. Others may seem to be reconciled with less difficulty but nevertheless, it is a lifetime experience.

This reconciliation is brought about as a result of their experiences in life as they are made to acknowledge the sovereignty of God in all things, again and again, as they journey through life. Then as they relate these experiences unto their brethren and hear of their trials and lessons, their faith is strengthened and they continue to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. They become more

reconciled to this new creature that has taken up abode in this body with the old man.

Paul goes on to say, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God." This is not to infer that man is helping God to complete the work that he has started, remember, the ministry of reconciliation was given of God for the good of the whole body. God has given to all an interdependency of each upon the other for comfort and strength in the face of adversity in this low ground of sorrow. They comfort one another with the same comfort that they themselves are comforted of God.

Elihu said, "Behold I am according to thy wish in God's stead; I also am formed of Clay." God used Elihu to speak to Job and his three friends as one their own equal, but by the inspiration of the Almighty. He had said before, "For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent. It is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer." Elihu was given to exercise the ministry of reconciliation but, keep in mind, that it is always the gift of God. It is for the comfort and edification of one and for the relief and refreshing of the other. Both working together for the good of the whole.

Peter, said in closing his last epistle, "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever." Surely this growing in grace and knowledge is the work of the ministry of reconciliation. As his children live their allotted time in this world in love and fellowship with their brethren they become more reconciled and at peace in their dual role. When you think of all of the brothers and sisters you have known in your life, the testimony that they left with you, their life and walk, their concern for the wel-

fare of zion and love for all of like precious faith, isn't this the mission of an Ambassador? Does it seem presumptuous to say of them that they were Ambassadors for Christ? I think not, rather it seems befitting of their lives and testimony. Surely this is the ministry of reconciliation, spoken of by Paul in its purest state. It is God's gift to the Church in all ages of time and it surpasses all the joy that the world can give and all the treasure that this earth contains.

"O, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out?" Surely these things of which we write are some of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. They are certainly beyond the reach of mortal man with all of his earthly wisdom, technological advances and riches of earthly treasure and yet they are the heritage of the meek and lowly. They are the inheritance provided for in a will that was made before time began and will come to full fruition when time is no more. All of the integrity of the godhead is behind it and it cannot fail, for the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Editors Of The Signs Of The Times—
Dear Brethren:

I send you the following for publication in the Signs, on the subject contained in Acts xix. 1-7.

Some years ago it was made clear to me that there was no re-water baptism of the twelve men mentioned here, that were baptized by John, because John's baptism was a valid baptism, is and ever will be a valid baptism, for it was done

by John, who was "a man (not men) sent from God to make ready a people prepared by the Lord." No one did or could do John's baptism but John, for he was "the voice of one (not more than one) crying in the wilderness."

John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. His father, the old priest Zacharias, and his mother Elizabeth, were righteous before God; both well stricken in years, and had no child. "According to the custom of the priest's office his lot was to burn incense." But "the angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense," said, "Elizabeth shall bear thee a son," "and thou shalt call his name John," "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord," "and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," "and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zacharias natural enough wanted natural evidence, and he got it, and it stayed with him until the promise was fulfilled, and he wrote "his name is John," and immediately he (Zacharias) praised God. "John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Then went out to him all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." This is the only kind John baptized. "Prepared of the Lord," which was the fruits meet for repentance, confessing their sins, and being made ready by John baptizing them. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," (not some of you.) "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have

need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him." "The baptism of John whence was it from heaven or of men?" I have given the foregoing quotations to show who John was, what he was, and what he came to do. "Jesus said, Suffer it to be so now, for it becometh us (John and the Savior) to fulfill all righteousness." O glorious baptism (eternal value).

The baptism of the twelve apostles by John, was always valid, otherwise there would have been a record of a re-water baptism. All John baptized had a valid baptism for all time to come. Now to the twelve at Ephesus Paul said, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." Paul did not say to them, John's baptism is out of date, and is no value now, neither did he say, You were baptized by impostors that had no authority to do so, such as New School isms, hence your baptism is no good, and you must be baptized by water again. No, Paul said nothing that would give a particle of a shadow to such kind of thoughts. But Paul described or defined John's baptism to them in that full and complete way that is nowhere else recorded. How did Paul know just what John's baptism was? It is not likely that he ever saw John, and if he did he was looking for stones at the same time, or ready to hold the clothes of them that would throw them, as was the case when Stephen was stoned. "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." (Now this is all that Paul did say to them.) Now leave the word

this out of the next sentence, for it is a supplied word, and it reads, "When they heard they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Just as John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

Brethren, I leave this with you. Do with it as you think best.

Your brother in hope,

JNO. A CAMPBELL

DEAR ONES IN THE LORD:

I am but a creature, and I feel so unworthy, but may God give me strength to pen a few lines. How can I find words unless they are given? I feel willing to wait if only a crumb is given me from the Master's table, and I hope that Jesus has made me glad through suffering. Most of the time with me it is sorrow and darkness, and thorns are strewed along my path, but at times beautiful things make me glad. O, how good it is that the Lord has given me a hope, and has, as I trust, raised me up from the fall: he is our only hiding place; he is my all and in all. There is no comfort for me only in Jesus; he is the only hope for a poor sinner like me. It is through suffering that we are brought to know these things, and I do believe that every one that is born of God must know of his suffering, and must taste of his grief. We cannot teach ourselves these things, no, not one of us. God does not speak to us as man speaks. When his heavenly voice enters into the heart of a poor sinner, that sinner will be made glad and rejoice. At such times we love the dear Savior and can easily say so, but at other times we feel weak and cast down. Sometimes a sweet calm is with us, this is when we have been brought to

a standstill place, and O, how good this is for us, but am I worthy of saying this? I find that I say these things quite often, and "I can't help it." I hope that it is because I love the brethren and sisters. Then these words come to my mind, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

I have been for a long time cast down; this is the brightest day for me in a long time, the beautiful mountains, hills and valleys, all seem to be clothed with brightness.

I am thinking that it is Jesus alone that can save from death; Jesus the great High Priest has full atonement made; his promises are sure, and none can change. Yes, I am glad that Jesus alone, who was God manifest in the flesh, has done so much for me. The pleasure of this world have faded away; they bloomed for a season, but soon decayed, but there is lasting pleasure in Jesus; he has given salvation on earth, and a mansion in heaven.

O, how I would like to meet with a multitude of God's dear children this bright day. It seems as though I have been through a valley, and it has been a long journey, but it is sweet to know that the Lord was with me there, all the way. There were some thorns and some roses there; they are strewed all along the way here below; in all the journey there are some sparks of light, some heavenly manna. This is the way that the good Shepherd leads his sheep. O am I one of that number?

Dear ones, I am afraid that you will feel as I do in reading this; it does seem so much like me, but I cannot help nor change it. I hope that I am thankful that Jesus has, through suffering, taught me the measure of his love, and if so, then he has given me strength to sing such truths as these: "The hill of Zion yields a thousand rich supplies;" "My wants are well supplied," and "Since he is mine, and I

am his, what can I want beside?"

Well, I had better close; it may be that I will not after all let this go from my hand; I will leave it all with the dear Redeemer. I send love to all the near and dear ones in the precious truth. Now, dear brother, do with this as you deem best.

I remain your sister in hope,

MARY OSTRANDER

DEAR BRETHERN:

It seems to me that I am lost without the SIGNS, it is meat and drink to my soul; I love to hear from the dear kindred in Christ, although I have met but few of them. I read so many good letters that tell my own travels so much better that I can myself, that I have a love for the writers which Satan, with all his combined host, cannot drown. When it pleases the Almighty to give me an assurance that I am one of his, I can say, Thanks be to his holy name for implanting his love in my heart. This enables me to be in sweet fellowship with his dear people all over the world. Although strangers in the flesh, and separated by many miles, yet we are one in faith and doctrine. I have many dark and dreary hours. But when my poor heart goes out in sweet meditation, and I can believe that here I have no continuing city, but that by faith I am seeking one to come, and I can look beyond this world of trials and tribulations, then I can, and do at times, rejoice, but it seems like a tiresome journey, and I feel as though I am but seldom in the right road as I should be. It is but just now and then, if at all.

Sometimes I feel that I am a poor, deluded sinner, and am in much distress of mind, searching for some evidences to confirm me that I am a subject of grace, yet when I look back upon my past life with its afflictions and troubles, I find

that the grace of God has upheld me, and that it is my hope and salvation. "By the grace of God I am what I am." My prayer is that God will keep me at the foot of the cross, believing in and declaring Jesus as the way and the truth and the life. He alone can reach the case of this poor, undone sinner. This arm of flesh is too weak to be a staff to me; it may do for those who never felt themselves to be sinners, but as for me the Lord Jesus Christ alone is my strength and my Redeemer.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, it is my heart's desire to do the will of the Master, but I come so far short of it many times. I ask an interest in the prayers of all those who may read this, for myself and for our little church, that she may flourish as the rose, and always be kept in peace. What a pleasure it is to meet and be with the brethren; it brings rejoicing to me. I often wish for the time to come when parting will be no more. To be with those who love God is such a blessing to me. I am not fit to be numbered with them, and I often think that I will ask them to exclude me, for I believe that if I am not a fit subject for the church, I ought not to be there. I would not harm one of the little ones, and if I were out of the church I should travel alone as I do now; I do not desire to be in the way of the people of God, but I feel alone in the world.

A. B. HARPER

Dear Readers of the Signs of the Times:

Today finds me at home, my health not sufficiently good enough to be out among the saints of God. While thus sheltered from the cold, my mind is wandering in far distant lands. It seems that I can feel a tender love within me for the Lord's children everywhere. I ask, is it the "unfeigned love," spoken of in the Scripture? If so, it is the love of God. It is said in the Scriptures that "Love is of God, and whosoever loveth God lov-

eth his brother also." And again, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." How blessed is that people who love their holy Lord! They love him because he first loved them. They love God because God gave them his love. Precious children, there was once a time with you that you did not love God. You were dead in trespasses and sins; you could not love God because you did not have his love; you did not want to love him; you perhaps thought that you would love him some time in the future, that it was an act of yours, and you could begin it at your own convenience. But ah, children, your own time was always in the future; you loved the pleasures of this world, and you had no fear of God before your eyes. You could not feel the danger awaiting you, for you were dead in sin, and loved its joys. God loved you even when ye were dead in sin. How sinful, and yet how unconcerned you were! "God is love," and it was he that kept you alive until his own appointed time to make you alive. You were enemies to God by wicked works, but Jesus died. The Lord quickened you when dead. O what a sinner you were. You have a knowledge of what you had been all your life. Your heart was broken and you wept and mourned; you wanted to love God, but O how depraved you were; your sins like mountains arose before you, and you were lost and ruined forever; you often went to some secreted spot where no eye could see, or ear could hear but God's, and there bowed beneath a load of sin and guilt, to pour out your soul to God in prayer. Poor, sin-sick soul, condemned by God's holy law.

Precious saints, you were thus made to feel the need of God's everlasting love to save you from being forever lost. You lost your life by trying to save it. You were completely worked out of works, and gave up all for lost. How sad and awful you felt; this was the darkest hour

of all your life. Did you get to this point at your own "free-will"? No, no, but grace has shown you your true condition: a lost and ruined sinner, destitute of everything good within yourself. The Lord just here sheds abroad his love in your heart, the darkness gives way, and you love your Lord. Matchless, boundless love! Jesus died for me!

O, precious children, how blessedly sweet to feel an interest in God's everlasting love bestowed on poor, hell-deserving sinners. O, that we could praise the Lord enough for his wonderful works toward poor sinners like we feel ourselves to be.

I so often feel cast down and think I have no grace, but I hope that I have realized God's love toward me. One of the best evidences I have is, I do love the poor, trembling saints. How I do love to hear them speak of their sorrow and grief. This touches my experience, for I am so much cast down, and so often feel sad and lonely. If I ever have any real joy it is when the Lord freely gives it to me. If I ever do a good work, or think a good thought, it is when the Lord's grace and love constraineth me. "The love of God constraineth us," saith Paul.

J. R. HATCHER

II CORINTHIANS XI. 7-9.

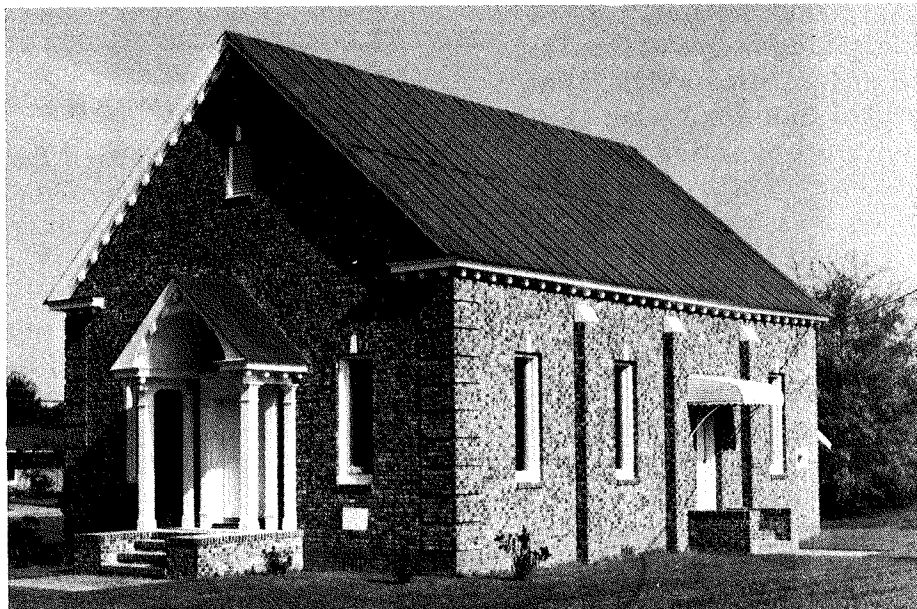
Brother C. M. Bruce, of Pawnee Rock, Kan., desires our views on the following Scripture: "*Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.*"

First. We will say, Paul had preached

the gospel at Corinth first of any, and the church there was established under his ministry, afterward, when he had departed from them, preaching the gospel in other regions, he heard of many things amiss among them. Among other things, he learned that some men who professed also to be teachers of the gospel, had come among them, and had perverted the minds of the church, or some of them, away from him. Paul was not jealous for himself, but for the truth, and for them, that they might not be led away from it, and so he wrote to them two epistles, in which he rebuked, exhorted, and warned them against that which was contrary to the gospel, and against those who had perverted their minds.

Second. In this chapter he contrasts himself with these false teachers, and calls to the minds of his brethren, his sufferings in the service of the Master. He also speaks of his self denials among them. So jealous had he been for the good of the cause, that he desired to take away all room for even the appearance of selfishness in his ministry, and so had not made himself chargeable to them for a temporal support, as he had a perfect right to do, according to the law of God, and according to that which even men judge to be equitable. Therefore he had labored among them freely, receiving the things which he lacked, from the brethren in Macedonia. Now, in verse seven, he asks, Have I committed an offence against you in so doing? It might well be thought so, by some of them. If any among them had the truth in their hearts, and love to God and to his servants reigned there, they would feel as though he had deprived them of a great privilege, in that he had received what he lacked from others. They might well be offended that he had not shown more confidence in them. But he explained that he had done what he had because of his desire that none among them should have room to say that he desired to

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



NORTH EAST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

North East Primitive Baptist Church is located in Onslow County in North Carolina on the Piney Green Road. The church was established in 1792.

To reach the church when coming from Jacksonville, N.C., follow Hwy. 17 about 4 miles to Moore Buick-Pontiac, Inc. on left at stop light. Turn right on Piney Green Road and follow to church. When

coming from Maysville, N.C., follow Hwy. 17 to Moore Buick-Pontiac, Inc. on right. Turn left at stop light on Piney Green Road and follow to church.

Church services are held every third Sunday, with Quarterly Meetings in February, May, August and November on Saturday and Sunday at 11 o'clock.

Present pastor is Elder J. T. Prescott.

make merchandise of them. Paul plainly teaches that he had a right to a support from them, but that in this case he had waived this right, and had become chargeable to the brethren in Macedonia.

According to the judgment of men, he had abased himself through preaching the gospel to them freely, but it was that they might be exalted. That is, that they might receive the word at his hands, and come to an understanding of it, which they might not do if they suspected that he was preaching for gain, and not simply for the glory of God. Was this an of-

fence to them? In the thirteenth verse of the next chapter, Paul tells them that they were inferior to no other churches, except in this, that he had not made himself chargeable to them, and then he says, forgive me this wrong. Thus he counted it a wrong that he had not given to them the privilege of caring for him in temporal things, while he had ministered to them in spiritual things. Yet he excuses this apparent want of confidence in them, by showing that he desired to take away all occasion from enemies of the gospel, by so doing. It was his right to be support-

ed, and it was his right to expect that they would willingly do this, but Paul in verse eight says that he had robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do the church of Corinth service. That is, other churches had done what they were not under any obligation to do, in order to enable Paul to labor among the church at Corinth, and yet not be chargeable to them. They freely bestowed this help upon Paul, but yet after all, it was but relieving the church at Corinth, from their duty, and from what ought to have been a privilege to them. Then he says that no man should stop him from this boasting in all Achaia. He does not use the word boasting here in any offensive sense. He did what he did, not for his own exaltation, but for the glory of God, and the good of the churches, yet if any were spiritual among that church, they would feel very keenly the statement that he had been supported by others, while devoting himself to them. It seems to us that the brethren at Corinth, as they read these words, must have felt a great spirit of admiration for the unselfishness of Paul in preaching the gospel freely among them, and must have felt to praise that grace which thus appeared in him, while at the same time they must have had a feeling of deep sorrow that they had not themselves ministered to him as his needs required, while he was laboring among them.

Paul expressly teaches in all this connection, that in other places also, that those who labor in word and doctrine among the churches, have a right to support from those among whom they labor, but that they may waive that right also, for the good of the cause, and the glory of God. Yet he regarded it as being in some sense a wrong against that church, and felt to beseech them to forgive the wrong.

ELDER F. A. CHICK

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS vi. 1, 16.

The first verse proposed for consideration reads thus, "*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*"

The apostle had been dwelling on the reign of sin and death, and the redemption of the church of God from the dominion of both by the reign of grace through righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord. The entrance of sin into the world by Adam as the embodiment and representative of all his posterity, long before the law or the Sinia covenant was given to Israel, even as early as the transgression of Adam, and the law is a detector of sin; moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. That is, as we understand it, that sin might appear as it really is, exceedingly sinful. The law did not make us sinful, but showed that we were so, making our sins to abound, or exposing them to view in their true magnitude, and so far as the church of God is concerned, the manifestation by the application of the law of the total depravity and just condemnation of those whom Christ came to redeem, shows the more vividly the superabounding of the grace of God. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Sin, enthroned in our carnal nature, reigned unto death, but now, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the principality of sin is spoiled; the strength of sin, which is the law, can no longer sustain the empire of sin, for being dead to the law by the body of Christ, they are no more under the law, but under grace, or under law to Christ. Grace now appears in regal majesty, erects her throne in the heart, and sways her sceptre with greater might, reigns, governs and controls unto the

opposite issue: life—eternal life. Sin's reign was unto death, but grace extends her reign unto eternal life, and never can possibly fall short of that result. As certainly as it is that sin is the sting of death, so certainly the gift, or grace of God, is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. None can fail of eternal life who are subjects of reigning grace, nor can any fail of the wages of sin who are subjects of its reigning power.

This being the prominent doctrine of the inspired apostles and of the primitive disciples of Christ, their workmongrel opposes slanderously reported that they held and avowed as their doctrine that they would sin, that grace might abound. But it was a false charge, and as slanderously said of the primitive saints as it is now reiterated against the old order of disciples, and upon the same ground. But the apostle pronounces it a slanderous report, and he says of those who propagate it that their damnation is just.

Again, the enemies of God and truth have always contended that the doctrine of sovereign, eternal, reigning and saving grace is exceedingly dangerous, leading to licentiousness, for they have no knowledge of that faith which works by love and purifies the heart. Their religion depends on fear, animal excitement, terror, fire and brimstone, &c. But the operative principles of love, as an incentive to holy aspirations, is only found under the reign of grace, hence all will-worshippers are ignorant of it.

Paul could and did confidently appeal to the subjects of grace in the language of our text, "*What shall we say then?*" We know what our calumniators, and all Arminians say on the subject, but, "*What shall we say?*" Can a subject of grace be found in heaven or in earth who will say, Let us sin that grace may abound? The very thought to them is abhorrent and repulsive; God forbid, is their language, for how shall we that are dead to sin,

slain to its love, dead to its dominion, and emancipated from its reign, how shall we live any longer therein? Baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being buried with him by baptism into death, crucified with him, dead to sin by his body, we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, and with him we are risen to newness of life; Christ now liveth in us, and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us. The body, or that which is born of the flesh, is dead because of sin, circumcised, or cut off, so that we are no longer known in the flesh, or after the flesh, but the Spirit; that which is born of the Spirit, is life, because of righteousness. It is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him," that is, with Christ who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. "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 him, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Now, therefore, our element is no longer sin, but holiness. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him." If we were crucified with him, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, and the body of sin destroyed; if with him God has raised us up together to a newness of life, then may we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And then the admonition of the subject applies to us. "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." The old mortal

body is still of the earth earthy. Sin is still there striving to maintain a dominion over our members. But being legally released from his cruel dominion, we have a right to renounce his yoke, and refuse obedience to his wicked mandates. Sin will strive to reign over our members and to control them by stirring up our passions and lusts, and to press our members into its service. But here is the true ground of our confidence, that sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under the law, but under grace. "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid."

We are frequently told by the votaries of free-will and human agency in salvation, that if they could be assured that they are not under the law, or exposed to its penal wrath, they would not only sin, but give a loose rein to all their lusts, and take their fill of sin, thus proving that they still love sin as well as ever. They are not yet full, they want more, and are only restrained by a selfish fear of hell. Our case is quite different, if we are under the reign of grace; we have had our fill of sin long ago, we loathe it now, we hate it, we detest it, and love holiness, for it is now our element.

We come now to the sixteenth verse of the chapter on which brother Springsteen desired us to comment, in connection with the first.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yeild yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

This the saints ought to know, and to thoroughly understand. Here are two opposite dominions, the one, sin; the other, righteousness; and if we are under the dominion of the first of these, we shall obey it in its lusts, yielding our members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But if freed from the dominion of sin, and brought under the

reign of grace, we shall obey the governing principles of grace, the law of grace, which teaches us, "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we shall live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." This law of grace is not written on tables of stone, but written on the tables of our hearts, according to the provisions of the new covenant, or covenant of grace. "I will put my law in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," &c. While a discrimination is here made between the slaves of sin, and the subjects of reigning grace, we are taught to regard a love of holiness, a spirit of obedience to God, and a relish for the word of truth, the doctrine and ordinances of Christ, as a reliable evidence that we have passed from death unto life, from the dominion of sin, to the reigning power of grace, and in the fullness of our hearts, in the assurance of this evidence, we join the apostle in thanksgiving to God that our service under the dominion of reigning sin, is among the things which were, that being now made free from sin, we become servants of righteousness.

The question may arise, Why, if I am thus made free from the reigning power of sin, am I so prone to wander, so full of vain and wicked thoughts? Why do I the things which I ought not, and leave undone the things which I ought to do? The answer of this inquiry will be found in the words of our Redeemer, in connection with those of Paul: "That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh, is flesh. And the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for in our flesh there dwelleth no good thing." All our disobedience and rebellion against the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, arises from the flesh, which is and always has been at war with grace. It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. With my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of

sin.

Here is the ground of the christian warfare; two opposing laws, two opposite principles dwell in us while we sojourn in the militant state. The flesh, or earthly, depraved nature will never harmonize with the aspirations of the new man after holiness. The flesh is still a servant of sin, but the new man is the servant of righteousness, and each zealous for its respective master. While the sin that dwelleth in us disputes and opposes every step of the reign of grace, so that we cannot do the things which we would, grace, on the other hand, or the immortal Spirit of life, which is denominated the new man, cannot sin, because he is born of God, and his seed remaineth, and making war, uncompromising and determined, shall crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and shall assuredly triumph over all opposition with, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The apostle continues to dwell on this subject throughout this and the succeeding chapter, and shows that the saints are debtors not unto the flesh, to live after the flesh; if governed by the flesh, or if we walk after the flesh, we shall die. Death hath passed on the flesh, and the flesh is dead because of sin; sin has defiled it, reigns in it, and his reign is unto death. The carnal or fleshly mind is enmity against God, and to be carnally minded in death. "But as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

EDITORIAL OF THE LATE
ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ARTICLES

LUKE XVI. 9.

Worldly riches are the mammon of this world. Whatever of them are possessed by christians, they hold only as stewards in trust, who are under a solemn charge to so use as not to abuse them, and they are amenable to their Lord for the manner of their stewardship. While possessing them in trust, if we impart them with a liberal hand to relieve the necessities of the poor and suffering, when we fail, or in our turn become poor and needy, we may, relying on our Lord's assurance expect to be in the same way ourselves relieved, for what measure we mete out to others, shall be meted to us again. "There is that which scattereth and yet increaseth; but to withhold more than is meet, tendeth to poverty."

Shortly after this parable was spoken, the disciples were driven from their homes, and their property was confiscated, but profiting by the instruction, those of them who had property, while they held an undisputed title, sold it, and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet, and when they failed, they were received and supplied from the common provision thus secured. They had all things in common. (See Acts ii. 44-47.) We are not directed by our Lord to make a mammon, or god, of riches, or of what we possess of the world's goods, but make to ourselves friends of it. It can afford us friendly aid in our extremities, and so to use it as to secure the commendation of our Lord, whose stewards only we are, as acting wisely.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Mat. 7:12

Elder J.K. Womack, My Dear Brother:

When your last brotherly letter came I was very busy, and now I am bad off with bronchitis, so that I am too weary and dull to write, but will tell you that I was glad to get yours. You write sadly, much as I feel, and would give an unpromising answer if asked, "Watchman, what of the night? what of the night?" But Peter said, "Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Is not this true in your experience? The Lord says, "I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." What a rich mercy that he hath chosen us at all! and how divine the blessing that he hath refined us, even though it be in the fiery furnace. Would those who would limit the Holy One in his counsel and purpose, admit that he foreordained the furnace of affliction in which he chose his people? If they admit this, then they must admit as well that his predetermined purpose embraced the ungodly conduct of the persecutors of his people, for they largely make up the furnace of affliction. So it is written, "The Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries should be round about him." The Lord hath commanded it so. There is no escape from it, therefore. How gladly we would have it different, dear brother, for we find it very trying and humiliating to be thus surrounded, and to find ourselves in such a heated furnace. But should any deny that the God of the eternal purpose, who worketh all things after

the counsel of his own will, has thus foreordained and commanded that our adversaries should be round about us as a furnace of affliction, for the trial of our faith, then they must also deny that the Lord hath chosen his people at all, because as certainly as he chose them it was in the furnace. Not a pleasant place, is it, to be in? Then how about always walking in the light and escaping affliction by good works of obedience? What saint has ever done so on earth? It will not do, my brother, because revelation and experience alike contradict it. This teaching is phariseeism, and it agrees with the micking words and teachings of poor, afflicted Job's miserable comforters. The good Physician says, "For the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." So here is hope for you, and for all the poor in spirit and contrite in heart, who have no righteousness to plead, nor merit wherewith to buy the Lord's mercies and blessing, which they so much need. These must come to the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need, which is all the time, for they can never claim the least crumb of favor and blessing as a reward for their good works in serving the Lord. But they must humbly confess with Paul and say, "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. --- O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here is promise and hope for you, dear brother, for you can say again with Paul, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"In the world ye shall have tribulations," says the Prince of peace. But to offset this he also says, "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." He overcome it for us, and his victory is ours in him. Yea, dear brother, "So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Therefore, the obedience which God accepts and blesses us for is

the perfect work of Christ, his beloved Son, for us. No other obedience under the shining sun is at all meritorious in God's account, but the "finished" work of the suffering and obedient Lamb of God possesses infinite merit; yea, more valuable and precious in God's esteem than all the glories and riches of the boundless universe.

O, then, why should the saints not be always swallowed up in the contemplation of our Lord's perfect work of finished redemption, and say, with a poet, "We only wish to speak of him who lived, and died, and reigns for us? We'll talk of all he did and said and suffered for us here below; the path he marked for us to tread, and what he's doing for us now." For if our souls were thus inspired with his love, and satisfied with his grace, there would be no desire or room in our minds and hearts to make a blowing horn of, or sound a trumpet before us to herald what we are doing for the Lord. Far more honoring is it to him, and in line with the primitive saints, to ever be testifying, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Thus moved and filled with the mercy and grace of God toward us, we should be "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Thus grace is all in this full salvation of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, speak we of obedience to our Lord, it is the obedience of faith and love, and these are the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God's grace. So, after Paul labored more abundantly than all the apostles of Christ in preaching the gospel, he disclaimed the least ability or merit of himself, and said, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." If all the preachers in your country had thus taught and preached, and ever magnified the grace of God, as did Paul,

think you, brother Womack, that there would have been such a contention and distress in all that country as has confused and scattered the sheep of the good Shepherd? I tell you, nay; for it would have comforted and united in fellowship all the poor sinners saved by grace. This simple truth cannot be disguised, or denied, for all know that the gospel of the grace of God, when believed and preached and walked in, has never yet made a contention and division among the Lord's people who are saved by grace, and it never will. What, then, has made all the confusion, mourning and sorrow among you all? Read Acts XV.; and Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia, and you shall plainly see that then and there the doctrine and principle of conditions was first introduced among the believers in Christ, as an addition to the grace of Christ; and it was the propagation and insistence of this principle, which denied the sufficiency of the grace of God in Christ, that made all the trouble in those churches then. In proof of this the apostles in counsel said, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved." Not the least intimation then about two ways or principles of salvation, or two salvations; one by grace, the other of works; one everlasting, the other in time; but the only dispute was the doctrine and principle of salvation; and the decision of all the apostles and the church was, as above. The other party was the advocates of conditional salvation in part for believers in Christ. This is the contention and the source of the trouble now, as it was then, and has been all through the history of the church. It is simply a covert denial of our dear Lord's work to his servant Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee." For as certainly as it was sufficient for Paul in his perils, persecutions, temptations and unparalleled labors, sacrifices and hardships, so it is ever sufficient for all who are

saved by his grace. Nothing else is sufficient for all who are saved by his grace. Nothing else is sufficient.

Believing that through the grace of Christ we shall be saved, yours in love,

D. BARTLEY.

ISAIAH XLIII. 1.

"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

Is not this declaration of God, as made by the prophet Isaiah, enough to cheer and comfort the poor pilgrim of God while walking through the valley, and shadow of death? It would seem that this one sentence ought forever to silence the advocates of conditionalism, in their efforts to show that man has a work to perform to make God's blessings of any certainty to his people. Here in this forty-third chapter the prophet of God has repeated several times over, the glorious truth that God did this because he was their Savior, and that he loved them, and declares why they should rely in him, *"I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior."* The question comes to mind, If there is no other Savior, can there be but one salvation? He says, *"I have declared and have saved."* This is in the past tense, *"have saved,"* so there can be no salvation left for poor, mortal man, or any other creature to perform. What did Christ say on this point? *"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in*

Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. viii. 38,39.

JAMES M. TRUE

JOHN XIII. 14

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

In our every day life, with its trials and cares, we are called to walk the way of man's duty. Hindered by temptations we stumble over rough places and go astray in the dark. Some of us go in forbidden places and soil our feet, figuratively speaking, with the things of the world. When we are brought together it is needful that some loving brother apply the water of the word, admonish us, that our feet may be washed, and we be made to walk more carefully. Again, a brother may have had to walk a thorny path and over rough places, so that with bleeding feet he sits among us, then the water of the word cools and cleanses his feet, he is cheered by the wine of joy, and the balm of Gilead heals the wounds of his heart. That one goes away strengthened, to bless the place where he maketh his flock to rest.

One woman washed the Savior's feet with her tears, and a like service is rendered by the humble service of the sisters and mothers of Israel to-day. Many of us feel and see the sweet but strong influence of woman as she in her love tries to cleanse from us the filth of the world. So we ought to wash one another's feet: admonish in love, comfort and serve others, in their walk through the wilderness of trouble and temptation.

Some seem to go into such filthy places, and bring into the house such loathsome things that for a time they must be set outside; to pass through the fire, or be shaken in the devil's sifter, The weary pilgrim seeks a place of rest, and it is a friend indeed who ministers to his wants, and serves him lovingly in all things.

Jesus in word and in deed taught this loving service. The work he has done for us must be shown forth by our service to others, for as he works in us, so will it be manifested in our walk.

On this occasion he has appointed a place for the meeting, and sat with them as he also does with his chosen ones today. Then at the chosen time and place did they eat the passover with the bitter herbs of sorrow. Then he girded himself and taught them that they must be washed. At last Judas having received the sop went out, and it was night. Was it not the last night of the legal dispensation? Christ must go down into the death of the cross, and come up from the darkness of the tomb, leading his people out of darkness into the glorious liberty of the children of God, that they might be with him where he was, and behold his glory. Thus he taught that he would be with them to feed, cleanse and lead them. And as he served them, so must they serve and love each other; put away the filth of the flesh. When in love a brother is prevailed upon to cease from that which is an injury to him, and a reproach to the cause, a sinner is converted from the error of his way; a soul saved from death (or separation from the church) and a multitude of sins hidden. Thus are the members of the body cleansed, and the prodigals brought home again, and dressed in the best clean robes of humility. To do this for a brother requires love, courage, humbleness, in fact the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." Those we love we try to save and serve.

God grant us power and guide us in the right way, that we may "Wash one another's feet." Peace be with us all.

I trust I am your brother,

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON

I JOHN IV. I.

"Try the spirits whether they are of God."

In all ages of the world, from the dawn of creation until now, living witnesses to God's immortal truth have tenanted their houses of clay, travailing in pain and sorrow, it is true, but none the less unceasingly breathing forth praise and adoration to Jehovah, and testifying often in the midst of most awful ordeals, to the salvation found only in the arm of the mighty God, the fortress of his people in all ages in time and forever in eternity.

In all ages of the world, from the dawn of creation until now, have been those ever ready to curse the saints, to inflict all manner of persecutions upon them, striving to beguile them in the name of the Lord (?) and with a mask of seeming saintliness to fall down and worship Baal, and to leave the Shepherd of Israel. But he whose goings forth have been established upon the Rock Christ Jesus, is there to stay, and though often menaced by worldly adversaries and persecuted in most hideous fashion, has invariably come forth from the fiery furnace bearing not a single scent of smoke, with his gold not tarnished nor lustre dimmed.

Against these enemies of the doctrine of God our Savior, the apostle sounds the warning note, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Even at that time, so soon after the manifestation of God in the flesh, false prophets have arisen, so cunning as to almost deceive the very elect.

Many come to the saints filled with the holy Spirit of God, animated by a desire to speak to them concerning his goodness and glory, trusting that God will bless their labors to the edification of the saints and to the upbuilding of Zion. Others come to the saints filled

with the spirit of their father, the devil, animated by a desire to gain a good name for themselves, and to win a high place among men, stopping not from hanging salvation upon conditions, and clothing poor, puny man with a fancied glory of his own. Having their eye not single to the glory of God, they deem it an unimportant thing to leave him in the background.

But all who would teach in Zion, no matter by what spirit they are animated, are ushered before God's most awful tribunal, the highest court before which a man can possibly be brought, and from which there is no appeal; the church of the Most High. Here, in the hearts of all God's children, is a judgment-seat erected, and here, too, are unfurled the banner and standard of the truth. By this, the saints "try the spirits whether they are of God." Upon the spirits before them, they set their seal entitling them to serve the Lord in his most holy temple, or banishing them from their presence forever. Among all these spirits, the "man diligent in business, shall stand before kings." Every saint is a king and a priest to God, and before this most regal company only he whose business lies at wisdom's gate, whose whole desire is to praise the Lord for his salvation and mercy to usward, and whose testimony upon the walls of Zion declares him as the Rock and his work as perfect; only he, I say, can stand before this royal priesthood, the assemblage of the saints.

Such is the primary interpretation of the language of John quoted in the beginning. Now, briefly, let us glance at the secondary or experimental side of it.

None but those who have traveled it, can know how rough is the road from earth to heaven. Now it rises over the summit of a lofty mountain, then dropping a little, it pursues its course along a level plain, farther on, it suddenly drops and is lost to view among the dark recesses

of some narrow valley only to rise again to climb the mountain where, lo, the golden sunlight gilds its highest point. How many different moods of mind possess the christian wayfarer all in a single day. Now doubting, now fearing, now mounting a pinnacle of hope, now plunging into the depths of despair, now calmly resting in sweet deliverance from the pit. Whether held in the bonds of the spirit of prayer, whether imprisoned in meshes of the spirit of hope, whether held by the spirit of grief, we constantly cry out, "Is this God or the devil?" "Is this the kind of affliction the Lord's people have, or are the whole human race partakers of it?" Thus daily does the child of God try the spirits which possess him, to discover whether they are of God or of Satan, whether they are the evidences of the indwelling of grace, or the croppings out of the propensities of the flesh. His constant inquiry is: "Am I, or am I not, one of the heaven-born sons of grace?" And only as the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit, do we realize that we are the children of God. Today you may not know that the spirit which holds you is of God, but tomorrow, God will interpret your experiences, and by his Spirit, which is always your indwelling guide, bearing witness with and testifying to your spirit or experience, you will know what the past means. It is by the future that we understand the present, and by the present that we interpret the past. Next year you will realize how much God has been with you this year, but now, as he walks with you daily, you are not aware that it is he, so confident do you feel sometimes that he has left you. This is because you are in the cleft of the rock, and his hand is over you so that you see only his back parts, places where he has been, and not where he is now.

HORACE H. LEFFERTS

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED.

(Matt. xiii.31; Mark iv. 31; Luke xiii. 19.)

In Matthew it reads as follows: "*Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest of herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.*"

First. This parable is recorded by three of the evangelists. They do not vary essentially in the terms in which it is stated. About the only difference in the three narratives is that Luke omits the expression, "which is the least of all seeds."

Second. It occurs in the midst of a cluster of parables which according to Matthew number seven. Mark and Luke omit several of these parables in their narratives. In our own mind this parable has always stood in connection with the one which follows it, the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. The latter seems to present the hidden, silent, effectual, inward work of the kingdom, in those where it has been planted, while this former parable seems to us to present rather the outward manifestation of this kingdom.

Third. Let it be remembered that it is a parable describing the kingdom of heaven, and not the visible church organization. The church in the Scriptures is always one thing, and the kingdom of heaven is another. The two words must not be confounded wherever they may be used. We will call attention to some of the differences between the two words, and the two things, "the church of God," and "the kingdom of God." A man must be born again to enter the kingdom of God at all. He cannot see nor enter that kingdom without the new birth. But

many a man has become a member of the visible church without knowing anything at all about the new birth, in the only way in which such knowledge can be attained to, viz: by experience. A man may be excluded from the visible church, but that does not exclude him from the kingdom of God. Many a man is in the kingdom who is not in the visible church, and many a man is a member of the visible church, who is not in the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of God is within men, but we cannot say this with any real meaning of the church visible. The word "churches" is frequently used, but never the word "Kingdoms" of God. We read of the church at Rome, Corinth, &c. but never of the kingdom of God in any particular place. There are other differences, but these seem to be sufficient to settle the fact that the visible church organization, and the kingdom of heaven, or of God, are not the same thing at all.

Forth. In this parable, and in many others, the kingdom of God is presented as a living power working within men, and producing results effectually. It is never presented as a form so much as a life. It is said to be within men. It is said to be righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is compared, as in the following parable, to hidden leaven, and as in fourth chapter of Mark, to seed which being cast into the ground springs up, first the blade, and finally the full corn in the ear. It comes not with observation. Jesus was himself set forth by John the Baptist as the embodiment of the kingdom. He said concerning the coming Jesus, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." And so Jesus commissioned the disciples whom afterward he sent forth into every city where he himself would afterward come, to say, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The organization of the churches followed in those places where the kingdom of God was preached, and where it began to appear

in the hearts and lives of men. Its beginnings are always presented as being in the hearts of men. As it worked in them the same things, so they would be drawn together in fellowship. And out of this oneness in feeling and in conduct, would come fellowship, and a desire to live together, and to mutually help and encourage each other. The church organization was therefore an outgrowth of the kingdom. The Savior spoke of the church as well as of the kingdom, and the apostles provided by inspiration for the order of the visible church, but always as the dwelling-place of those in whom the kingdom of God was manifest.

Many things are said about the coming kingdom in the Old Testament, and many things are said of it after it had come in the New Testament. Of course we cannot refer to all that is said concerning it. We desire to call attention to this one parable, wherein some characteristics, among many others that belong to the kingdom, are set forth. And here, as well as in other parables, it will not do to seek too many meanings as belonging to it. As a rule, in all the parables there is one thought to be set forth, and if we can discover that, it is sufficient. The Savior's meaning is what we ought to desire to know, and not curious applications which our own fancy may present. As in the parable of the leaven, the one thought seems to be the secret, effectual working of the leaven in the meal, so in this parable the one thought seems to be the great outcome of what appeared to be a small beginning. What a miracle that so small a seed should produce such large results. How contrary to human judgment is the Lord's working. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he ordains strength and out of weakness he makes men strong. He chooses even the things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are. God works with things which men despise. There is nothing at which men might wonder in a grain of mustard

seed, but yet see now large an herb, like a tree even, has grown out of it. How poor and mean did the beginning of the gospel seem to all men. Even the disciples themselves did not see what the true glory of the work of the Redeemer was. They looked to the outward appearance and were disappointed. Yet see the mighty working of that small seed, and the wonderful outgrowth in all the ages since.

Now let us notice that a man took the seed and sowed it in the field. So our God by the Spirit plants his kingdom in the hearts of the chosen. As the man chose the field in which to sow the seed of mustard, so does our God choose all the sons of men in whom the seed of the kingdom shall be sown. It is sown in the field, and so is the kingdom sown in the heart. Man does not plant the seed of the kingdom in his own heart, neither does he sow the seed in the heart of any other man. One sower sows the kingdom in all places where it is sown. All this is true, but yet the one thought in the parable to which all others are subordinate is the smallness of the seed, and the great outcome from so small a beginning.

There has been some criticism concerning the statement that the mustard seed is the least of all seeds. It is not really so, it is urged. Some seeds are much smaller than the mustard seed. Cavilers have noted this, and have attacked the knowledge of the Savior on account of it. The word "least" is the same as that translated "smallest" or "small" in other places. It might just as well have been translated "smallest" in this parable. Our understanding is that it signifies not absolutely the smallest seed, but popularly and proverbially the smallest. And when it is said to be the greatest among herbs, it means not absolutely so, but relatively, and with relation to the smallness of the seed. When it is said that the birds lodge in the branches of it, we have understood the design to

be to point out the amplitude of the tree, and so enforce the contrast between the smallness of the beginning and the greatness of the ending. The smallness of the grain of mustard seed is also presented when the dear Redeemer said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed," &c. That is, as we would say, "never so little faith." It is evident that all to whom the Savior spoke, would fully understand that he spoke of the smallness of the seed in the sense in which it was commonly referred to at that time, as the smallest or least of all seeds. He would say to them in substance, you yourselves know how small a seed of mustard is, and yet you also know that the power of the Creator causes it in multitudes of instances to become like a tree in size after a little time. So shall be the kingdom of heaven which I have come to plant in the earth.

Jesus himself appeared among men as a man of sorrows, and in lowliness of appearance and manner. His earthly parentage was obscure, he lived in obscurity, subject to his reputed father, until he was about thirty years of age; he walked during his public ministry in humbleness and meekness, and of the multitudes who from time to time followed him, but few became really his disciples. At the last he was crucified in the sight of men, and what claims he had put forth were thought by all to be brought to naught. He was crucified through weakness, as the apostle himself testifies. Afterward the great, the rich, the noble, did not believe on him, but the humble among men, such as servants and laborers who bore the burden and sorrows of life without its honors or riches. He had chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. And it was then as it has ever been since, true that his triumphs were not such as men could either see or understand. He reigned in the hearts of men; and the fruit of his reign there was not human wisdom, or

knowledge, or power of reasoning, or the power to become great in any earthly line, but the fruit was love, joy, peace, humility, forbearance, longsuffering, patience, endurance, temperance, faith, hope and charity. These fruits were the fruits of the Spirit, but they were not such as would either then or now command the attention or applause of men. And these fruits appeared then, and do yet, not among many of the great, the wise, the noble of earth, but among the unwise, the weak and the lowly of earth, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

Another thought must be made prominent here, viz: The power to thus increase is in the seed itself; it is not in the surroundings at all; the seed has life in itself alone, and this life of the seed has transforming power. This is true of all seeds, as well as of the mustard seed. We refer to this to emphasize the one thought of the parable, the largeness of the plant grown from so small a seed. The plant becomes thus large not because of any outside aid, but because of the power that is in the seed itself. The kingdom of God does not grow in a man because of any good thing in him. The root grows out of a dry ground. The root gives fatness and moisture to the ground, but the ground does not give these things to the root. (Isiah liii. 2.) Jesus grows up as a root out of a dry ground. The ground then adds nothing to the root, but the root does add to the ground. The ground does not add to the power of the seed, but the seed does reach out and lay hold upon the dead earthly matter, and bid it live, and it lives in the plant. All is dead, and would remain dead without the seed. If then divine life exist in any man, and if any man does show forth in his body that life which is within him, the glory belongs to the life and not to him. The whole field in the parable is made up of dead earthy matter, but the seed lays hold where it will of that dead matter, and builds it up

into the body of the plant, until a tree is standing forth in its beauty and glory. Every branch and every leaf and every fibre of the tree, if it could speak, would say, "I was dead until the life of the seed reached out to me and bade me live."

Every spiritual thing, such as love, joy, peace, humility, faith and hope within us, speaks forth the praises of the kingdom, and not of self. All is to the praise of the glory of his grace. Out of the small beginning within us has come up these heavenly graces, and the name of the Lord is glorified within us by them all. And out of these heavenly graces comes to exist the delightful fellowship of saints. We for ourself look back over the past of our life, and can but wonder at what has followed from our past experiences. Many of them at the time we could not think belonged to the life of the believer, but now, out of some of them have come our greatest joys and out strongest hope. Little thoughts, little experiences, that seemed so small that we could not claim them as being of the Lord at all, now bring to us large harvests of hope and love and joy.

If it be asked to what special thing do the fowls of the air refer, we would say that we do not think that it is straining the language of the parable to say that they may represent all those who in time of weariness, need rest, and in time of darkness, desire shelter, and when the sun comes down with scorching heat,

desire the coolness of the shade. The kingdom of heaven is all this to all such characters, and it is all this to these in spite of the small beginnings. God sees, and he gives those who are spiritual to see things which natural men never behold. That which is not desirable to natural men, is pleasing to God and wonderful in the eyes of his quickened children. How many who have felt themselves to be among the wandering fowls of the air, with no place of rest, and no one to care for them, have come

to find shelter in the shade of this kingdom, and have rejoiced there with exceeding joy.

We have no doubt that the dear brother at whose request we have written this, can bear testimony to this experience. Once feeling to be an outcast from God and from man, there came a time when he found rest and shelter under the shadow of this kingdom of God, and after that it was his privilege to confess what this kingdom had become to him, among his brethren, and to find a home also in the visible church. How blessed it is to come to see and to enter the kingdom of God, and then how blessed afterwards to find a home visibly in the church on earth. In the time of heat and darkness and trouble what a place of rest is this kingdom to those who like the fowls of the air have no other home. Such ones the Lord sets up on high. Such ones he hides as in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. "Here the sparrow and the swallow have found their home." Whether they are ever known among the visible churches or not, still he gives them to abide in his kingdom, and to find all that they need provided there. The kingdom of God becomes to them more than meat and drink. As they have thirsted after righteousness, peace and joy in the Lord, now they have come into the possession of all these things, and their longing hearts are satisfied.

We will leave these thoughts with brother Terry, and with all who may read, having written with much of hesitancy and trembling, lest we darken counsel with words without knowledge.

ELDER F. A. CHICK

Look on your address label.
If the expiration date is
7/85
it will expire with this issue. Please
send renewal in the mail today.

MEETINGS

**STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION
NOTICE**

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will Convene, the Lord Willing, with Springfield Church.

The church is located in the town of Gretna, Virginia, in Pittsylvania County north of Danville, Virginia.

The meeting begins at 11:00 a.m., Friday, July 12 and will continue through Sunday which is the second weekend in July. All believers in the truth are invited to attend.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

APRIL 13, 1985 MEETING

We met at Knob Primitive Baptist Church and organized a Presbytery to look into the qualifications for Deacon of Brother Nelson Bryant.

Elder Amos Hash was chosen to be Moderator.

Deacon Claude Hopkins was chosen to be spokesman for the Church.

Deacon Carl Terry was chosen to be Clerk.

Elder O. K. Tench opened service with Prayer.

Elders: J. R. Hollandsworth, Larry Hollandsworth, and Lane Carter were chosen to lead in questions.

Elder Noel Conner was chosen to Pray the Ordination Prayer.

Elder Hale Terry was chosen to deliver the Charge.

A motion was made, second, and approved to proceed.

The Candidate was delivered into the hands of the Presbytery by Deacon Claude Hopkins.

Elder Lane Carter read from 1 Timothy 3rd. Chapter.

Elder J. R. Hollandsworth asked the Candidate questions concerning his calling and the duties of a Deacon.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth read from Acts. 6th. Chapter.

After these and other Elders had questioned the Candidate and Deacon Claude Hopkins, a motion was made, second, and approved to proceed with the Ordination.

The Ordination Prayer was given by Elder Noel Conner, with the laying on of hands by the Elders and Deacons.

The Charge was delivered by Elder Hale Terry.

A motion was made, second, and approved to receive the work of the Presbytery.

Deacon Claude Hopkins delivered Deacon Nelson Bryant back to the Church.

Then the Presbytery was dismissed with Prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Amos Hash, Moderator.
Deacon Carl Terry, Clerk.

Elders present:

O. K. Tench	Noel Conner
Tom Turner	Lane Carter
J. R. Hollandsworth	Amos Hash
Larry Hollandsworth	Hale Terry

Deacons present:

Harry Cannaday	D. S. Houston
Tommy Lovell	R. L. Wright
Fred Murphy	Bobby Bernard
Grover Semones	Eulas Turner
Amos Byrd	H. D. Ingram
Lonnzie Nichols	Gray Ingram
Guy Holly	Jimmy Holly
Charlie Childress	Wilford Parsons
Carl Terry	Claude Hopkins

*"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you,
live peaceable with all men." Psalm 116:15*

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST, APRIL 1985

J. O. Harrold, AR.	\$ 2.00
Mrs. J. M. Jenkins, TN.	2.00
Mrs. Mabel Ellis, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Dorothy Cassell, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Fannie Wiles, VA.	7.00
Mrs. Odell Anderson, LA.	5.00
Eld. Rush Hendrix, TN.	2.00
Miss Cathrine Houchins, VA. ...	2.00
Dave & Sara Cody, AZ.	12.00
Eld. W. D. Griffin, AL.	10.00
E. E. Moran, VA.	25.00
Eld. Jimmy Hamrick, TX.	2.00
Raymond Haygood, TX.	10.00
Dale Haygood, TX.	10.00
Miss Clarisse Brooks, NC.	25.00
Mrs. William L. Lee, VA.	2.00
C. C. Barron, LA.	2.00
Mrs. Edgar Bolejack, VA.	2.00
Mrs. Olive Hastings, MD.	5.00
Mrs. Clemmice Bishop, AR.	5.00
L. W. Nichols, VA.	2.00
H. L. Knight, NC.	2.00

EDITORIAL NOTICE

In the published list of donations under the head of "Contributions," our readers have an index to the interest of the brethren and friends in the welfare of the "Signs". Aside from the financial value of these contributions, they are a source of great encouragement to us as tokens of appreciation of the conduct of the "Signs" and although our time is so occupied we are unable to reply personally to each one sending a contribution. We hope our not thus acknowledging our thanks for their liberality will not be interpreted as a lack of appreciation on our part, but that contributors will accept this notice as an individual letter of our sincere thanks for their kind assistance.

Editors

OBITUARIES

VERNON B. CARAWAN

On Sunday, June 17, 1984, after spending five of his last six weeks in Pitt County Hospital, Vernon B. Carawan passed away at his home, with his family in Greenville, North Carolina. Earlier that morning he said, "I want to go home." He knew he was home, at his house, my Mother told him. But he replied, "I'm not yet, but I'm almost there." And within a short period of time, we feel that he was home.

He joined Hancock's Primitive Baptist Church on May 18, 1969. Church for him on Sunday mornings was much more than an obligation. He enjoyed taking other members of the family and friends to Church, he loved seeing friends from other areas and "dinner on the ground," Associations seemed to be such special occasions to him. He'll miss them. I feel that we will miss him being there too.

His funeral was conducted at Wilkerson's Funeral Home in Greenville by Elder Joe Sawyer and Elder Reeves Smith and burial was in Greenwood Cemetery. He was survived by his wife, Lillian B. Carawan, two sons; Robert M. Carawan and Vernon E. Carawan, two sisters; Mrs. Sarah Vandiford and Mrs. Mary Wingate. He also, had four grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

It seems ironic, June 17, Father's Day, to have to lose a Father on that day. But what better day could there be for one never to forget the help, kindness and understanding, always given by their Father.

Vernon E. Carawan

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

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PSALM 100

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

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

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

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

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

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Proverbs 9: 10

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Edward D. Morton	

 EDITORIAL

Isaiah 35: 8, 10

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any venomous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

At the beginning of our experience, we do not walk this highway. It is not our intention to walk the King's highway, but we, at first, are seeking cisterns

in which we have had a hand in hewing. The apostles themselves were filled with unbelief in the beginning of their association with the Saviour. This unbelief accompanied them even during His many years of His personal ministry among them. In our early examination of their ministry we find them believing that they could stay awake when duty enjoined upon them to be vigilant and sober and above going to sleep at the post of duty, yet they all followed Peter, the spokesman for the bunch for them all, in going to sleep. Further, we find Peter desiring to erect an image in honor to both the prophets and to Moses along side of Jesus. He had to learn from the Master that there were not any exits nor detours on the highway of the Lord.

This highway is the Lord's work from its eternal design in the secret will of God, until the last traveller on it has reached their eternal resting place. The language is peculiar, and yet it is beautiful to think upon, and to meditate upon just the kind of travelers are to travel it. It is indeed delightful to think about when contrasted with the devious ways of poor sinners. It is a costly road, and the cost was all borne by the glorious Benefactor that sat down in counsel and in council before a move was actually made in its construction. He counted up the entire cost, not sparing anything for the security of those that travelled its course, even though that cost was all to be paid in suffering by the Man, Christ Jesus the Lord.

Come one and all of the poor sinners that are crippled in both feet, whose every faculty is failing, seemingly both in nature and in grace. View the landscape over dear reader. It is a peaceful looking road on which such way worn travellers would delight to pass through and out of this afflicted state in which all of the Lord's people are in. It seems important for us to notice the two fold sufficiency of the road. Travel on it is with-

out money and without price. First, all of the travellers were by nature like you and I. We were dead in sin; we were without God and without hope in the world. As by one man's sin, all of his posterity became the same, even so from the crown of our head to the sole of our feet, we were contaminated with it, even polluted and corrupted in every way. And yet, as we contemplate this highway being the way of holiness, and that no unclean thing shall go thereupon, our hand is laid over our mouth that we speak no more (Job 40: 4, 5).

As He communes with us and leads our mind into channels of His own devising, we are given here and there a glimpse of the wise Master Builder of the highway that His brethren are to travel from this dismal wilderness and desert land into the presense of all that heaven means, our view is eclipsed with the gospel declaration of the apostle Paul when he tells us that He was made of a woman, and made under the law. These two things to which He was made, sets forth the unequivocal truth that we could not have overcome either one of these two things which overcome our first parents and us in them. The apostle goes on to show exclusively that this having been made of a woman and under the law was in order to our redemption from under the law, and our adoption of sons. There is not any name given under heaven or among men whereby this could have come about any other way. This was, and it is, God's way of making poor sinners eligible to walk this highway of holiness.

The highway is there. The redeemed of the Lord are to travel on this highway. But there is a way or, if you will understand it better for me to say that there is a means of your travelling on and in this lovely way, let us, without any thought to what non travellers might say, say that there is a highway running every direction over this land, but if you expect to

get to your destination, you will need a way to travel the road. I did not borrow the way from anybody. The Holy Ghost declared in the most emphatic and comforting manner that there was, and is, both a highway, and there is a way, or that God, that designed and built the highway is also the cause or the supply or the reason that you get along on the road.

In connection with the double promise in this highway and way, let us ever remember that the children of God have more than just Christ. He that gave His children Christ, His own darling Son, has, from the same divine source, and by the same bequest, has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, and furthermore, that all things are yours, the world, life, death, things present, things to come, all, all are yours.

Let us notice, and be glad, and be thankful, that it is the way of holiness. What a lovely work is this, my soul. How rich is the grace of God. We are sinners. There is not any way for us to remove our sin and thus qualify to travel this throughway. How can an unclean thing ever have the privilege of travelling here. There is not any way for sinners to qualify. And yet how precious is the gospel of the grace of God. That grace is the complete satisfaction for all of our sins and is the only cleansing power that can give poor sinners the right to walk here on this holy road. How wonderful is the cleansing power of the shed blood of the Redeemer. No unclean thing is to go there, and yet, the Redeemed of the Lord are the only ones granted to walk there. Have you ever heard anything as gracious and as wonderful as that salvation wrought out on the rugged tree of the cross when Jesus of Nazareth died? This is the only name given under heaven among men whereby poor sinners must be saved.

God did not open this way for the unclean to go over. God did send His Son to

the cross to die for the sins of His people. God did not receive the work of any man in satisfying the law. Why? Because they were all violators of that law. None of them qualified for the opening of that book and looking thereon. There was not any way that any one of them could have answered the mandates of that law. Therefore, (for that reason) God raised them up another Prophet. He could hear them, and they could hear Him. The law could do no hearing of the Israelite and the Israelite could never comply with that divine law of God. But God, who is before all things, and by whom are all things, could and did, raise up another Prophet. One who was God and could hear, and who also was born of a woman and could die and live again, and thus open, and keep open, the highway of holiness.

The unclean shall not pass over it. What has got to be applied to a guilty sinner in order for he or she to be eligible to travel this highway to heaven? Will the washing of water alone do it? The answer is an emphatic no. Will a mixture of works of various kinds cleanse us so that we will gain admission to that joyous band of travellers? The answer to all of the plans and efforts of ours for gaining admission are null and void, for not the first one will be there. The requirement is strict. Not one shall be there save he and she that are cleansed from sin. There is only one cleansing recognizable. That is by the precious blood of the saviour of sinners (I Peter 1:19).

While under conviction for sin there will be fearful things that will frighten a little child of God. But when the Lord speaks peace to he or she there is a feeling of safety, a feeling of perfect complacency and satisfaction that all is well. These travellers have lost their independence, but they have been blessed with a placid calmness that enables them to trust in and to wait upon the Lord as their divine Protector, as their

daysman, as their salvation. There is plenty of reasons for this looking unto Him as their daysman. His care in ruling out and off from this Highway any unclean traveller that would contaminate or bring them into ill repute among fellow travellers is enough to cause trust and complacency. In fact, Mother Wisdom is the Designer of this Highway, and she looks well to the welfare of all travelling this road to glory. Everything for the welfare of those found thereon is provided. O yes, they do not know as they hope to know, but a lack of knowledge in the travellers on this highway are well provided for. If any lacks wisdom; if any feel to be simple in understanding as a little child is likely to do, let them ask for understanding (Pro. 9). Come, poor sinner, and rest with the saints of God on the highway of holiness that not only leads home, but furnishes every needed thing while journeying hitherwards.

Much a do has been paid to God's humble poor as they have plodded through this world on foot, often that being the only way that they could make a living and fill their appointments. How good it is to be a wayfaring man on this highway. The world would reckon him rather low on the rung of the ladder of success, but what a blessing to be reckoned as a fool, but to have been guided into the highway of holiness, wherein there is not any accidentally or erring or stumbling on to it. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

How beautiful and how precious is the love of God for His people. He has perfected a highway for them, and only He and them are on it. O my God, what love is this. He came from God and He is God. Every one that walks this road to glory, is clean by the imputed righteousness of our blessed Lord. There is not anything unclean on this highway. Just Jesus and His bride. His atoning blood has cleansed each and every traveller, but the cleansing stopped there. Not any

overlapping of the mercy. It reaches each one of them and puts each one on the road to glory, but when that is said, it stops right there.

Now let us look and wonder and adore at something else about this glorious highway. There is not any fear on that highway. Yes, dear aged brother and sister that are now facing old age and the accompanying ills that go with it. For lo these many more than forty years I have come to you year by year with the vigor of the years, but I, too, am facing these aged years when so many problems arise. Wife and I are now old, and we can not plan as we once did. O yes, I am full aware that I have been as helpless in the past seventy nine years as I am now as I am entering my eightieth year. Yes, indeed, I know all that, but there is a difference now. I have to listen to my children, and I have to listen to my doctor (who is good to me), and I have to listen at myself as I argue with myself, that I just cannot do as I used to do. But that is not all, I desire to go as have always gone, asking leave of no one save the Lord, and yet I am confronted with this weakening body. Yes, there is a sense in which many fears come up. Am I strong enough to undertake a trip like that? Many times I am confronted with things that I do not know what to do about. Yet, with this fact that has been my daily companion for a long number of years, I say that I am not filled with any fear about anything for myself or my brethren if we have been remembered by our gracious God to that end. There is not anything on this highway to molest and make afraid of any soldier of the cross. "No lion shall be there." It was by design that the lion was specified, for it is the king of the beast. The king of beasts will not be there, I am sure that Wisdom was not dealing with such things as animals of the forest, but with any devilish character called man, as we have had them in this natural existence. There is

not any kind of a being with the cunning and power of the lion that is going to make God's little ones wary of the way. There will not be a Herod nor a Herodias sneaking and lurking on that pleasant highway. What a serene journey. It is not any wonder that David said, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go up to the house of the Lord." No lion there, no ravenous beast shall go there upon, they shall not be found there. But come dear child, look at the pleasant description of the journeyers there. Only the redeemed will journey in that celestial highway.

As I write and meditate on the grandeur and the height and depth of what I am seeing, I am sure that there is not the slightest bit of indifference with my God as to this highway and what is to travel here and who is to enjoy and reap the benefits of it all. God is the God of purpose, He being the only Being in the universe that can purpose and bring it to pass. Before I go further, let me leave on the printed page an opportunity for you to present any being other than He, that is able to purpose and bring it to pass. Very well, I did not think that you could do it. Since you and I both must acknowledge that, is it feasible to think that He would purpose this highway for the redeemed to walk in and leave it indefinite as to whether a lion should walk there or not? Is it feasible to think this of Israel's God? No! No! Not at all. His determinate counsel undergirds and makes safe and sure every purpose that He has ever purposed. There will not be any lion on that highway because He purposed that they not be there. Equally true, and equally amazing, is every other promise made concerning this highway and those that travel there. If God could not purpose them out of the picture, then how could He purpose the safety of the travellers on the highway? If He did purpose that only the redeemed walk there, how did He purpose that the things harmful would

not be there, except that everything about the highway, those that walked there, those that did not walk there, and the assurance of them being there, unless all of the work be covered by His predestination? The Holy Ghost inspired the writer to say 'shall' in regard to the assurance of the travel and the destination of His people, and the same in re-

gard to things other than children of God.

May God give us grace and spiritual courage to contend for all of the truth in all the ways.

Yours in much weakness, but in hope,

ELDER W. D. GRIFFIN

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

WEATHERFORD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH



Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church was organized in the year of 1879 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia and is a member of the Staunton River Association. The Church is located at the Intersection of State Roads 760 and 763, about five miles Northwest of

Gretna, Virginia.

Their meeting time is each 4th Sunday morning at 11:00 O'clock. Elder O. K. Tench is the Pastor and has been a Faithful Servant here for 47 years. Elder Raymond Goad is Assistant Pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

CONCERNING THE ONES
THAT CRUCIFIED THE LORD
OF GLORY JESUS CHRIST
To The Signs of The Times

Man is not excusable for neglecting God's will of command. Pharaoh was wicked and therefore justly punishable for not obeying God's revealed will though 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 Pilate and the reprobate Jews were justly condemned for putting Christ to death. In as much as it was a most notorious breach of God's revealed will. They did no more than God's hand and his counsel - his secret, ordaining will determined before should be done. The wicked will be justly punished. Secret will belongs to God. The revealed will belongs to the Lord's children. Even the apostles of our Lord when he was being crucified did not understand the purpose of God in it. They did not know it was necessary that Christ must suffer and enter into his glory. They had earthly hopes of the restoration of an earthly kingdom. It would appear to human reasoning that with the prophacy concerning the suffering of Christ the prophets declaring before his birth the place of it, the foretelling of manner of his death that a bone of him should not be broken. That they should look on him whom they had pierced. That for his garments they should cast lots. That they would have understood the things. But the Holy Ghost must reveal these things. The carnal mind is always contrary to truth. The apostles were much stronger in predestination after the day of the pentecost. (Taken from D.V.S.) And Luke also says, "Then he took unto him the twelve and said unto them. Behold! We go up to Jerusalem and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles. And shall be mocked, and spitted on: And they shall scourage him. And put him to death: And the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: And this saying was hid from them. Neither knew they the things which was spoken. Then said Jesus unto his disciples and apostles that thought that this should not be done, forgive them Father, for they know not

what they do. They didn't think that Jesus should be curcified. Jesus never prayed for the wicked or for the world but for them the Father gave him out of the world."

In Daniel 12:8 "And I heard. But I understood not: Then said I, O my Lord. What shall be the end of these things? And he said. Go thy way Daniel: For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified and made white. And tried: But the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." You can trace the wicked all the way from Cane through Esau through the ones that killed the Lord and Savior, the Son of God.

I like when writing or preaching that they would let me know just where they stand on these things. I have heard several that go close to Judas, then go around an not let you know where they stood. I don't believe you will have to guess where I stand on this subject. Knowing that it is possible to be deceived.

I Thes. 2nd Chapter, verses 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 puts it this way. Beginning at the 11 to 16 verses. "As ye know how we exhorted and comfort and charged everyone of you as a father doth his children that ye would walk worthy of God. Who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also, thank we God without ceasing because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye recieved it not as the word of men but as it is in truth. The word of God. Which effectually worketh also in you that believe. For ye, brethren became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen even as they have of the Jews. Now pay attention to this fifteenth verse - Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets and have persecuted us and they pleased not God

and are contrary to all men. 16 verse forbidding us to speak to the gentiles that they might be saved. To fill up their sins always for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. You notice we said above that the wrath had come upon them which was the wrath of God, not man.

Romans 1: 18 speaks of the wrath which says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness was speaking of those pharisees Jews and gentiles and all that had to do with the murdering of the Lord Jesus.

In Acts 7: 52 says which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted. And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the just one of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers. In Rev. 18: 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth. If it was all that was slain upon the earth, was not the Christ slain upon the earth.

Now let us look at the 8 chapter of John. It would do well to read the whole chapter but will only write a few verses. 8: 38, I speak that which I have seen with my Father and ye do that which ye have seen with your Father. In verse 40 - But now you seek to kill me. A man that has told you the truth which have heard of God: This did not Abraham. You do the deeds of your Father. Then say they to him we be not born of fornication; we have one Father. Even God Jesus said unto them if God were your Father ye would love me. Verse 43, Why do ye not understand my speech even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your Father the devil and the lust of your Father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own for he is a liar and the father of it.

Verse 47 says, he that is of God heareth God's words. ye therefore hear them not because ye are not of God. I would like to know how much more any one that has received a hope in Jesus would need to hear. That those that killed the Lord Jesus Christ was not his people. They continued to kill the prophets. They beat Paul the Apostle, threw him out for dead long after they killed Jesus. Paul says you are the ones that killed the prince of peace and desired a murderer. You would do well to read the whole 20th chapter of Luke for that 20th chapter treats on this subject. The 20th chapter, 9th verse says, "Then began he to speak to the people this parable: A certain man planted a vineyard and let it forth to husbandmen and went into a far country for a long time and at season he sent a servant to the husbandmen that they should give him of the vineyard but the husbandmen beat him and sent him away empty." So they sent others, some they beat, some they killed until at last he sent his beloved son. It may be they will reverence him when they see him. Verses 15-17 says, "So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. What therefore shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen and shall give the vineyard to others and when they heard it they said, God forbid, and he beheld them and said, what is this then that is written, the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? And the chief priest and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him. And they feared the people for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them and they watched him and sent forth spies. They feared the people, not God. The scripture says the ones that crucified the Lord of Glory was the wicked. If you deny the separation you have denied the election and predestination, fore knowledge, and power of almighty God and

our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. I know that this is a very controversial subject with some of our people but not so much as it was some few years ago.

In 22 Psalms, 16 verse says in types and shadow don't you think? 16 verse says, "For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me, they part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture." Sure seems very plain to me that he was crucified for his people but not by them.

John 6: 64, "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus from the beginning knew who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." So you see he said they, meaning more than one, not just Judas. In Acts 4: 25-29 says, "Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, why did the heathen rage and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus whom thou has annointed. Both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word." In this 4-26 Acts, they were called heathens. Now pray tell me what becomes of the heathen? You know, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, crucified and slain these wicked men were raised up for this very purpose just as Pharoah was. All things were foreordained and predestinated. Whatsoever come to pass. In Acts 5: 27-29 says: "And when they had brought them, they set them before

the consel, and the high priest asked them, saying, did not we strictly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men." Now I know that this is a very controversial subject and may wish I had never written it. There is so much more on this subject that could be said but this is what it is to me. If I send this to be published, please do what you will with it. Thank you.

We have here in Florida what is called Old Baptist, but I call them Universalists because they don't have any separation between the wicked and the sinner. They take into the covenant with the elect, all those that killed the Lord Jesus Christ, Judas also, and Esau, Cane, which are the wicked. To do that where would your separation be? You would have Universalists, which would be a no hell doctrine. Universal means that all would go to the same place. Some thought it an awful thing to say that God was the author of sin. Rightly so, so do I, but I had just as well say that he was the author of sin as to say that God loved the wicked. He didn't love Esau, did he? I believe that God made the devil to be the author of Sin, but to say he, God, loved the wicked would be to say God loved the devil, which is the most wicked thing in the world. So you see sometimes, you can be holding to one thing and be just as wrong on another. Those that killed the Lord, the Bible says was the wicked. Now we know that God's elect has done wicked acts, but they were not of that wicked one. Now to put things where they belong would be to put the wicked all on the left hand and the elect on the right hand. That would clean things up where they belong and not try to put the wicked and the righteous all together. I may be talking to hard for some, but not

as I see it. Now I know that we have some among us that try to say that Jesus prayed for them that crucified the Lord of Glory, but the apostles and those that stood afar off and wept thought that that shouldn't be done, didn't know what they were doing, and the Lord of Glory said forgive them Father for they know not what they do. Jesus prayed not for the world but for them that the Father gave him out of the world, not for the wicked.

I could write this much more, but I don't think it would be necessary. Will close for now. Come to see us when you can.

Yours in hope,
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ARTICLES

THE LORD'S PEOPLE

Some Of Their Characteristic
Marks, Blessings, &c.

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends:

That there is a people peculiarly the Lord's people, in distinction from a people that are not, is abundantly proven by the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments. That the Lord has

chosen this people for himself out of all kindreds, tongues and nations, and that they should by the Holy Spirit be called out from the world and separated unto himself, and live in this world of sin and sorrow in all periods of time, to the praise of his glorious grace, is also plainly taught. This people is also so plainly described, and the marks which characterize them, together with the forces with which they must ever be at war, are so plainly set forth in the pages of holy writ, that we need not mistake when we read. The holy Spirit has moved men to declare, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." "I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" "Chosen us in him (Christ) that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty and not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty,

and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are." "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful." "And after this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. *** And he said unto me, these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The foregoing quotations from several different inspired writers certainly is sufficient to sustain the remarks preceding them, though only a small portion of what might be quoted. This people God has most wonderfully blessed, and it is of these blessings, as provided by God the Father in his eternal purpose, and given them in his Son before the foundation of the world, and the possession and enjoyment of them in their personal experience of them, I wish more particularly to speak in this letter. Paul the apostle said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him." From this we learn that the source of all spiritual blessings in Christ, and that they are bestowed according to God's choice of the recipient in Christ before the foundation of the world. O, how manifold and wonderful are the blessings of God in Christ. They are all in Christ, not one ever came from any other source. Understanding this we may truly sing with the poet,

*"Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."*

To their spiritual David and his people identified with him, the covenant promise of the Father is, "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. 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 transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me."

The visitation of the rod, and the stripes due for the transgressions of his people, was brought to bear upon their blessed covenant head, Jesus Christ, when he hung upon the bloody cross. So the prophet Isaiah could say, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." His people are called members of his body, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. Thus identified with him each member of his body must experience in some measure the pain and suffering of the Head, and "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." And to his people it is said, "For unto you it is given in behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Also, "If we suffer we shall also reign with him."

So then if we are his, every particle of suffering we endure for Jesus' sake, or on account of him, or because we are his, is a God provided and given blessing in behalf of Christ. Even the measure of chastisements that falls to our lot as a member of his body, is a covenant blessing of God, and "No chastisement for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, but afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby." All his children must endure chastisement in some measure, for, "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Chastisements truly bring grief and sorrow, but who among all the saints would want to be without the evidence they afford, or without the peaceable fruits they yield? How the children sometimes complain and writhe under the rod, and when some grievous trouble comes upon them, they feel to say like Jacob of old, "All these things are against me." When in the course of time this very thing has turned their mind again to the Lord, and they are brought down at his feet in humble and loving submission. To-day it became necessary for me to chastise a little grandchild for waywardness and disobedience. The desired effect was soon realized. An expression of willingness was given to do as required, and in a short time she came into the room where I was, and putting her arms around my neck said, "Pa, I won't be bad any more." Every affliction, grief and sorrow, that comes upon his children according to God's purpose and promise, are destined to work together with all things else for their good, and not one among all these things comes to them by chance. If his people are brought low down in grief and sorrow, the Lord in his own way and time lifts them up and comforts them. If they become idolatrous, or in any way too highly exalted, in his own way and time he brings them down,

weans them from their idols, and this all according to his covenant promise in Christ. It is written, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Jesus was ever, is now and ever will be the Savior, and the only Savior of his people. "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." What a blessed people! What a wonderful Redeemer and Savior! He by whom and for whom the worlds were created, the possessor of all things, having all power in heaven and on earth, holding in his own hand even the keys of death and of hell. Well and truly was it said by one of old, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency; and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." And again, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." This people have the promise of God that he will never leave them nor forsake them. In every sorrow, trial and temptation, though he seems to tarry long, yet will he manifest himself as their Comforter and Deliverer. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God." "He is not slack concerning his promises to us as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any (of us) should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Then I would say to the poor, tempted, afflicted and sorrowing one, take courage from the foregoing considerations, no matter what the nature, or what you may consider the cause of your troubles. Your Savior is able to save you out of all your troubles, and from all your sins. All

his wisdom and power and riches is engaged in your behalf, and his promise is to you. Is not the very groanings of your spirit, prayer that he will save you from your troubles, from sin, from self? And is it not a fact that languishing on the bed of affliction, or a heavy sorrow resting on your heart, or smarting under the rod, you feel welling up in your heart an earnest desire for a resigned spirit that you may be able to say, "Thy will be done"? I say again, take courage, for no one but a heavenborn subject ever felt this longing desire towards God. You are admonished to "Look to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith." He endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. Think on him, "lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Think of the anguish of soul he endured in the garden of Gethsemane. As a consequence the sweat rolled off of him as it were great drops of blood. The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. Although the earth and the fullness thereof was his, it was not his to use as the rich of this world, the kings and nobles did. But both the world, its wealth, and those who for the time had it in possession, were his. So of his people the apostle encouragingly says, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

I have witnessed a few times in life, languishing upon beds of disease and bodily suffering some of the most humble, devoted and spiritual minded of the Lord's people. They seemed to have been brought into close fellowship with their Lord. What a contrast I have been made to see between their condition of mind and my own; quite as much apparently as between our bodily health. I have been made to realize this especially in reading the writings of the late Mary Parker. So often in the furnace of afflic-

tion God's children are enjoying the richest of his blessings. In all our doubts, perplexities, afflictions, temptations and trials, we learn by experience that our salvation is not in our own hands; that our Lord alone can save. "By grace are (not were) ye saved." So our salvation even in time is not by works of righteousness which we can do, but by grace, "through faith, and that not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God." Afflictions, sorrows, trials and temptations, go largely to make up the experience of this life, as a necessary (and I believe a purposed) preparation to enable us to sing the final song of all the redeemed, "Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." Such is the condition then of the Lord's poor and afflicted in this life, by reason of foes within and without, that "If in this life only we have hope in Christ Jesus, we are of all men most miserable." But there is a time and place when and where sorrow and sighing shall be felt and known no more forever. The little foretastes of love and joy felt here, earnestness of our inheritance beyond, shall burst in the full blaze of fruition beyond this veil of sorrows, perplexities, doubts and fears. Although "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," yet the strongest desire we have while sojourning here is to be realized, viz: to be like our blessed Lord. Our vile body is to be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. Yes, I do believe that there is a sphere of state of being beyond this life of turmoil, sin and sorrow, where the redeemed of the Lord shall be with and like Jesus, and shall be gathered in one great blood-washed throng, to praise their Redeemer Lord throughout the ceaseless ages of an unbounded eternity, unmolested by sin or any of its consequences.

These things, though feebly expressed. I believe to be true of the Lord and

his people, whether I am one of them or not.

In the hope that I am not mistaken in my hope, I am yours in fellowship,

H. B. JONES.

In the first place, at the beginning of this writing, I desire to impress it very clearly upon every readers mind, that in the writing which follows, there is the total absence of any intent in both my mind and heart, to even slightly indicate or infer of even the minutest particle of the excusing of any of mankind for his or her sinful weakenedness; but rather instead, to the uppermost extremity, may both our minds and hearts never lose sight of this one Holy true fact of truth, and that is that the three-in-one God does all the good and Holy things; and that mankind does all the sinful and wicked things. While at the same time (God willing), let us never lose sight of this very fact of truth also—and that is in all time for this world to stand, nothing has ever or shall ever take place, what did ever come as any surprise whatsoever to the “Almighty God,” and this applies assuredly also to time, place, and the very manner in which it all came about, and furthermore all what has any direct or indirect connection with it, and all resultings what come from it.

It is that evil intent, within both the mind and heart of mankind, while performing an act, wherein lieth the whole of the wickedness concerning such performance; therefore, the transgression of “God’s Holy Law” lieth entirely and only within that evil intent which were in mankinds mind and heart, while so performing that act. In other words, manking meant it to accomplish his evil or wicked purpose.

Just as it were in both the mind and heart of Joseph’s brethren, when they

sold him to the Egyptians, their only purpose was an evil and wicked one; while God’s purpose in the whole matter was and is to accomplish His Holy purpose; one being surely to save much people alive; and that assuredly to be in and only in His way and manner and time and place. And my friends, I do feel and believe with all my heart and soul, that is the sum total of how every act and performance ever performed in this time world is, where man in his own wicked nature is involved, mans intent and purpose is evil and wicked; while God’s intent and purpose in and for the whole matter is good and Holy. If God so will, then His greatness and goodness is the one and only thing I can rightly boast of.

Mankind has never and shall never, bring his evil and wicked intent and purpose into its ultimate and final accomplishment and conclusion. But the God in whom is my hope and trust, will surely use all things what take place in all time for this world to stand, for to bring untimate conclusion and final consumation and accomplishment of His every purpose in and for so having created this world in the first place.

You see, this great and Holy God of whom I speak, is the One and only true and Holy and Almighty, all in all Three-In-One eternal unchanging and everlasting God who holds and controls all power both in heaven and earth, for which can be and is used to furnish every ounce of strength for every thought of every mind and every movement of every body both great and small, in all time for this world to stand. And not only that, my friends, but all this time world and the fullness thereof ever has been and is entirely and wholly dependent upon this “God”, even for its very existance, much less for its every movement while here. So you see my friends, there never has been and never shall be but just one and only just one thing, of which mankind could ever RIGHTLY boast of (if God

willing), and that is of His "God" greatness. And so my friends, in order to be consistent with my feelings and belief as above stated, is it so great a wonder that I do most assuredly believe in the absolute predestination of ALL things by this great merciful and almighty God.

And so therein, is left no room or opening for any one of mankind to render any praise of himself or another for anything. For without His furnishings, we can neither exist nor do any-thing. I have no doubt but that God's will be done. I just desire that I might be given a willingness that His will be done. But I feel to know for a certainty, that it is impossible for me, except that so be His pleasure.

It seems to me, that in order for one to feel that any or all of satan's and man-kinds sinful meanness and wickedness, could ever in any way shape or form, either hinder, hasten, stop or delay even for one trillionth of a second, God' plan and purpose in and for so having created this world and the fullness thereof; or that any or all has ever come as any degree of a surprise to God, or has to even the minutest degree brought about any change to God's mind or purpose; then that one who believes that such could ever be possible, must as an absolute necessity, also (in order to be consistent in his or her belief) believe that at some point in time and circumstances, satan or the devil must have had more power than God.

If a man should take all his worldly riches and give them to the poor widows and orphans; can that man of himself be (rightly) praised? I say no, ten-thousand times no. Now why do I say no? I feel first of all, that it is by reason of God's grace and mercy unto this poor and self helpless sinner, I could feel or say such. For I feel that within that process whereby I received these blessed gifts. I were given to feel and believe that after all, who beside this great and merciful "God" created and made my body and brain and

furnish every ounce of strength necessary for its every function; and furthermore that His every creation was and is created perfect, in that it shall surely function to exactness in such manner, time and place, as to fulfill that very and exact purpose for which He made and created it for and to do in His having created it for in the first place. And my friends, there just can be no variation, slip-up, hastening or delay in that process of its every function, as was in both His mind and purpose while creating and making all things. And so now my friends; In as much as be in accord with His Holy will, may we ever be kept in remembrance of this very one thing—that each and every instance we were ever able to even think or feel or speak of His greatness and goodness, or able to pray unto Him for mercy; we were able to do so only by reason this great and merciful Three-In-One-God did ENABLE us so to do, and that only by reason it was His pleasure so to do. His willingness to, and pleasure in, so ENABLING us to do these things, is that very and only great cause of our every ability so to do. He just simply is our All in All. And that just simply is the Holy truth as it is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I just feel to hope I am thankful unto God, that He is in no need of mine or others help, and so therefore, neither allows nor accepts any help from mankind in the operation of His government. Because, for me to feel and believe otherwise, my sweet and precious hope would be completely gone.

But, just so long as one still feels or believes, even to the slightest degree, that they or any other of mankind has ever or could ever do anything, even to the most minute degree, to in any way shape or form, either hasten, hinder, alter or help in the operation of God's government; then he nor she will ever fully concede to that principle under which unalterably declares of the abso-

lute predestination of ALL-things, by this merciful and almighty God. For this Predestination of "God" I have spoken of; allows of absolutely no confidence in the fleshly mankind; as having anything to do with or pertaining to the Holy Spiritual things of the true and living God and Lord and His Church.

In traveling around in this world we see oh so very many pictures, plaques, and monuments too, the expression of great accomplishments (so called) of different members of the human race; even in and around different church meeting houses, even some old or primitive Baptist meeting houses (which some call Churches).

But just so as The Lord God has said—vengeance is Mine, so does all praise rightfully belong to and only to Him.

And so, any and all plaques or otherwise expressions of praise toward any one or more of mankind for their accomplishments, can be and is no more of true worth than that of filthy rags. For otherwise the "Three-In-One God" could not be an All-in-All God.

Whenever it be and is God's pleasure to speak unto His children, thru the mouth of one of His Ordained Ministers, or a word of comfort thru the mouth of any one of His Children unto another; does this in any way shape or form justify the receiver of this comfort from those words, to render one iota of praise unto that one from whose lips those words of comfort came, as if they themselves helped in any manner, in originating or delivering of those words unto ones poor soul? I say no, ten thousand times no. For to my mind and heart that would be like subtracting (at the very least) a portion of that whole honor of which God is fully and wholly and Holy justified in receiving.

Now this is not to in any way or manner subtract from that deep and abiding love one brother is to have for

another, by reason of what one has seen and felt of the manifestation of the Lord' working within one of his Brethren.

Written By: Troy Shepard

S R 1058

Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Sent in by Elder Henry Jones

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE X. 25-27

"And who is my neighbor?"

This question was asked by a lawyer who desired to justify himself, and who previously, in answer to the interrogation from Jesus, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" had said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And Jesus answered him, "Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." We believe that no man but Jesus ever kept that wonderful commandment, and though Jesus, after showing who was neighbor to the man fallen among thieves, said, "Go, and do thou likewise." yet neither the lawyer nor any other man of himself but Jesus could play the neighbor's part. Only Jesus loved the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength, and with all his mind, and his neighbor as himself. He laid down his life for his neighbor. In considering the parable of the man fallen among thieves we believe Jesus is setting forth a great truth for the comfort and edification of his people. The parable begins, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." This certain man does not represent Adam before he fell, nor

does it represent the natural man after the fall, for he is dead, not half dead, but it represents a child of God, one who is in a covenant, the covenant of grace which is ordered in all things and sure. By Jerusalem is meant that Jerusalem above which is the mother of us all. Thus this certain man is of that number that no man can number and we believe that he has tasted that the Lord is gracious, but for some reason not explained in the parable, he went from Jerusalem to Jericho. Before we dwell upon that, we would give our view of what Jericho means. In the early history of Israel, we come across a city named Jericho, it was on its walls that Rahab lived, and it was there that she hid the spies sent out by Joshua and that city fell before Israel at the sound of the trumpet and the shout of the people. It was from that city that the wedge of gold and the Babylonish garment were taken by Achan, which offence brought disaster upon Israel at the first attack upon the town of Ai. Poor Rahab and her household were saved, but the city and all therein were put to the sword and Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, "Cursed be the man before the Lord, that raiseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." We find in the dark and cloudy days of Ahab, that wicked king of Israel, that Hiel, a Bethelite, built Jericho. He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram, his first-born and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segub. Abiram means father of height, pride and lordliness, and Segub has a similar meaning. Thus we notice that the man who built Jericho was cursed before the Lord and the city was built upon what proceeded from him, his first-born, the father of height, pride and lordliness, and it sets forth a lordly fleshly religion which glories in self and self-aggrandizement. Thus it is from Jerusalem to Jeri-

cho that the certain man goes down. The prophet wrote, All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way. The Galatians began in the Spirit and wanted to be made perfect in the flesh; in other words, they went down to Jericho and fell among thieves. Many of the saints to-day began well, we cannot question that the work of the Spirit has been begun in them, yet we find them lured by the fragrance of Jericho. (Jericho means fragrance, but it is not the fragrance of the garden of God, but of creature excellency, worldliness and vain glory.) They lose their steadfastness and ere, long find themselves in the company of thieves. It is a child of God who can be robbed and spoiled. A worldling, whether professor or profane, has nothing, he is already dead, but a child of God who looks to the flesh is leaving, in his mind and thought, the security of the blessed city whose builder and maker is God. The walls of Jerusalem are secure, no power can overthrow them, outside are thieves and robbers. In the shalls and wills of Jehovah the child of God is secure, but men go down, and as surely as they do they fall among thieves. Sometimes the thieves are men who have been esteemed as Elders in the church. It is true they are called servants of God, but every time they speak in the name of the Lord they rob God, they belittle his word and would strip him of his power and glory. They take their knives, like the prophets of Baal, but instead of cutting themselves they cut and hack at the truth of God and would teach a righteousness of the flesh, at the same time stripping God's dear saints of raiment that God his Father has provided for them. Thus such thieves grieve and wound when they are through with their work, the child of God, mangled and mauled by them, is left half dead. Such preachers, though going by the scriptural name of Elders, belong to the den of thieves, and nothing puts

such to flight but a "Thus saith the Lord." Many years ago in our native village of Rowley Regis, England, there was an old saint, named Betty Rollinson, who had often been stripped and wounded by such thieves, and one day when a man of God stood up in that strange place and preached the truth she saw the people begin to get up and walk out, and at last, stamping her crutches on the floor, she said, "Fly, fly, this is the gospel." Many suffer at the hand of false preachers who are thieves, and the thief cometh not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. They hate predestination because it puts God above men, devils or sin, and as the word says, they only consult to cast Him down from His excellency, they delight in lies. There are many other ways that this certain man, in his journey, will fall among thieves. For there are those that will be rich, as Paul tells in 1 Timothy vi. 9, 10: But they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some covet after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Always, as we follow after the flesh, we find that our joy and peace are gone, for the flesh is under a curse, and when our soul is lifted up in us we are not walking by faith. This certain man was so stripped and so wounded that he was left half dead. How good it is that it does not read he was left quite dead. That would not be true, for though men and devils aim to kill they cannot exceed our Father's will. True all his joy was gone, he was stripped, yes, and wounded sore, yet there was still life there. The devil could not touch Job's life; if he could have done so he certainly would, but God's purpose is above, in and through all things that come to pass and it is for the lifting of Jesus on high. "And by chance there

came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." Thus we see both the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side, giving no word of comfort, binding up none of his wounds. The priest, as a representative of the moral law, and the Levite, of the ceremonial law, neither could nor would minister to such an one. The law shows up an offense and can only be on the side of those who keep it. The law is not merciful, even though one is stripped and wounded. Neither the law nor those who administer it could clothe the naked guilty soul or ease the pain of those wounded that sin had made. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was." Jesus was a son of Abraham, but the Jews despised him, and in hating would call him a Samaritan, and we believe Jesus is that certain Samaritan, who as he journeyed, came that way. By man came disobedience, by man, the man Christ Jesus, came obedience. He came that way, he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. As he journeyed he came where he was. He could not get up and go to Jesus, but Jesus came where he was. Oh, what a blessed Lord Jesus we have, to come when we least deserve him, but just when we need him the most. "And when he saw him." Jesus had seen him all the time, even when the thieves were stripping him, and such power had he that not one of them could have touched the poor erring man if Jesus had said no, but this poor erring man must know the kindness, love and condescension of Jesus, therefore the thieves are there, all their malice and rage, all their cruelty and crime wreaked upon him, will, in the mercy of God, make the coming of this certain Samaritan the most wonderful event in the erring man's life. He did not pass him by. He never has, he

never will. He went to him. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. He did not journey for those who have never been stripped, never been wounded, never sinned. He did not come for little sinners, but all God's people are big sinners, vile worms they feel themselves to be, and he came for such.

"And he went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine." This is the Lord's work, it has not been given to mortal man of himself to bind up the wounds of his brother, but Jesus does. You may wound your brother, and you should confess your sorrow for it, but it is Jesus only that binds up the wound, pouring in oil and wine, the oil of joy and the wine of the gospel, to stimulate and warm his poor heart and enable him to forget his poverty.

"And set him on his own beast." Such treatment would indeed revive his fainting soul and make him to admire amazing grace for saving a wretch like him, He "set him on his own beast." Although this poor man had been very active in sin, he was passive in the hands and mercy of the good Samaritan. This beast then represents just the means or way that Christ has of carrying his poor erring people. It is not man's way. Some may refer to this beast as representing the minister of the gospel; we do not feel that it matters. It was the Samaritan's way and the very beast he himself rode on, that this poor wounded man had to ride. In his majesty Jesus rode prosperously, and we believe that it is Jesus that raises us up, enables us to go forward in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of our God. He rides a white horse, the white horse of the gospel, and his people are raised, free from condemnation, pure and white, and he has placed them there.

"And brought him to an inn, and took care of him." Churches of Christ here in this world are like inns placed at convenient places along the way for the rest and refreshment of the weary travellers.

A person who is at home in the world will not need such a place, but it is to such places Jesus brings his poor afflicted saints. Only Jesus can bring them, if he does not bring them they are in their wrong place and will soon show it. In this inn there is a bed of comfort for such an one, it is the love of God, and such can and do sing, "Father, we rest in thy love."

"And took care of him." Such was his mercy when he brought him there that he did not commit his care to any other while he was with him. With us, when he brought us to his people, it was one of the days of the Son of man, and perfect love cast out fear. He gave us sips of his love and we partook of the fatted calf. He brought forth the best robe, and took care of all our needs, and he left us in the hands of our brethren, having given the Elder of the church, who is the host of the inn, two pence, currency not of the world but of the Lord's people, each made in the same value for the comfort of the saints and the work of the ministry, that the man of God, the host, might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. These two pence imply that Jesus has given his servant (and he only has the power to give) a faith in both the New and Old Testaments, that they are the very word of God, each having his likeness, the likeness of Jesus upon them, and both are for the comfort and edification of the saints. Thus the host, or Elder, has nothing from the Master in which to traffic but his word, or the two pence. So Paul told Timothy to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. This was a gift, it was not a bargain, neither did the host set the price, and by this gift the host set the price, and by this gift the host was bound as a steward of the manifold mysteries of God to be faithful to his charge. Take "care of him." Feed the flock of God over which the Holy

Ghost has made you overseers. Take care of them as those who shall give an accounting. Feed them, encourage them, cheer them, wash their feet. Preach the word, and as you spend and are spent be sure of this, that whatever they are indebted to you, Jesus will make up when he comes again. This coming again to some may mean when he shall descend from heaven with a shout, but we here are disposed to suggest that he does in Spirit come into our midst from time to time and then the things that are wanting are easily numbered. If we are weary in his service, if we are tired, because of many cares, if we are grieved because of some slight, or because brethren have been unkind (and brethren when in the flesh can be very unkind), whatever it may be, even if we have been fretting under the yoke, or rebellious at the cross, when he comes he makes amends for all. Thus the priest and the Levite, who were teachers of the law, could not be called neighbors to this man, neither is he who teaches morality to-day a comfort to God's erring children, for morality can never take the place of the work of God's Spirit within, nor can the one who seeks to justify himself play the neighbor's part. It is Jesus who is the neighbor and only the Spirit of Jesus Christ in us will enable us to restore an erring brother, the Spirit of Christ will enable us to consider ourselves lest we be tempted. The wicked, tempting, self-justifying spirit that the lawyer possessed, which sometimes may be found in brethren, can no more love his neighbor than he can love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind. Those who profess the name of Jesus Christ also profess that they are led by the Spirit, but one can get very proud, haughty and hardened when in the flesh. How fearful it is when we consider the hardness of the heart of man, who, while forgiven the ten thousand talents he owed, will lay hands on

the throat of a fellow-servant who owes him a hundred pence, saying, pay me that thou owest. Brethren, this ought not so to be, for even if it is the host of the inn, he could not take from the poor, wounded, robbed man, for he had not anything, but, "When I come again, I will repay thee." So whatever care or sorrow the brethren may cause us, when Jesus comes into our midst he will give full recompense. The apostle John says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us (who are poor, miserable, erring wretches, needing mercy every hour); and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Brethren can do very wrong. Who has not? Let us examine ourselves. It is only with a spirit that Christ gives that we can be merciful. It is mercy that melts a heart of stone. Mercy was the one thing that the poor publican craved. He smote upon his breast, he did not justify himself, but Jesus lifted him up and took him under his care and keeping; in other words, he justified him. Yes, stripped and spoiled as we often are, wounded, sick and sore, what do we crave but mercy? The mercy of the brethren, the mercy of God, and he who is humbled under the mighty power of God to the lowest of the low, he then can cheer others, and does bind up their wounds, he is enabled by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, with the word of the Lord to bind up the brokenhearted. After he has done all, so humble is he and lowly in heart that he says. What have I done? It is the Lord, for it is in him and through him that his children do any good thing.

Elder George Ruston

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them"

Mat. 7:12

CONTRIBUTIONS

May 1985

Mr. & Mrs. R.H. Gauldin, NC.	\$ 5.00
James W. Arrington, NC.	2.00
In memory Rufus C. Roberson, LA.	15.00
Mrs. Nannie Arrington, VA.	2.00
Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL.	2.00
Mrs. Gaye A. Thompson, VA.	5.00
Mrs. Lora B. Tullos, AR.	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. Ira Bell, VA.	5.00
Bryan L. Shockley, MD.	10.00
John F. Simpson, FL.	7.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX.	5.00
Floyd Oakley, AR.	1.00
Mrs. Elva Spikes, OR.	2.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA.	50.00
Mrs. Julia Ada, MD.	2.00
Mr. & Mrs. Krewatch, MD.	
In memory Eld. D.V. Spangler..	35.00
Mrs. E.R. Graves, AL.	5.00
Henry B. Shockley, MD.	7.00
Mrs. Lillian Gilliam, NC.	5.00
William E. Mitchell, VA.	2.00

MEETINGS

PIG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Pig River Association will be held, the Lord willing, the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before (August 2, 3 & 4, 1985).

Rocky Mount is the Host for this setting of the Association.

The meeting place will be Rocky Mount High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Come into Rocky Mount on 220 Highway and exit onto Highway 40 going west. Take second Street to left to the High School.

We invite all our Brethren and Sisters

that are in peace and good standing at home to seat with us.

Jammie E. Cooper
Association Clerk

SOUTH ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION

The next Session of the Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association will Convene with Pilgrim Rest Church, September 13-15, 1985.

Take highway 167, five miles north of Fordyce, Ark. and turn left on highway 273, the Church is located one-half mile on the left.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder J.C. Townley, Moderator
Frances Townley, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

If God be willing, the next session of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Union Church beginning on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September, (Sept. 20, 21, 22), and continue three days.

Union Church is located three miles north-east of Linville, La. and near Marion, La.

All who love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ are welcome.

If more information is needed, please call or write:

Clifford Wilbanks
217 Bastrop Drive
Monroe, La. 71203
Dial 318-343-5473

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Primitive Baptist Association is to convene, the Lord willing, with the Church at Long Branch, first Sunday in September, 1985, beginning on Friday & Saturday before.

The Church is located on Highway No. 40, approximately 9 miles west of Ferrum, Virginia.

We look forward to meeting the Saints there.

Yours in Hope,
Elder Amos I. Hash

BELL SPUR MEETING

Pursuant to the request of Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, County of Carroll, a Presbytery met 2:00 P.M., April 20, 1985 at Bell Spur for the examination of Brother Alan Terry, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Amos I. Hash. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Amos I. Hash, Hale Terry, Larry Hollandsworth and Licente Carl Terry. Deacons listed below:

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Amos I. Hash as Moderator and Claude R. Hopkins as Clerk. Elder Larry Hollandsworth was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Carl Terry having been duly appointed spokesman by Bell Spur Church, delivered Brother Alan Terry to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Larry Hollandsworth using scripture from Acts 6th. Chapter. The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the

candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Hale Terry. Elder Larry Hollandsworth delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference was Acts 6th. Chapter.

The Moderator asked Bell Spur Church if the church approved the work of the Presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother Alan Terry and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Alan Terry was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Bell Spur Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and adopted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Deacons present

C. T. Conner	Grover Semones
J. Nelson Bryant	Vance Duncan
T. G. Lovell	H. D. Ingram
C. R. Childress	R. L. Wright
L. W. Nichols	Carl Terry
Claude R. Hopkins	

Elder Amos I. Hash, Moderator
Deacon Claude R. Hopkins, Clerk

FALLS OF THE TAR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH Rocky Mount, North Carolina

Ordination of Brother Clyde DeBow to the full work of the Gospel Ministry, and Brothers James Arrington and Arnold Rasmussen as Deacons.

A Presbytery was called consisting of Elder D. B. Stokes, Elder Bill Everette, Elder Paul R. Lamb, Sr. and Deacons S. B. Brown, Pete Smith, Hassell Allen, Clyde Pridgen, M. D. Simmons, Jr., Marcus Armstrong, Milton Fountain, Thelbert Hocutt, Odis Daughtridge, Thomas Pennington, and M. D. Sim-

mons, Sr.

The Presbytery was called into conference. Conference was opened with praise and prayer by Elder Everette.

A motion was made and carried for Elder Stokes to sit as Moderator.

A motion was made and carried for Sister Frances Arrington to serve as Clerk.

The candidates were presented to the Presbytery by Deacons Clyde Pridgen and Marcus Armstrong of the Falls of Tar River Church.

Elder Stokes asked the Church if it was agreed to set Brother DeBow apart as a Minister and Brothers Arrington and Rasmussen as Deacons. It was unanimously agreed.

Elder Lamb and Elder Everette had no charge to make to the candidates.

Elder Stokes asked Brothers Arrington and Rasmussen what they understood their duty as a Deacon to be. They answered, "to be a servant to the Church and act in a Godly manner." Elder Stokes told them to make decisions by the Lord's guidance and serve the people always with a "Thus saith the Lord" attitude. Whoever your Pastor may be, always see that he is taken care of, and if the church does not, reprimand them if needful. A servant is worthy of his hire. He asked the members not to tie their hands.

To Brother DeBow Elder Stokes said; "Your life will not be your own. You cannot keep all arrangements. You may not always have a mind to go, but remember the ones who need you. You can sing praises to God wherever there are but a few as well as if there are many. Go as you are called by the Holy Spirit. Go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel wherever you have the opportunity. Look to the word of God when you are in trouble. The One who called our disciples called us. To Sister DeBow he said to do the best you can. You will find joy from time to time, but the way will be hard. Elder Stokes read from the book of St.

Mark Chapter 16, verses 15 through 18. He asked the visiting Deacons if they had any words for the candidates. Brother Hassell Allen told them they were set apart to serve the Church, not to run it, to take the Church body and make decisions.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidates in prayer. Elder Everette asked God to incline them always to look to him for guidance and strength; Elder Lamb said "we come with humble hearts: we ask thee to continue your blessings on them." Elder Stokes said, "We thank you for the gifts of the Church. May your spirit go forth with them and give them understanding. Bless their families. Walk with them in their lonely hours. They have the love of the people. May they serve them humbly, remembering they are servants."

Brother DeBow was presented back to the Church as an ordained Minister and Brothers Arrington and Rasmussen as Deacons.

Moved and agreed the minutes be read. Moved and agreed the minutes be received. Moved and agreed one copy to be reserved for Church records and one copy to "The Signs of the Times."

Conference was closed with prayer. Moved and agreed conference adjourn.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Frances Arrington, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JOHN S. COLLIE, SENIOR

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write this memorial of our dearly beloved Brother in Christ, John S. Collie. Our Gracious Lord saw fit in His Providence to take him from us on March 2, 1985.

He was born on March 21, 1905 in

Caswell County, N. C., a son of the late Florence Siddle and George Thomas Collie. On December 8, 1928 he was married to the former Nellie G. Dix who survives. He is also survived by three sons, John S. Collie, Jr., Route 7, Reidsville, N. C., Bob R. Collie, Route 9, Reidsville, N. C., David F. Collie, Atlanta, Ga., one daughter, Peggy C. West, Ruffin, N. C., 10 grandchildren, and one great grandchild and one brother, Floyd I. Collie, Reidsville, N. C.

He united with Dan River Church in 1945 and was baptized by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler. He loved his church and was faithful to attend the services regularly.

He was associated with American Tobacco Company for 35 years and had been retired for the last 17 years.

Due to the illness of his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, his funeral was conducted on March 4, 1985 by Elder Haywood Wray, Elder Kenneth Key, and Elder J. R. Williams. His body was laid to rest in the Dan River Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord. May the Lord grant the family faith to sustain them in their sorrow.

Written by request of the Dan River Church at her conference on April 27, 1985.

Respectfully,
Connie M. Page

EDWARD D. MORTON

Brother Edward Morton was born near Jacksonville in (Onslow County), North Carolina of which he was a life long resident, 22 June 1906. He passed from this life in Chapel Hill Hospital, Chapel Hill, NC on 26 April 1985.

On 16 June 1923, he was married to Bessie Humphrey who survives him. To this union was born 3 children, Mrs. Isabelle Eubank (deceased), J. J. (Bud) Morton and Mrs. Marie Haga, all of

Jacksonville, NC. Six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

On 14 November 1936 he joined North East Primitive Baptist Church. Not long afterward the Church recognized the gift of Deacon in him and was ordained to that office which he was blessed to fill faithfully until death.

Brother Edward was a humble man, a very dedicated family man, but beyond that he was dedicated to the principles of Christ our Saviour, which the Church is founded upon. His desire was that "all things be done in decency and in order, that the Church be edified and the name of Christ be glorified."

As we visited him during his illness at home and in the hospital, his loving family was always there providing loving care, bearing the fruit of the Spirit that "you love one another even as I have loved you."

The family and the Church miss him greatly, but not to wish him back in his suffering, but would rather say, "Sleep on, take thy rest, thou good and faithful servant." We believe Brother Edward is asleep in Jesus and "all that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him when he comes again, without sin unto salvation.

May God reconcile his family and all who loved him, realizing what God does is right. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Written by one who loved him and consider it a most blessed privilege to have served with him.

His Pastor,
Elder J. T. Prescott

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/85
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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Psalm 121

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills
from whence cometh my help.*

*My help cometh from the Lord which
made heaven and earth.*

*He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:
he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*

*Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall
neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy
shade upon thy right hand.*

*The sun shall not smite thee by day,
nor the moon by night.*

*The Lord shall preserve thee from all
evil; he shall preserve thy soul.*

*The Lord shall preserve thy going out
and thy coming in from this time
forth, and even for evermore.*

*“A GOOD name is rather to be
chosen than great riches, and loving
favour rather than silver and gold.”*

Proverbs 22: 1

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 EDITORIAL

FALLING DOCTRINE

Give ear O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. (Deut. 32: 1, 4)

This doctrine belongs exclusively to our heavenly Father. Our precious Saviour disclaimed it as being His and taught us so by His own statements far as Bible testimony goes, there is no source of saving doctrine save that which

comes from God to poor sinful fallen men and women save this source. It is His, and He is the only source of it, and He initiated the only method of it being brought to us. I do not have any compromise to make about this doctrine getting to us. Furthermore, it not only is His doctrine, but he alone drops it down to poor sinners. It is dropped on purpose to us. He alone can drop that which is His, and if I had the only doctrine, that is, the only saving doctrine that there is, I certainly think that I would turn it loose to fall on only those that I purposed to drop it on. You would do that wouldn't you?

There is not a source of rain save that which belongs to God. If anyone knows of another source of it I hereby yield to the one that has rain cached up somewhere, and that has a method of getting it to where it is needed by the owner. Unless I hear of such a source, I will know that I am on the right text. However, I am not expecting this fact, that is, that God is the only source of this doctrine, and that He has the only absolute method of getting this doctrine to the desired point in the world to silence the objectors to His sovereignty.

Just a few years ago the powers that be (I beg your pardon, they just thought that they were that powerful) thought that they could end droughts. They carried the rain making tools and ingredients unto the vast universe above us and found some dry clouds and they sprayed those clouds and made it rain. But complications arose. They were threatened with lawsuits from neighboring communities because that they had been deprived of rain that they should have gotten. Other complications arose, for tampering with God's sole prerogative of looking after the weather.

If you are a God fearing reader, I kindly ask you to consider that God's doctrine drops as the rain. This is also inclusive of the snow and sleet and hail--all of it comes from the same source. It

only comes as God drops it, and sometimes it is in sweeping power that all men working together cannot form a successful barrier against it. There is not a sane person on the globe that does not know this. Another thing that they do not know, and that is that it comes so small and so smooth and so easy that we are not aware of it. This dropping of this moisture is so beyond the power and wisdom of men that it comes as a vapour and is distilled as dew while men of great power are sleeping and unaware of the falling from above.

How helpless is this great land of ours about rain? We are as helpless as new born babes for this falling rain. Every single man and woman in the United States, yea, for that matter in the world, are dependent for the dropping down of rain. Now the comparison brings us, each of us, face to face with the absolute and unconditional fact that all of us are dependent upon God for the doctrine of God to fall on us. If for just one year this necessary rain did not drop, what would be your picture of this world in which we live? It has done quite a bit of ropping down rain in the last twelve months, and yet look at the starvation that is rampant over the world. Just suppose that it not rain in the next twelve months? What would any of us do in that twelve months?

Likewise suppose that the doctrine of God does not drop down again in the next twelve months? He does His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. What would be the consequences if the doctrine of God our Saviour did not drop any more doctrine of God? This is not any laughing matter. God would be just if He withheld rain from every human being. You ask me, why? And I am telling you why! Simply because that we are all guilty before God. However, God loves His children and His doctrine of saving grace falls on those that belong to Him. He has made

them an unconditional promise that He would come and that He would save them that belongs to Him. God never ceases to love His chosen people. In fact, God does not change His mind about coming and saving those that the Father gave Him. That promise was made by an unchanging God, therefore, that promise was made by the God that never changes. The doctrine of God is established upon the unchanging love of God. The doctrine of God's unchanging love is based on His continued faithfulness.

The salvation of God is as sure as the rain. Neither the rain nor the snow, in themselves considered, bring salvation, but God's way of handling them is figurative of salvation. As the rain comes down, even so does salvation come down from God. As there is not any salvation save in rain coming down, even so there is not any salvation unless it likewise comes from God. We certainly realize that there is salvation in what comes from God. Let us take a tour through the work shop of God. My thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. Let us pause here. Thus we have found out one, if not the greatest things about we frail creatures and our Creator. He does not think as we frail mortals think, and He does not do as we frail mortals do. He has His ways, and He does his ways. What would it be if we had our way? Let us ask ourselves once again that astounding question, What would it be if we had our way. In the sense in which it was created for, it is a good, yea, perfect world. Had we, as the human race, had our way, who knows the destiny of it now? Now let us continue, to wit, For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us pause again. Not only are His ways and thoughts above ours, but they have been that way all of the time. His first and ultimate ways and thoughts

have been above ours. As our creator as the Architect of the universe, He is, and has been, the Potter and Creator, the builder and upholder and disposer of all things. This creature, man, has been a created destroyer (Isa. 54:16), but God's way has been higher and thus a Builder (Heb. 11:10).

This Builder is God. Man is a destroyer. Every blade of grass, every drop of rain that falls upon the earth, every smile of a little child together with its hand clasped in the hand of its mother, together with her love for it, every blooming flower, every sunbeam that has lighted up our pathway, every star that has shined out of the universe above us, together with every eye blinking, every breath you have had, combined with every beat of your heart has been a gift from God.

God's ways are not our ways. God's ways are higher than our ways. They have not recently got that way. All things were made that way and they have remained that way. The nations bluster and destroy and persecute the poor of the earth, but all of them reckoned together have a mighty poor standing with God (Isa. 40:15).

God is rated in His Book as being love. This love, like the source of it, did not have a beginning. Immediately a clamor arises among men and nations, both of them, like all things else, being creatures of God, He being above them, higher than all of them, did not have their origin in themselves; their being subject to His, the divine Creator of all, chose His subjects, His children in One like unto Himself, has fixed or arranged or appointed or predestinated their station here and hereafter, arranged all things and all subjects of this grace, together with those who are not subjects of that grace, should be ruled by Him.

Those subjects of His in nature have never gained the mind of Him. He appointed the laws of nature in such a sublime way that everything that His wis-

dom dictated as being necessary for the benefit, for the lifting of His people on high was provided in His declaring of the end from the beginning. Everything for the preservation of His people both in a natural as well as a spiritual way was set in motion. This setting in motion these many wonders of nature embraced the falling of the rain as He dropped it from His hand.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing where to I sent it (Isa. 55:8, 11).

Now I have dealt extensively with the fact that the weather comes from God. In every sense in which earthly creatures know to summarize the weather, it is all out of men's hands. Let me say to one and all what Napoleon said to a group of his generals. While on one of his noted campaigns, a group of his generals were in an argument about the question as to the extent of God's creation. He listened for a while in silence. In impatience he walked out of his office into the midst of his subordinate commanders, and sweeping his hand to the heavens he challenged them with, Gentlemen, who made all of this? He stalked back into the seclusion of his private quarters.

Dear brethren and sisters, who made this world and the fulness of it? Secondly, who did He make it for?

I have in my declining days dealt with the rain, and the wonderful way in which it fits into our lives. There isn't a human being on the face of the globe that acknowledges the Bible as the MAN of his counsel that can disannul the fact that God sends the rain when and where He pleases. Furthermore, that same sacred

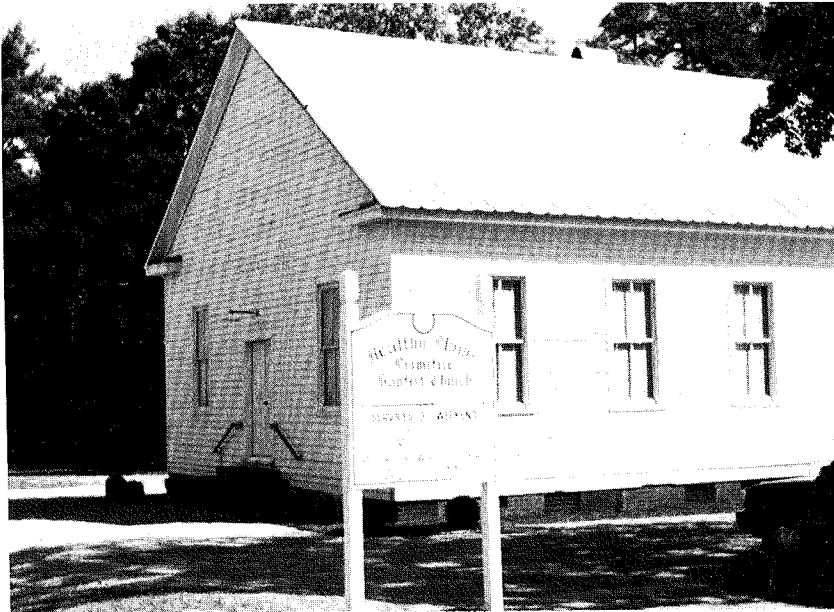
volume teaches us that the doctrine of God's saving grace is sent from God out of heaven when and where He pleases and that the result is just as efficaciously distributed, spread out as the doctrine of God is dropped, God in His effective way of doing everything He pleases.

In the meantime, study Gods holy distribution of the rain that it always

gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater, and beseech the Lord in my behalf that He will give me an exercise of mind to explore the beauties of that grand and glorious doctrine.

Elder W. D. Griffin
Route 6, Box 269
Fayette, Alabama 35555

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Healthy Plains Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in August 1872. The church is located about 4 miles south of Bailey, N. C., on N. C. Highway 581 at the intersection of County Road No. 1129.

The meeting time is at 11 a.m. every third Sunday and 2:30 p.m. on the Saturday before.

Elder W. Randall Saunders is the current pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please find enclosed check for two years for The Signs of The Times. I enjoy The Signs very much as I am

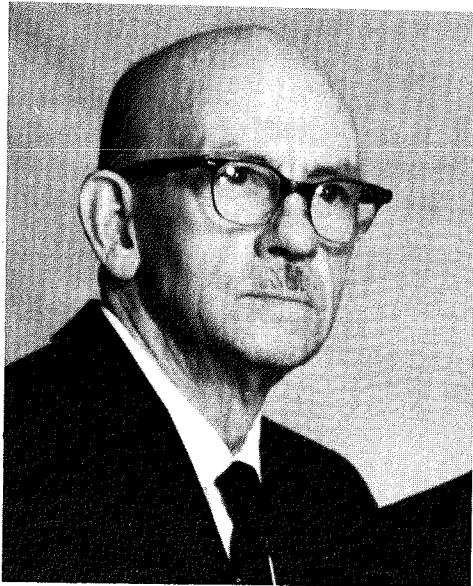
not able to go to The Churches and I get my preaching from The Signs.

I am eighty-five yrs. and crippled with arthritis pretty badly.

Keep up the good work and may God bless.

Mrs. Ella Mae Merrill

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalms 116: 15.



Few if any editor has spent more time and effort than Elder John D. Wood in presenting the Signs Of The Times, nearly flawless to its readers in years

past. We also remember him saying the task would be impossible without the help of Sister Wood. There is a question mark in our mind to-day as to where the paper would be without their effort through years past.

The Signs has and will greatly miss, not only his devotion to the paper, but also his name on the editorial pages, having been listed since 1951 or 1952. We were saddened to hear of Elder Wood's passing, born June 3, 1898, died July 3, 1985, "but we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." The faith he worte of , believed, and spoke about brings us to acknowledge, as in Romans Chapter 8, Verse 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."

May this paper continue to strive to uphold sound doctrine, to His own name's honor and glory as the editors of the past.

Editors

8 Central Park
Brownsville, Texas
July 13, 1970
Mrs. Lela Culpepper,

Dear Sister in Christ:

I want to thank you for your kind letter of July 7. I was very glad to hear from you. I am aware of the church in both Stockdale and Welaco. I have heard Elder Ault several times and also your beloved minister, Elder Shipman.

Both my parents are Primitive Baptists as were some of my ancestors. My older brother married Jeanene Hamrick. I'm sure you have heard Elder Hamrick.

I grew up hearing such fine old preachers as Elder John Lee Smith, Elder R. W. Rhodes, Elder Haygood,

and the older Elder Shipman. I feel very fortunate to have listened to these men who are most assuredly blest of the Lord.

I rejoiced to hear the fact that you got some joy out of my writings. I often feel that I do not know the truth, but when one of the little ones tells me that she feels it is the truth, then I praise God for what He has done. The credit belongs all to Him, for I am not able of my own self to write anything unless he gives me the ability to do so.

I am only 23 years old, but I feel at times that I am so weary of this life. I look constantly for the Master to come, and hope eternally that I will be counted in His flock. The majority of the Old Baptists are old and poor, but I have never found another group of people

anywhere that show such abiding love for one another. There is something in the hearts of them that draw them closer. We are poor, yet we have the greatest of blessings here in this earthly life, and that is to believe in the true and living God, and to hear His word preached as it was meant to be preached. That is something that cannot be taxed, destroyed, or conquered. We need the blessing of the Almighty God to give us of the crumbs from the Masters table, and we are filled.

Thank you for writing. I am going back to college this summer to work on my Master's degree in education. I teach school in Brownsville.

I am not a member of the church. I have never felt myself worthy to ask to become a member. I hope someday to become a member, however, I feel I have much to learn first. I am not worthy to try to talk to anyone about the wonderful blessings of God, but I would like to leave you with this one short verse:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Yours in hope,
David Harrell

EARMARKS OF GRACE ABOUNDING

Dear Friends and Loved Ones:

It seems I must try, the Lord willing to tell some of the blessings I have received at His Hands.

I am such a poor, feeble soul who, it seems, has always been a backward child. I never seem to be able to talk or act as I would like to. Ever since just a small child I have had the feeling that I didn't belong: I wasn't able to join my friends and companions in their activities, though I greatly desired to be popu-

lar. Even at a very early age I would read my father's Bible in secret, for I didn't want anyone to see me. I do not know why I felt that way. I would sit and listen to my elders talk on the Scriptures, but didn't want anyone to know that I was interested.

I have always felt that the Primitive Baptist were a chosen people, but I thought I was as good as anyone else, for I had never done anything that I thought was such a great wrong. But, bless your souls, there is one who can show us just how far from good we are. It was in my late twenties that I was made aware of just how sinful and lowly a creature I was. I was reading my father's Bible one day, which I had read many times before, when it seemed I saw myself a lost soul, doomed and without any way to turn. Oh, what a terrible feeling it is to become aware that you are standing naked before God; and to know that there is nothing in this world that you can do about it!

I thought perhaps that if I would go to church, I would find some comfort; but not so. I tried reading the *Signs of the Times*, and opened to where someone had written about the prodigal son, but, instead of comparing myself with the prodigal, I saw myself as the brother. I even thought that if I were just a dumb brute, Oh, what a blessing it would be. I suppose I was envious of the dumb beasts of the fields who have no soul to go down into Hell.

All I could do, was to think, Lord be merciful to me a sinner; I could not open my mouth. Oh, I thought, if only I could fall down on my knees and pour out my heart to Him who was all power, then surely I would find relief; but I could not open my mouth.

This feeling of dread and doom stayed with me for some time — it seemed longer to me I'm sure than it really was. Then, one day just as this terrible feeling had come upon me, it left, and a wonderful

peace came over me. I went around with a song in my heart, but, just as I hadn't been able to open my mouth in prayer, neither could I sing. But I thought, Oh, to be able to sing His praise from the highest mountain! For I was persuaded it was He and He alone who had helped me, for the arm of flesh had failed.

Since those days, I have had wonderful feelings of rejoicing; then there are times of great doubts and fear that perhaps I have imagined it all. This is the reason, I suppose, that I have been fearful of telling anyone: for fear that I am deceived and trying to deceive. I can only hope that God will keep me by his power, for, if left to myself I shall surely fall. I feel to know that poor, beggarly man has not the power to stand of himself.

I don't know why I have written this, but it seems that I shall tell others.

Unworthily,
Lena Mae Johnson

ARTICLES

WHERE ART THOU?

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?"

One of the differences between the doctrinal belief of Old Baptists and all other faiths of the world is, they believe man to be totally depraved; that he is wholly corrupt and can do nothing at all to extricate himself from his fallen state in Adam. He cannot in anywise fulfill the law, neither can he by any act within and of himself, obtain eternal salvation. He is destitute, lost and undone, without hope in this world or the world to come, except for the intervening love and mercy of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Now when he had partaken of the forbidden fruit, seen his nakedness, be-

come ashamed and hid himself; when the Lord Called, "Adam, where art thou?" it was not to get information or learn something he did not already know. It was a question to cause Adam to take a good look at himself. Oh! what a pitiful, groveling, hell deserving wretch he saw, when he was forced to face himself. Do you remember? Suddenly he had fallen from the sinless state in which he was created, to a creature who was nothing and less than nothing in the sight of God.

Not only did he fall from his happy state, but in his disobedience he incurred the wrath and anger of God and, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31). God in his wrath expelled him from the garden and decreed, through Adam, death on all mankind. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) and also, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

Following the fall and expulsion, God set a flaming sword to guard Eden, so that man could not enter again. This left him out in a world of sin, lost and without help, to face the wrath and judgment of a jealous God.

Then Adam learned so many things about himself. The forbidden fruit did exactly what the wily serpent had promised. It made him know good and evil, and the things he saw in himself were only evil. Satan was no help now, in saving him from the awful judgment into which he had led him.

Man learned that the Lord had formed him from the dust of the ground, which was a very humble beginning. He was shown also that he was made a little lower than the angels, who are servants of God. He learned that man at his best state is altogether vanity. He came to know that all nations are nothing, less

than nothing and vanity, before this God with whom he had to do; that these nations are as a drop in a bucket and are as the small dust in the balance. When all nations are as such, small, puny man looks really, totally depraved to himself, when asked by God, "Where art thou?"

As Adam stands before an angry God in judgment, words cannot describe the littleness of his feelings or his destitute condition. He tries to reach across the deep, awful chasm that separates him from safety, and knows a desperate, indescribable futility. His own efforts to span the mighty gulf are in vain.

David asks, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" (Psalms 8:4) and James asks, "For what is your life?" and answers, "It is a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Adam feels that vanity, less than nothing, small dust of the balance, the drop in the bucket, and vapour are as small as man can get, in nature, but the law condemns him even lower than any of those things. It puts him in a devil's hell. So when man is really shown what he is in the eyes of God, he does not question, but that he is totally depraved. He knows that, "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering," and that, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," so where can he flee?

God asked Adam, Where art thou? then left a record of many, many places where He found him. If you are a child of God, you have been in those places, and felt your own sinfulness and weakness at such times. You have looked here and there, and found no hiding place from his all seeing eye.

At one time man was found in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness. Another time he was found in a horrible pit, in the miry clay. Jonah was in the belly of hell. One of the apostles was

found on the way to Damascus to persecute God's children and another lied about knowing the Saviour. As an idolater Adam (man) threw the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, and as a thief he was crucified on the cross.

These all faced God in judgment. Their sins were as scarlet, they were helpless, empty, famished, unable to help themselves, no matter what the sin or situation in which they were involved. They had sinned and were sinners, and the wages of sin is death. Their sin was ever before them and in their anguish they cried with David, "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin."

Unknown to Adam, God from eternity had set up a means for his deliverance. His anger and justice were tempered with mercy. He sent his own Son, who was himself Manifested in the flesh, to be a mediator between God and man; to bridge the gap that was impossible for Adam to cross. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (I Tim. 2:5) This mediator was sent to satisfy and fulfill the law that Adam had transgressed. The Father gave all things into his hands. He came to seek and to save that which was lost.

All things given into the hands of the Son included judgment and justification. This mediator set things right between Adam and God, by taking all of Adam's sins on his own shoulders, and satisfying the law by dying in Adam's place. Only death would satisfy the law for the wages of sin is death. This delivered man from the transgression of the law and its dreadful consequences. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) And again, "Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sin."

When at this point in his experience

God asked, "Adam where art thou?" there is One who answers in his place. Man still knows himself to be unworthy, and will not lift his eyes, but can cry only, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He knows he is naked before God and begs to be hidden. He finds hope through promises made him by the great Mediator. He has a witness within him that causes him to hunger, to thirst, to beg for mercy, and to look forward to the deliverance of the body from this death.

He also finds in the scriptures, where those of like or similar experiences, were lifted up and delivered. The wanderer in the desert land and wilderness was led about and instructed. He who was in the pit and miry clay was lifted up. His feet were set upon a rock and his goings established. Jonah was vomited from the belly of hell and preached, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Paul and Peter continued in his way, and were kept as fountains, through which his mercy and grace was preached to fallen man. Nebuchadnezzar, the idolater, praised and extolled him, after being shown his own weakness by the "Fourth man." The prodigal son returned, begging his father's forgiveness, and confessing his sins and weakness. The thief on the cross died with the precious promise, "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." Adam in all these found mercy and grace.

All creation in Adam fell under the law, but we have written only of those, who are that portion of his posterity, for whom the Lord died. The precious chosen ones He redeemed from under the law and clothed in his own righteousness, after finding them naked and undone.

According to David, the wicked will not seek after God and they shall be turned into hell. But we hope to be one of that number found through his love, and made to answer his call, by begging for grace and mercy, and praising and ex-

tolling his wonderful name. He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Once in the first Adam we feared Satan and all he could do, not knowing the bounds of the wicked serpent were set, as is all created things. Now, we trust that the second Adam found us lost and undone, taught us Godly fear and clothed us in his own righteousness. This is our only hope for that bright tomorrow, when He calls Adam where art thou; that the One who died for us, to wipe away our sin, our sorrow and our shame, will answer for us, Lord, here am I.

"And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." (I Cor. 15:45)

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

LETTERS FROM PRISON

Among us who read this, there may not be any who have had some loved one in prison. So, if we have never read a letter from one of our prisons today, we would not be able to fully comprehend the very hopelessness of such a letter. There would be the agony of the very thought of losing one's freedom. I imagine this thought that takes possession of one's heart eats like a cancer. The prison walls are a painful reminder that one has lost his freedom. Rebelling against this situation is not the answer, but where is the one who wouldn't rebel? Not only losing the very valuable prize of freedom, but having on the conscience the awful weight of guilt.

With all this in view, then what attitude would one take, for there must be some sort of avenue for the mind to follow. They do not just sit and look at the gray walls of the prison. It would be one of these two: they would become bitter, or they would repent of the wrong they had committed. Good and evil are set

before us. In this case one must watch his conduct. Now I've written of one in prison, but my main object is to write on another case — of other letters from prison: those of the Apostle Paul.

This one said that in all things he could adapt himself. Now we know the prisons in those days were horrible indeed. We can imagine them cold and bare; without one sign of the flickering light of the sun. We do not feel it was total darkness, but the light must have been faulty, the food poor, the hours long and lonely. In this last imprisonment there was not the slightest hope of ever being free again, only by death. Now what was the attitude of this prisoner? It was not hopeless, it was not one of despair, as one who had reached the road's end. It was one filled with bright anticipation; one that could look beyond prison walls to a brighter country. Even in this bleak and bare prison, there was sweet communion with God. David once said, "Whither shall I go from the presence of thy Spirit?" He goes on to say that wherever he went the presence of the Holy Spirit went with him.

So, then, some of the sweetest letters come from one in prison. We notice he spoke very little of himself, but told of the love of God to all the saints. To have drawn our attention to his sufferings, at the moment, would have relieved him somewhat, but his mind was not on things temporal, but on things eternal.

We find in Second Corinthians 4:17, some of the words of encouragement that must have filled his mind while in prison. Here it says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Ah, how it would lighten our burdens to see the things eternal! It took a man in

prison to tell us of the glories of these things. Earthly prison bars held him fast, but this did not dim his keen anticipation of a final release. I believe this prison life had helped him; and at first consideration, the question would be, How? We can answer this question when we contemplate our own life here. There are times when we all feel imprisoned; and, like David, there seems no relief. We could beat our hands upon these prison walls, but to no effect. It's when we find that God comes to us even in the prison of trials, and a troubled heart, that we can see the joys set before the Apostle Paul. His were through the gates of death; but ours, oft-times through having the burden lifted. In contemplating his last prison term, we'd do well to visualize what he suffered there. There was probably no way of measuring time but by the flickering light that failed when the day was done. It must have been cold throughout the night and day. There would have been little companionship of anyone, maybe a guard now and then; but that too would be fleeting. One thing he had that we do not have: he'd been to the third heaven and saw such splendor that there are no words to describe it. He had viewed the eternal home of all the redeemed. In that cold dark prison those visions came back again to him.

We find him saying, "The time of my departure is at hand." Such confidence, such complete calmness of mind! We will fail to get any benefit from this, if we don't get off to ourselves sometimes, and just contemplate how we'd feel if we knew that our time here on earth was finished. Now we're not leaving a cold prison; no, not in the sense he did. Of course, I know this whole world is a prison that holds us here, and we all wait for freedom into the blessed eternal day over there; but actually, we do not have a natural prison wall around us.

From a natural standpoint, we'd think

those outside these walls would be the ones to encourage the prisoner; but in this case, it's the prisoner that writes letters of encouragement. Oh, the unsearchable riches of Christ; and those riches come through the pen of one behind prison bars. These are some of the mysteries of God revealed to us. We often wonder why he let his servant go to prison; but there was a purpose in it, so we are not to question it. There have been thousands who have given their life for the sake of the gospel.

If ever we find ourselves so overwhelmed with troubles and disappointments, let us read those letters from prison to cheer our hearts. We will never have a heaven here, but we can read about one in those letters of a prisoner, who had already been there. In another place he says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

The one main prison that holds us here is this body of clay; and how well we know this. We say, along with the Apostle Paul, "Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?" We see it dying day by day, but we have this hope within of one day having a body like unto His body. Our Lord says, "Let not your hearts be troubled: Ye believe in God, believe also in me." What comforting words to the troubled heart, the promise of eternal life given to all the redeemed. Along with these words from our Lord are also these comforting letters from prison.

Myrtle Cross
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Glendale, California

"For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."

Proverbs 3: 12

JESUS THE AMEN

I was asked to write a sermon upon the word amen. Well, I may not be able to do that, but I will very readily pen some few thoughts upon it that has been comforting to me, and in which I have had some experience by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The first and most blessed thing is that Jesus Christ our Lord, our redeemer and everlasting friend, is "The Amen" Rev. 3:4. Indeed, there is no abiding blessedness apart from our beloved Savior. As He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, He is also the fountain of living waters. In Him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places; but all would be a failure, all our hope in things pertaining to God and to eternity would be a failure, if Jesus Christ were not the Amen.

This sacred name, like all the names he bears, is what He is unto His church. This name signifies that He is the constant one, the gracious, immutable Almighty friend, faithful and true. Rev. 3:14. He is the one, who makes sure, and will bring to an all-glorious consummation all the eternal purpose which Jehovah the Father purposed in Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and He is the mediator and surety of the new covenant, and as our covenant head He is in delighted acquiescence with it. Even though in order to the removal of the sins of His people, to make atonement for their transgressions and reconcile them unto God. He should come and give Himself a ransom, a sacrifice for their iniquities. He said, Amen to it. So let it be, it shall be. Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, Thy law is written in my heart." Psalm 40: 7-8; Heb. 10: 4-10. All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us. 2 Cor. 1:20.

Oh what exceeding great and precious promises there are in Him for time and eternity. The new covenant was established upon better promises than those given unto Israel under the law, the old covenant. The gospel promises are in Christ's gospel; they are made unto the elect in Christ. Thus, by the communion of the Holy Ghost, who speak to us, and shows to us, and glorifies Jesus Christ in our hearts, We have sacred assurance, and are in earnest expectation in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Titus 1:2 All the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea, and amen, sure to all the seed. As our covenant head He said, amen to them all.

In His faithfulness, love and mercy, and omnipotence He will see that none of these promises fail. What God hath promised, He is able also to perform. Their gracious and glorious fulfillment is not based upon the creatures performance. Ah no! God will show His people His covenant in the incarnate Son of God. Psalm 25:14. "For God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us which hope we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 7:17-20. In all the characters that Christ sustains, and all the offices in the new covenant He fulfills, He is surely the amen.

The pleasure of the Lord prosper in His hand; the government shall be upon His shoulder. Isaiah 9:6; 53:10. Well, beloved ones in the Lord, as we meditate upon the glorious work wrought by our

Redeemer, and see how He was faithful to Him that appointed Him, how He finished, and will finish all the work of eternal salvation, and will surely bring His people home to eternal glory, faultless, and holy, and without blame, and with exceeding joy before the majesty in the heaven, truly we are comforted and our hope is sure and steadfast, for Jesus Christ, the word made flesh is the amen. And we, like the four beasts, (living creatures) in Rev. 5:14 say, "amen" to all that Jesus Christ has done, and to all that He, as our great high priest, in heaven is doing for His people. There He appears in the presence of God for us, and forever, our beloved Redeemer, intercessor, our advocate with the Father. And when we offer up our feeble sacrifices of praise, when our hearts send forth our sighs and prayers unto the throne, they all come through Him unto our God Father. He says amen to them, for they are all cleansed by His precious blood, perfumed by incense of His finished work upon calvary's cross, His sacrifice of Himself in our behalf, an offering, and a sacrificies of a sweet smelling savor unto God. Through Him, our amen, we have access into the grace, we are favored to worship God in the beauty of holiness, with reverence and Godly fear. Yes, our hearts say amen, so let it be, to all that Christ has done, and all that He is unto His people. When we are in sweet accord and our hearts are saying amen to Christs gospel, all sufficiency in self has been cast to the moles and to the bats, we are lowly in our own sight, we feel how naked and destitute we are in ourselves, we see we are poor sinners, and we have been taught under this bitter and humbling knowledge to look unto Jesus as the only ground of hope for perishing sinners. Yes, here must be Gods own gracious teaching to humble such sinners, sinners who are enemies of God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in

them because of the blindness of their hearts. It needs such operations of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart to bring him to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," to bring him to see that all creature righteousness is filthy rags, and to submit to the righteousness of the God-man Christ Jesus, which is unto and upon all that believe. But every one that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me saith Christ, John 6:45. And in our precious Jesus our all-sufficiency salvation, righteousness, all grace and glory, and to everything in Him we say amen. All is agreeable, all is needful, there is nothing lacking, all is finished, all is blessed, all is altogether lovely, all is to the glory of God, and to our everlasting consolation and happiness, in faith and love we say, amen, so let it be. If the gracious operations of the Holy Ghost are so essential to bring our souls into accord with the gospel of Christ, and to say amen to all the revelation of Jehovah's counsel therein: so also the same teachings of the comforter God and Holy Ghost, are needed to bring us to say, amen, the will of the Lord be done in all His providences. We have surely learned, yes, we have had to learn it over, and over again; that without the continual ministrations of the grace of Christ how unreconciled we are to our lot, how cast down we are sometimes, how fretful, what inward murmurings, and how hardened we then become in rebellion. "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." Psalm 68:6. God's providences are high and deep—His thoughts, His purposes therein are not for us to fully understand.

"Deep in unfathomable mines,
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will."

Job at one time could say amen to the adversities and bitter afflictions to which he was subjected, Job 1:20-21; 2:9-10;

but in the continuation of his deep and sore troubles he is found fretting at a great rate, and speaking hard things against God. But we see the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, James 5:11. "The Lord answered Job and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it." Surely this severe reproof was nevertheless love's reproof! It entered Job's soul, subdued all opposition to the Most High, and brought him at the feet of the Lord. Then Job answered the Lord, and said, "behold, I am vile: what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken: but I will proceed no further." Job 40:1-5.

We have trials, afflictions, adversities, we have vexations, and things that are so contrary to flesh and blood. Our little plans are upset; our gourds are blasted, the flowers that delighted us wither, they are snatched away, cisterns are broken, and creatures all fail. Sickness, pains in ourselves and others we have to endure, we suffer bereavements and we encounter the enmity of the wicked, of hypocrites. How shall we say amen, unto the Lord under the pressure of any or all these woes? When the Lord giveth us tears in great measure to drink, Psalm 80:5; if the bread of adversity and water of affliction be our portion, Isa. 30:20, is it possible to acquiesce, and say amen to God? When the thorn in the flesh is rankling, and the enemy is buffetting us until we are at our wits end, shall we not cry out for the extraction of the thorn? We pray that the enemy may be forced to take departure from us, but if it is the will of God that the thorn shall still pierce us, and the enemy still assault us, can we then say unto the Lord, amen? We can, but only when our Heavenly Father says, "thou art my dear son;" thou art unto me a pleasant child. Jer. 31:20. Thou art beloved, lovely, all acceptable unto me

in the beloved. Eph. 1:6. Drink the cup, my child! O then we can say, amen, so sweetened is our cup with our heavenly Father's love in Jesus Christ our Lord. And, when He says, "my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," then we can say, amen, and join with the apostle Paul and say, "most gladly therefore, will rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 Cor. 12:9. Pharisees, the selfsufficient, the hypocrite may talk very smoothly, and say, we ought to say, "Thy will be done" to God's providences. But the dear child of God, who while in this world is compassed with infirmities, poor and sinful and tempted, finds himself so in need of grace that it is only by the power of Christ resting upon him, only as his preciousness is communicated and the spirit of truth glorifies our dear Savior in the soul, and thus sustains us in afflictions, and sweetens the bitter waters that we can say, amen to all our Heavenly Father's will.

There, I have penned some thoughts upon the word, and, oh may such grace from the Lord be ours that we be in accord with Him who is the Amen.

Frederick W. Keene
Raleigh, N. C.

PRIDE HUMBLED

The following is republished by request and is told, as part of the unwritten or traditional history of Elder John Leland.

During the latter part of his life, Mr. Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours on foot. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited, in writing, by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service,

both as a place of abode and also a place to hold his meetings. Mr. Leland replied by setting a day that he would preach at her residence, at 10 o'clock a.m. The lady was a wealthy planter, in Appamattox valley. She regarded herself one of the most pious and exemplary persons to be found anywhere.

She had been raised in the high circles of life, and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was at this time about thirty-five years of age, and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of a widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was, that she might make a display of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her wealth but her piety as well; so she went to a great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends to attend the meeting; no expense or pains had been spared, not only to have the best and the finest of everything, but to have everything in the best style.

On the evening preceding the meeting several carriages had already arrived, to be in good time and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free perspiration, which ran down his cheeks, making roads in the dust which had settled on his face during his day's walk. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired for the landlady; the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, from which proceeded the talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, very richly attired, made

her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door, where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once saw in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits of character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone; "Old man what do you want here? I have nothing for beggars."

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unassuming tone, said, "Please excuse me, madam; I do not wish to beg for money, but I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Viewing him hastily from head to foot, she very positively answered: "No! I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I can't take in poor stragglers."

"Well," said Mr. Leland, "I am too much fatigued to travel further to-night, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins?" pointing to a row of negro houses just outside the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes, you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts. He proceeded to the farthest one from the mansion before he found any one to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest but neatest of all the huts, there he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl.

He spoke to her very gently:

"Good evening, aunty."

His greeting was answered with "Good evin, mosta."

"Well, aunty," he said, "I have come to ask a very uncommon favor of you.

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can that

be, fo' please God I'se got nuffin to give you?"

"I am very tired from walking all day. I called at the house of your mistress, but she says she has no room for me in the great house. I am too much fatigued to go furher, and so have come to see if you can allow me to shelter in your house."

Bless de Lord, mosta, I got no 'commodation for any one; but 'fore a fello' mortal shall stay out doo's, I lets 'em stay in my cabin sho,' ef da can put up wid my plain hut. Uncle Ben be in drecky; den he can keep you company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as tho you had not a morsal for a long time, and at the same time, pointing to a three legged stool by the door, saying, "Set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so worn out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed, saying, at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble, as I have no money to pay you."

"Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charges any one yit for sich comodations as I could give'em for God knos its poor enuff at best. You say, mosta, you call on missus at de ouse dar, and she can't take you in. Well, you must 'cuse her, for she's looking for a mighty heap o' company to-morrow; dar's a great man to be dar to-morrow, what's gwine to preach in her house, an' a good many folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin', to-morrow, so missus is mighty busy fixin' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben," she continued, as an old grey-headed negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself about the carelessness of some of the other negroes.

This old couple, Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small,

but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by younger and more active slaves. Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarily took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped and gave him a scrutinizing look when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying: "Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis old gentleman was out travelin', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus can't let him stay dar, as she's got a heap of company now."

"Well" said Uncle Ben, "We's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in an' give him sech as we have to set before him."

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper, Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from Uncle Ben; he learned, with other things, they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion with but very little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a long day's walk, and would wish to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his protection through the night; that if it would annoy them, he would retire to some place out of doors.

"Bless God!" said both old folks at the same time, "we allers like prayin' in our house, and nebber goes to bed 'thout one o us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old worn Bible out of his bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading the two old blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bless de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in

such an outburst of revential eloquence as was seldom ever equaled, and never surpassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and prayer that they could do nor say any more than to fix their eyes on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than mortal man. He retired to a clean pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep.

When morning came he was up early; Aunt Dilsey soon haf him a good, plain repast, after which he seated himself to read, telling his hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing, he would rest there until afternoon any way; and then, if he felt better, he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said, mosta, stay jest as long as you want to; we be glad to have you stay with us a fortnight, if you can put up with our far."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, with Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in a bustle at the stone mansion; all the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozen, until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing, but to their dismay no preacher made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever seen him but all had heard of him. So every one was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he cme he would be drawn by two or four horses, driven by a servant in livery.

Ten o'clock passed, half-past ten, eleven o'clock was announced by the clock on the wall, and no minister.

The company by this time had become restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mis-

tress and said: "Bless de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come here to de door and pray, 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin last night and dis morning, 'a 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's settin, dar now, under de tall pine tree; ain' as de preacher's not come, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation, when it was agreed to have the straggler, as they called him, to come and pray before the congregation broke up. Aunt Dilsey went where Mr. Leland was sitting and said, "Mosta, de folks all disspinted bout de preacher coming": he am not cum and da wants you to go down and pray for 'em, 'fore da all breaks up. Mosta, I wants you to pray jis like you did las' night."

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door and, standing on the steps, repeated a hymn from memory, sang, and then he engaged in prayer, and by the time his prayer was ended, all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement. He then remarked that as there seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes; and as a foundation, or starting point he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." When he had spoken for twenty or thirty minutes, the hostess, who had refused him the hospitalities of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and prostrated herself at the feet of Mr. Leland and would, had he allowed her to have done so, have washed his feet with her tears.

It was said that she was so overcome

and affected from that time forward, she was a changed woman, so much so that she threw off all her jewelry and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship, where she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them, in fact it was said that, if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

**SERMON BY THE LATE
ELDER A. B. AYERS
Pigg River Association 1960**

I will read to you the third verse of the fifteenth chapter of Romans: "*For even Christ pleased not himself; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*" The word "me" here implies Christ himself, as we understand. The Psalmist uses almost the same language in the 69th Psalm, 9th verse: "*The zeal of thine house has eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*"

As we understand the word fallen and the word fell, both signify the past tense as to when the "reproaches fell on me." We read also in 1st Timothy where the Apostle said that Adam was not deceived, but Eve being deceived, was in the transgression, but she should be saved in childbearing.

Now the question is, When did the reproaches fall on "me?" My mind goes out to believe with all sacredness of heart and soul that in the garden of Eden, when there were but the two, there was the transgression. And in thinking

about it, a thought is formed in my mind that there never was but one transgression, and that was in the garden of Eden; and that transgression has been multiplied as the human family has been multiplied. My thought is that in the transgression there was every conceivable sin that has ever been practiced by mortal man. The Apostle tells us in the 4th chapter of Ephesians that there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is one salvation; and that salvation was prepared in the Son of God, upon whom the reproaches fell in the transgression. This woman, was in the transgression, yet she shall be saved in childbearing. Now to me, in the transgression the church was figuratively in Eve; and the seed of the woman concerning whom God spoke to the serpent, was the salvation of his people: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The Apostle Peter tells us that He stood a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world. Christ has been without blemish from the foundation of the world; yet there was the promise that he should bruise the serpent's head; and there was the promise that she shall be saved in childbearing.

Well, what child is under consideration here? It didn't say, In children bearing; but in childbearing. The very child, to me, brethren, the very child, the seed of the woman that was promised there in Genesis, is the very one in which Abraham received the promise that in his seed this child should come forth, "For in Isaac shalt thy seed be called." And in Isaac Jesus did come forth, that is, in the genealogy of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesse, David, Solomon, etc., — the genealogy right on down, did the seed of the woman come forth, on whom the reproaches of the transgression fell. That is, "All the reproaches have fallen on me."

Therefore, he stood as a Lamb without blemish and covered every trans-

gression of the household of faith — of the church of the living God. The old prophet Zachariah tells that, "In that day", (a specific day, which to me is the very day in which the seed of the woman was crucified,) "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness," "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea." That was the blood that had the atoning power in the day of the crucifixion of the blessed Lamb of God, upon whom all the reproaches had fallen. He came at the appointed time of the Father, as we are told in Galatians: "When the fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."

What a blessed promise, brethren? The promises of God can't fail: never have, and never will. If the promises of God could fail, then none of us would have salvation, nor eternal life. What a blessed promise we have in him, that he should bruise the serpent's head. All the promises were based on him. In Hebrews the Apostle wrote, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visiteth him?" He did visit the Son of Man. The man that is under consideration is figurative of the church; and here we have the Son of Man whom God visited with the wrath that we deserved — that the church deserved in their transgression, because the whole church went down in that transgression and was never able to lift itself up. You can't lift yourself up by your own boot-straps; you can't lift yourself up with nothing to cling to, but He has the power to lift us up. The Psalmist declares that He brought him up from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed his feet upon a rock.

Brethren, friends, and neighbors, do

you have your feet upon a rock this morning? If so, what rock are you standing on? Not the common rocks that I see in the land and soil up here, but the Rock of Eternal Ages. That is the bed-rock. That's God's salvation and eternal truth, who arose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept.

So the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Now can you fathom the greatness of God: his mercy, his love, and his truth and salvation that he has in store for all his people that love him. All of us were in the transgression, yet He chose the church in Christ, for he tells us in 2nd Timothy, *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*

So, brethren it can't fail. There was your promise that all the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Yet he stood in that capacity from the foundation of the world; and before there was a people God made this covenant of redemption with the Son. Can you fathom the greatness of the mercy that God had on you, knowing what would take place? There is not a sin or shortcoming that you have ever come through in life's journey that was not known to God from all eternity.

He knows how vile and depraved we are today. But the question is, do we believe by faith? The Apostle John tells us, *"He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."* Do we believe this morning that God the Father from all eternity did embrace that grace in him, and send him forth at the appointed time? Can you conceive that all the salvation of the whole church of the living God, coming in the very small package, in the oneness of that infant babe that was born in Bethlehem of Judah, and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger. Can you conceive that

there was a sufficiency for every child of promise, every heir of promise, every child of grace in every age, from the creation to the final consummation, he standing as a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world, and the reproaches of them that reproached us are fallen upon him? Brethren, if you can conceive that, then you have something that is far beyond the capacity of the mind. I have thought about it; and the more I think of it, the more it becomes a sea without bottom, without brim, without shore: The greatness and mercy of God, and what we call eternity; and to live through eternity in the bliss and splendor of the Son of God, clothed with the garments of righteousness that will never fade, never decay.

It is said by a prophet of old, *"Let the foundation be strongly laid with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the expense be given out of the king's house."* Oh, brethren, here comes your expense again: that one that the reproaches fell upon. He is the expense of the king's house; and here is the foundation strongly laid: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And there is life in every one of those layers of stone. Let the foundation be strongly laid of three rows of great stones — and they are great stones brethren. It is the very foundation upon which the church of the living God is built. Every house must have a foundation, a good foundation, otherwise the building will soon fall and decay.

But I assure you, brethren, if we have faith to believe that Jesus is the Christ, then we are born of God; and he that is born of God doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, as the Apostle tells us. Who is it that is born of God? It is not this corrupt man here; it is not this earthly body of ours, but it is the Spirit of God born in you. That is the new birth to me: When he sheds abroad that quickening power that brings us to the knowl-

edge of how vile, how sinful, and how lost we are, and how depraved we are; and, with that, always gives the knowledge that there is power that is able to save the most vile sinner. If he was willing to reach my case, that was always my thought, for mine is an outstanding case; if he was just willing to reach down that mercy to me. I believe he has brethren, because I have a precious hope that is superior to me to all the hopes of this congregation. I wouldn't give you mine this morning for all of yours, because it wouldn't do me any good. But this blessed hope is that all the reproaches not only of the whole church of the living God, but this poor servant, was embraced in that same promise of covenant grace there, and redeemed by that blood. And I want to give you, in my way of seeing and understanding, the full assurance that none of you will ever enter heaven and immortal glory, only through the merits of that blood that streamed from the side of him that said, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me." Just the merits of that blood, and the sacrifice of that body.

When he came into the world, he didn't come as the other high priests did, offering the blood of bulls and goats as sacrifices. He, being the High Priest himself, did not have to offer for sin for himself, as the other priests did: for all the Levitical priesthood had to offer sacrifices for themselves and not for the people only; and that had to be every year. But once in the end of the world, the Apostle tells us, He made one sacrifice: and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, because the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me, and the zeal of thine house has eaten me up.

Brethren, what a wonderful God this is, that made a promise that can't fail. Abraham his servant received faith to believe that the promise of God could not fail, when the Lord said, "Take now

thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest . . . and offer him for a burnt offering." He had faith to believe that though I go and slay him, he is coming back. He testified to that when he said to his servants, "Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you." He is coming back, though I go and slay him. Brethren, here is your resurrection from the dead. He is coming back with me! That is a glorious thought with me — the resurrection from the dead.

This life here is such a short span, its just a few days. The servant of old said, "A few days, and full of trouble." If we live to be four score years, we soon pass on just the same. There is no time limit with God, but we must all go the way of the earth. But the blessed thought is that there was a day coming when this one that all the reproaches were laid upon should come forth, for the Lord said, "Thou shalt bruise his heel, but he shall bruise thy head." That is to me, brethren, when the reproaches, the one sin that has been multiplied that was committed in Eden, like a tree that comes forth from the seed — just one seed brings forth the tree, fell upon him. Here is a figure, that one sin back there has been multiplied, and all of us have been bitten by that same poison, and that same poison will cause all of us to wither. If you chop around a tree and break the sap and bark, you will soon see it wither; and it will soon die. So sin has been multiplied, and caused us to wither in body, to wither in mind and thought, and this old body will go back to the dust. But the thought is now, that He has borne the reproaches — they have fallen on him. He was bruised for our offences, buried for our iniquities, and arose for our justification.

What a blessed thought, that death couldn't hold him! Neither will it hold you. Because just so sure as Jesus came forth from the dead, just so sure there

will be a resurrection day. Abraham saw that when he was assured that, I will slay him, but he will come back with me. I have thought of that many times: "While we go yonder and worship". What was he going to worship? He was going to take the life of his son, but that unfaltering faith and the all abounding love of God was so strong in him that he saw the resurrection there. And when he went to perform the very thing that God commanded him, there God placed a ram — which is a figure of this one that bore the reproaches. There the ram was slain, and Isaac went free. Again here is a pertinent figure of the church: Isaac went free: the lamb was slain.

Here is that blessed Son who knew no sin, who bore the reproaches of sin of all his people, the whole church of the living God. He was bound upon the cross. God delivered him there, and withdrew himself from him, that he might die and pay the ransom price. Your purchase price is the blood of Christ. Your passport, if you enter heaven and immortal glory, has been written in the Lamb's book of life with that blood; because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

"For the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me."

(The above is from a recording, and is somewhat condensed for publication — Editors.)

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JUNE 1985

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Mrs. Jesse Ray, NC.....	2.00
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Elder Albritten, FL.....	2.00
Elder R. O. Smith, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Minnie Barrett, AL.....	5.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, FL.....	12.00
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Mr. & Mrs. Frank Simpkins, VA..	10.00
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Mrs. Ruth Jeffreys, NC.....	12.00
Elder Paul Lambe, NC.....	2.00
Homie C. Dalton, VA.....	2.00

We wish to thank our many subscribers who renew their subscriptions so promptly and have sent in new subscribers and renewals. This is Very encouraging for our efforts of the past and the future.

Editors

MEETINGS

MOUNT OLIVE CHURCH MEETING

On the 15th day of June, 1985, Mount Olive Church was called into conference. The Church by motion and second declared themselves ready to proceed with the ordination of Brother David W. Harrell to the Full Work of the Ministry.

Pursuant to this call, the following Elders:

Joe L. Hamrick	W. M. Burkhalter
James D. Hamrick	G. D. Shipman
Graydon Smith	C. M. Haygood

and Deacon Walter Harrell were seated to form a presbytery.

The presbytery organized itself by electing Elder Shipman as moderator and Elder Jimmy Hamrick as clerk. Then prayer was offered by Elder Smith to our gracious Lord for His divine blessings upon the presbytery.

The Church's spokesperson, Elder

Burkhalter, delivered Brother David W. Harrell to the presbytery. After Elder Haygood had questioned the Church's spokesperson and Brother Harrell concerning his qualifications as a God-called minister, it was moved by Elder Joe Hamrick and seconded by Elder Haygood to continue with the ordination.

The presbytery selected Elder Joe Hamrick to word the ordination prayer and Elder Smith to deliver the charge. The ordination was then conducted by the laying on of hands of the presbytery and with prayer by Elder Joe Hamrick. The charge was then delivered by Elder Smith.

The right hand of official fellowship was given to Elder Harrell by the members of the presbytery, which then by motion and second delivered him back to the Church.

Mount Olive Church, by motion and second, received Elder David W. Harrell back as a duly ordained minister. The right hand of fellowship was given him by members of Mount Olive Church, visiting brethren, sisters, and friends.

The minutes of the presbytery were read and approved, and the presbytery dissolved in order with prayer by Elder Burkhalter.

Gerald D. Shipman, Moderator
Jimmy Hamrick, Clerk

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Proverbs 9: 10

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OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT FOR ELDER DAVID V. SPANGLER

Elder D. V. Spangler, at the age of 83, was called home by his Lord on April 18, 1985. He was born January 9, 1902, the eighth child of the late Elder Jacob F. Spangler and Roberta Howery Spangler. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Sister Nannie Turpin Spangler, four children, Sister Mildred Graham, Elinor Hodnett, David M. Spangler and Rebecca Smith; eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Brother Spangler joined the Spray Primitive Baptist Church in 1918 and later moved his membership to Dan River. He first spoke to the congregation at Dan River in June, 1920. He served the church from 1923-1927 when the meetings were held in homes and then officially from June 25, 1927 when the property was legally granted to the members whom he served. Elders Kenneth Key and Paul Lambe conducted his funeral on April 30, 1985 and his body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Brother Spangler would not have wished to be eulogized or grieved over. Therefore, it is our prayer that anything penned here might be to the praise and honor of Him whom our precious Brother spent his life exalting above all names. As was stated at his funeral, he preached his last sermon on the 53rd. chapter of Isaiah. This experience is related below in the words of his daughter, Sister Mildred Graham:

"Several months before Daddy passed away, he had a revelation on the text on 53rd. Chapter of Isaiah. That night my mother heard him weeping and she wanted to know what was wrong. He told her to go back to bed that he was so happy

and that he was rejoicing in this text and everything was fine. He told her he was shown that his Redeemer lived, and He had shown him wonderful things and that where his home was when the time come.

He had wanted to be able to preach one more sermon on this 53rd. Chapter of Isaiah—especially the 10th. verse, ‘Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he had put him to grief: When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.’ Ne never got to tape or preach this sermon at church.

The morning he passed away he told the nurses that he had one more sermon to preach, and they would have to listen. He quoted the entire Chapter of 53rd. Isaiah. He preached beautifully for about 30 minutes; clearly, forcefully, with great power. At the close of the sermon he said that there was a time to be born and a time to die, and his time had come. He again said his Redeemer lived and His will be done.

He had told us the first of the week that he was going home. The nurse said she felt blessed to have share this experience.”

This experience brings to mind Romans 10:15, “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” Our Brother’s walk and talk speaks for itself. He was blessed in the years of his ministry to do as Paul instructed Timothy, “Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” And we feel surely he was able to witness with Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.”

Brother Spangler loved his brethren

dearly and was blessed to serve them faithfully. We will miss him immensely and his memory will live on in our hearts, but we would not, could not, wish him back as we know he has reached that final destination for which he longed. Rather than sorrowful hearts, may the Lord grant us thankful hearts for all the years we were blessed with Brother Spangler, for the blessing of communing with him, of hearing the special gift with which he was blessed, and of seeing the Lord shine in his countenance. There is no question to whom he looked for strength as evidenced in his favorite hymn, “Rejoice the Lord is King,” and in one of the last hymns he sang, “Oh Lord, I would delight in thee, and on thy care depend; To thee in all my troubles flee, My best, my only Friend.” May we be given to look to that same source, and may his family be blessed with a reconciling peace of knowing that he is where he most wished to be as he stated in the final words of his book, AMAZING GRACE, “I have that blessed hope that I will someday see the King in his beauty, and praise Him as I ought.”

Humbly Submitted,
Sister Mary L. Hawkins
Brother Bob R. Collie

“But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.”

Matthew 18: 6

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Psalm 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”

Mat. 7:12

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Sister Elise Slaughter	
Sister Hettie Thacker	

EDITORIAL

"God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." Psalm 118: 27.

There seems to be no doubt that David was (at the time he wrote this verse of scripture) possessed with divine light. This light had shown from above into his heart and opened up to him things that had been hidden from all eternity. By this light shining into his heart many things were manifested to his heart and soul. The Psalmist does not say that this light came into his heart through his own creature exertion or his own wisdom or his own free will, but he ascribes the whole of it to the giving of the Lord.

My dear ones, if we have any spiritual knowledge of the workings of the Holy

Spirit in our hearts and soul, it is because this same divine light has shined there by the power of God. *"For God, who commanded the light to shine our of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* 2 Cor. 4: 6, 7. The Lord does this for his elect, by making the things they were once buried in as darkness, deadness, ignorance to pass away and his true divine light to shine into their hearts revealing to them things they never felt or experienced before.

Christ meets the sinner with all the curses and pollution of his father, Adam, upon him, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, by nature a child of wrath even as others, without Christ, having no hope, and without God in this world. In this awful condition he had no power to help himself; he may have thought he had while he may boast of his goodness, of his good works, of the freedom of his will, yet he is still where he was, a sinner dead in trespasses and sins.

The effects of Christ in taking the sinner into union with himself soon make their appearance by light in the understanding and life in the affections; for Christ is both the Light and Life to the new creation. Christ in boundless love unites himself to the soul of a sinner, and from this blessed union the sinner becomes a branch in Christ the heavenly Vine, a member of his mystical body, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The effects of this peculiar relation will show themselves in every circumstance of time and to all eternity. But light and life are felt struggling with darkness and unbelief, because the life and light implanted by the Holy Spirit in the soul are most violently opposed by Satan and he musters all his forces to combat against the new regenerated soul. Satan tries very hard to frustrate or destroy

the work of God in the heart and soul, and we deeply feel the effects of his efforts in attempting to do so. But thanks unto the Lord, for he furnishes a weapon from the heavenly armory called prayer. "God be merciful to me a sinner."

"God is the Lord, which hath shown us light." O, how this precious light of God when shinned into our hearts, reveals to us what poor polluted undone sinners we are. He has shown us light by giving us some knowledge of ourselves and of himself and of his will. If the Lord has shown you and me this blessed light as he did David and those of old, we will have certain evidences, certain convictions to give us a sweet hope that we are partakers of his divine light. There will no doubt be times when unbelief, doubts, fears, dark clouds hovering over our minds will darken the presence of this light; but the light is never completely diminished because we can look back to a time in our lives when we had no such light, when we were in total darkness. We may have considered ourselves at that time to be engulfed in his light; yet, everything spiritual and heavenly was dark to us, and we were dark to them.

"Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." The horns of the altar of burnt offering were eminenes of spires at the four corners of the altar which were not only for ornaments but also for use, so that the beasts to be offered might be bound with cords to them. To bind the victim with cords to the horns of the altar seems to imply that there was a certain fear, a certain dread, a shrinking from the horror of being bound. But in our text we are not to think of slain beasts as being the sacrifice. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." Heb. 10:4. Then what sacrifice is this that our text speaks of? This sacrifice signifies Jesus Christ who offered himself as a propitiation for the sins of his people. "And he is the propitiation for our

sins." I John 2:2.

May it please God to bless us to enter into some of the things concerning Christ which bound him to the horns of the altar. The one great thing that bound Christ is God's decree concerning his everlasting covenant. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 8:10, 11, 12. The Lord's covenant is ordered in all things and sure. It is a covenant of electing love, of redemption and salvation by grace, entered into by the sacred Three in one Godhead, in behalf of elect sinners on whom grace and glory were settled forever in Christ, their covenant head. There were certain covenant engagements which our Lord had freely and voluntarily undertaken and when once entered into bound him with cords to the horns of the altar. He was bound to take upon himself the spiritual seed of Abraham, to suffer, bleed, and die for he was "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:8.

My mind at this point seems to meditate upon Abraham and Isaac. Remember God had given Abraham an order to take his son, Isaac, to a certain mountain to be made a sacrifice for a burnt offering. All things were made ready for the sacrifice, and as Abraham stretched forth his hand to slay his son, an angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, "lay not thine hand upon the lad." "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns, and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." Gen.

22:13. Isaac could not be made a sacrifice for he was not perfect. The sacrifice had to be without spot or blemish, only the Lamb of God could be a sacrifice, for he was perfect in every detail.

The ram was no doubt a type and figure of Christ. Was not Christ "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world?" The thicket that the Lamb was caught in seems to me to be as an emblem of God's covenant in his decree on behalf of his elect people. A covenant that Christ was caught and bound to when he undertook for his bride, the Church. He was bound to the covenant that would give his people eternal salvation. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." The Lamb was caught by his horns, an emblem of salvation. "*The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I trust, my buckler and the horn of my salvation.*" Psalm 18:2. There are two horns which established the sure truth of the covenant in the salvation of his people. "*In the mouth of two or three shall every word be established.*" 2 Cor. 13:1. The cords that he was bound with seem to be an emblem of the sins of his people. It was the sins of his people that bound him to the horns of the altar. The cords of his people's sins were binding to him. "*His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holder with the cords of his sins.*" Prov. 5:22. Christ who had no sin took the sins of his people upon himself. "*For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*" 2 Cor. 5:21.

Remember that the beasts that were "bound with cords to the horns of the altar" were bound because they were to be sacrificed: all these were pointing to the great sacrifice made by our Lord Jesus Christ. The beasts were bound literally, pain was to be endured, blood was to be shed, their binding was not voluntarily; but Christ being bound by sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar, was

acting from choice by his own free will. "*Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offering and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.*" Heb. 10:5, 6, 7.

Why was it necessary to "bind the sacrifice" with cords? Is there not a tendency in all flesh to shrink away from things that horrify us? In the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, was there not some shrinking from the human nature of Christ to escape the bitter cup of extreme pain, blood shedding, and his suffering death upon the cross? Did he not pray saying, "*O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me?*" Yet he was bound to the horn of the altar and says, "*Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.*" Matt. 26:39. So he was caught by the horns in the thicket of covenant engagements which he by his own will had freely and voluntarily undertaken on the behalf of poor unworthy sinners, that he might forever put away, as far as east is from west, the sins of his people. "*By the which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*" Heb. 10:10.

May the Lord bless us to see and feel the binding of his people, spiritually and experimentally. As the victim had a feeling of breaking away from those confronting him, so the Lord's people have an inclination to break away from the pathway the Lord has predestinated for his elect children to walk. There is a shrinking back from suffering, trials, tribulations, burdens of sins, labouring under our sins, guilt, troubles, and many other difficulties which confront us in our walk of life. Was this not true of the children of Israel while traveling through the wilderness? "*And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, would God that we had died in the wilderness! Were it not better for us to*

return to Egypt?" Num. 14:23.

Christ being bound to the horns of the altar suffered untold sufferings for his people while here upon earth and is now sitting in glory at the right hand of the Father. If we have a hope of entering into that future glory then we must expect much suffering along our pathway of life here upon earth for there is no entering into glory except through suffering. Is it not even a gift from Christ to his people for them to suffer? "*For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.*" Phil. 1:29. Our growth in grace is not without trials and tribulations. If we be in union with Christ, being bound to the horns of the altar, we must suffer to some degree with him, for how can the Head suffer without the body being effected? If we suffer each hour while on earth, for Christ's sake, what would it be compared to eternal glory, if we be his children and heirs? "*And if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon the suffering of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us.*" Rom. 8:17, 18.

We are all born into a sinful world, with a sinful nature. Our sinful nature is so prone to go after the things of the world, to go after its' idols and to hew out cisterns for ourselves, broken cisterns that hold no water, forsaking the Fountain of living waters. Dear ones, can we not see how this world could become our paradise with our every thought and mind centered upon it if God did not cause it to become a wilderness, a desert land to us through suffering, trials, and tribulations? Our afflictions may be great or small, but afflictions we must have, because we are bound to the horns of the altar and there is no escaping them if we be in union with Christ Jesus. "*We must through much tribulations enter into the kingdom of God!*"

Acts 14:23. We are traveling on a stormy sea tempted and harrassed by Satan, by the many idols of this world, sometimes by family troubles, temporal afflictions, bodily afflictions, and many more may fall on those traveling to Zion. Yea, sometimes trouble among churches and brethren. But in all these may we be given by the grace of God to proclaim that this world is not our home, we are only passing through to that far greater and better home which God hath prepared for them that love him.

If there is anything worthwhile in this article, give God the praise; if errors, charge those to me for I'm ignorant and full of errors.

An unworthy sinner in hope of mercy,

Elder Joe L. Hamrick

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Williams:

I am sending in check for two years subscription to the Signs.

I really enjoyed the July issue—Hidden in the cleft of the rock was so beautiful.

Sometime God blesses me with His sweet spirit of love, then *everything* is beautiful—Love is such a powerful thing, it makes everything worth while.

I know everything God does is just and right for He *is* wisdom, but I wish many times I could retain the Spirit, and would hold it if I could, but we are *taught* that without it we can *do nothing*, and we learn where it comes from. I have begged for wisdom and knowledge of the things that pertain to God and Godliness—and it is written "If any lack wisdom, let him ask God, who giveth liberally". Great is the *mystery* of Godliness.

Brother Williams, God gives us what we need and I feel so grateful to have

been given faith to *believe in Him* and Hope in His Mercy and enjoy the love and fellowship of His Children and try in our weak way to praise His name and talk of His mighty love and power by which He upholds all things, rules and controls all things.

May He watch over us all and lead us in paths of righteousness and peace, for His own names sake.

Mrs. Lucille Young
807 Pope Street
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Brethren and Friends:

I feel like writing a few thoughts for publication in the good old paper, the *Signs*. I do not know what I may say, but hope it will be a thus saith the Lord. I am sure I can say one thing: that there dwells no good thing in me, that is, in my flesh, all polluted, a poor, trembling worm of dust. When I would do good, evil is present; the good that I would I do not, evil thoughts crowding out good thoughts, as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upward. There in only one good, that is God; he is precious to them that love his name. The name of Jesus, how sweet, how lovely, how pure. Man in his best estate is but vanity, a lump of clay in the hands of the Potter. The Lord's portion is his people, chosen out of every kindred, tongue and nation; not many mighty, not many noble, but the poor of this world. Forty-nine years ago to-day I tried to tell the brethren here at Hopewell what great things the Lord had done for me. I could say but little about this wonderful salvation through grace, faith and hope through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. I thought I must tell the brethren how worthy I felt, but hope I was made to see that there was no salvation in that way. I was received, and have been greatly blessed to have the

privilege and to be able to be in my seat at most of the meetings. Sometimes I ask, am I a child of God, or have I deceived the brethren? So many misgivings and failures to do the good I would. He said, There is none good, no, not one. That encourages me at times, The thief on the cross repented at the last moment and was saved. He is merciful, he will not chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Whosoever confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which art in heaven. Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father which art in heaven. We love to praise him and crown him Lord of all, giving him all the glory, honor, dominion, power and majesty. A poor babe found in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes grew up the wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and died that ignominious death on the cross. He was made a little lower than the angels, died and rose again for our justification. I feel that I can praise him for all his wonderful works and trust him for all that is to come. If I could only feel sure that I am numbered with his chosen ones. I fear at times that I have not been born again, forgetting spiritual things and clinging to worldly things. That good hope is an anchor of our souls, sure and steadfast not like the anchor of a ship, but a sure anchor, a sure foundation, that will stand. My sheep hear my voice, I know them; not one shall perish. Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold. He gathers his sheep in his arms and carries the lambs in his bosom; he will never forsake one of them, they are his. Blessed are they that do his commandments; they shall have right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. We hear much about worldly inheritance,

but we seek that inheritance which fadeth not away, but is from everlasting to everlasting. O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? Is not God wiser than the wisdom of men? No flesh shall glory in his presence. The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men. Paul said, By the grace of God I am what I am. I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. He told his Philippian brethren to rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee. The words of the prophet were: Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame, for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall he be called. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer.

I fear I have written more than I should, so will close, hoping that some one of the little ones may get a crumb of com-

fort from this poor letter. I wish I could write like others of my brethren.

From a poor worm of the dust,

D. L. Blackwell.

Dear Brethren:

I cannot find words to express to you what the SIGNS is to me in my lonely life, separated so far from those I love for the truth's sake. It seems to me that all the dear writers are taught by the same great Teacher—all taught the same great truth. Some dear one writes of the power and majesty of our God, who has all power in heaven and on earth, and of the nothingness of man. How I realize the truth and beauty of the words. What a sweet and comforting doctrine, that our God is the God of purpose and grace; that He works all things after the counsel of His own will, and that all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose. Such letters are full of comfort and strengthen the little ones. Then a letter from one whose heart is drawn out in love and sympathy for those who are situated like myself, far away from those they love for the truth's sake; they I feel are my friends, and I hear no preaching except through the Signs. We have the Bible, the precious word of God; yes, and a precious treasure it is, but sometimes our hearts are so dark and dead we cannot see the beauty in its pages, and it seems like mockery to attempt to read its divine words. O how dark and dead is our heart when we can see no beauty in that word, so full, so precious to God's dear people. I read on; each and every writer has some word that touches a responsive chord in my heart, telling some of my daily experience; so it all seems like an unbroken chain linked together in love. I can but hope that I am taught by the same unerring Spirit, and my heart is drawn out in love for each

dear one. My only hope is in Jesus, that because he lives I shall live also. How much I love the Old Baptists; I feel that I know something about their sorrows, their longings and also their great joy when the burden is lifted. My heart rejoices with those who rejoice and sympathizes with those who sorrow. May the Lord keep and bless you and spare you long to publish the dear old Signs of The Times, and long spare the dear editors to continue to fill it with truth and light from above, to share with the little ones.

Yours in love for the truth,
(Mrs.) F. J. Norris.

Dear Editors:

I have been impressed several times to write you, but have procrastinated until to-day, and now it seems to me I cannot think of one thing that so actuated and prompted me then, so there is no doubt in my mind at this time that if you deem this as worthless as I feel at present you will throw it into the wastebasket. I have read some letters in which the writers have expressed such feelings, and I was made to feel strengthened and benefited by their letters, so I am still inclined to make an attempt. Strange indeed that we take consolation in our infirmities by the testimony of like experiences in others, but did not Paul say that he gloried in his infirmities, and another place in the cross? It strikes me that such infirmities are good symptoms of grace. My mind is directed to John vi. 44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." It seems to me that the conclusive thought herein conveyed is that of the resurrection. Jesus declares that he is the bread of life, and that no man can come unto him except it were given unto him of his Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked

no longer with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. This part of the subject seems to be of most concern to me at this time than any other. Some called it a hard saying, and it appears that Peter did not deem it otherwise, and the Lord did not say that it was not a hard saying. It was manifest there that there were some that did believe and there were some that did not believe, and now this matter of depravity is the most hated doctrine of any other in my country, I think. It occurs to my mind to give my experience, sentimentally, whether any one else is wrought upon in like manner or some other manner. The scripture says, dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. This is consistent with my own experience, and I take it to embrace all of Adam's race. Though a man appear to be something, yet he has no more sovereign power than the dust under his feet. Let our attention go to Matthew xxv. 24, 25: "He which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." Now let us consider just what the Lord taught in this parable. Men seem to have that which they have not, and we do not understand that the Lord surrenders his rights of sovereignty over the work of his own hand, because he was accused of being hard. Jesus is all to his people; they could not do anything whatever toward their soul's salvation without him. It seems to me that if we could do one thing that would be of any merit in our soul's salvation the Lord would not have told us that some would come up and claim that they had done many wonderful works in his name. If our understanding is right there

is a death to die, and we infer that no man can approach it of himself; and a birth to take place, then what could a man do in the begetting and birth of himself? So may we well conclude that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and that the Lord works in his people. Philippians ii. 13, reads: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Now I think it a plain proposition that the apostle put to the Philippian brethren, and they had no right to claim any of the honor for their well-doing, for all the honor and glory belongs to the God of all creation. There are many other references in the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, which space will not admit, since I would like to say a few words about the latter part of the passage: "And I will raise him up at the last day." There seems to have been people in the days of Christ and the apostles who did not believe in the resurrection

of the dead. The Sadducees were grieved that the apostles taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead. (Acts iv.) I reckon that the world is no better now than it was then, for they not only had the Savior face to face to correct or rebuke them, but they had more than five hundred witnesses, and when the apostle recorded the incident he said the greater part of them remained, and a study of the resurrection of Jesus himself seems to give us a hopeful anchor; the victory is all in Jesus.

I think I had better stop here. If the Lord will, I want to attend some of the associations this fall, and I hope I may find the brethren in preaching spirit, for I believe it is now nearly two years since I heard any of them. If it were not for the SIGNS I hardly know what would become of me. I am miserably lonesome, depraved and sinful.

With only a hope,
J. A. Preston

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



North Creek Church was established in 1742 and may be the oldest active Primitive Baptist Church in North Carolina. Minutes of the meeting from 1790 to 1890 are in Duke University Library. For those minutes prior to that time we have no record.

Our meeting days are Second Sunday

and Saturday before in each month.

Our pastor is Elder J. T. Prescott who has served us for about fourteen years. The church is located on Highway 92 about 10 miles east of Bath.

North Creek is also Elder Reeves Smith's home church.

 VOICES OF THE PAST

 "he being dead yet speaketh"

Dear Brethren:

The Psalmist says: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." By the Spirit of God in him David was enabled to know that the Savior would come and suffer and die for his people, rise the third day, as shown by the sign of Jonah, raise his loved ones above the law, bring all of them to him and finally land them all in glory. "He that goeth forth and weepeth," whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Again, the prophet says, Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. If we follow on to know the Lord. Most people have not followed on to know the Lord, and have dried up for the lack of rain and perished, and you will hear them singing, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves, claiming to do what has already been done by the great Redeemer. People tell us the Primitive Baptists are an ignorant people. They honestly think this is true, because they do not know, and have been taught from their infancy that it is so.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth." Before the world it was arranged, and when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. When the appointed time came for him to suffer and to go into the garden and weep, they came to a place called Gethsemane. He began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, this one who did no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of

the world; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. He said to his disciples, "Tarry ye here and watch," and he went a little farther and fell on the ground. Matthew says, "Fell on his face and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He came back and found them asleep, and said, "Could you not watch with me one hour?" The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Then while he was in the garden there came an angel the third time and strengthened him. Brethren, have you not experienced the same: been so distressed, so awfully pressed down with the weight of your sins that you gave up to die, and something would strengthen you? The angel of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Paul says, That ye may know him, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection. He suffered for us, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Then they came out against him in the night, and Jesus said, This is your hour, and the power of darkness. Then the appointed moment had come, so they took him and crucified him.

"Bearing precious seed," is the next clause. The Bible says, A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation. Again, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Again, I will make Christ's seed to endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. Paul says, If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Abraham was a type. Again, The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are accounted for the seed. Because they

were the natural children of fleshly Abraham it did not make them the children of God; the relation must be in the Spirit. Paul says, Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Peter says, Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. So he bore all this seed, and not one was left out. He is the head, ye are the body, and members in particular, from whom all the body, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. They were all there. Were they always in him? Was that incorruptible seed they are born of always in him, or are they baptized into him, or does the preacher sow the seed and in this way they are born and get into him? If this seed the preacher sows is what causes the birth, none but those who hear the preacher are born of the Spirit, every one else is lost. We had a member who was convicted in Africa, brought to America after she had received a hope, and when she joined the church she said, "Master, what you preach I felt in my heart in my own country." Primitive Baptists never did believe the birth is caused by seed sown by the preacher. This is like their bringing in the sheaves, they leave too many out. Billions they never even see, much less bring in.

"Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing." Paul says, And the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight. Peter says, Begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The prophet said, After two days he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. He came again with rejoicing. Isaiah says, Sing, O barren, that didst

not bear; break forth into singing, thou that didst not travail with child; for the desolate hath many more children than the married wife, saith the Lord. Yes, brethren, there are many more Gentiles that are manifested as the children of God than there are Jews. Isaiah says, For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoice over thee. Here you have been trembling and full of fear, saying, My God hath forgotten me and the Lord hath forsaken me. A woman may forget her sucking child, yet will I remember thee, is what God says. O, says every poor little trembling one, I do not see how the great, wise and wondrous Savior could even look at such as I, much less rejoice over me. O, I want to hide my homely face, I want to go away in some dark hollow, in some dense forest, and lay me down and mourn always because I am so black and so polluted. It cannot be that the one Isaiah says is glorious in his apparel and travels in the greatness of his strength could love me. I can see so clearly how he can banish me from his presence and the glory of his power. There is every reason why this should be my lot, I deserve it so much, and I cannot see how he could love such a polluted sinner as I know myself to be. If I only knew he rejoiced over me as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride I would be the happiest mortal on earth, and willing to bear any loss, or any cross, or any trial or disappointment. That is what all of his loved ones say. If you had no spiritual life you could not see your blackness. You do not look black to him, for you are washed, you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

"Bringing his sheaves with him." The

angel said he would, and we believe the angel told the truth. Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Peter says, For Christ hath also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. His power is sufficient, for he said, No man taketh my life from me; I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. Again, All power, both in heaven and in earth, is given into my hands. His arms are long enough to embrace every one that ever did or ever will live; not only long enough, but reached out backward and forward and lifted every one above the law. For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Again, it is written, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. It only took Jesus three days to reach out and get every sheaf and bring it back with him. Isaiah said, Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. The world, from Abel down to the last one to be born, is the field where these sheaves are, embracing all nations and all people—a big field. Now, brethren, look at these people that sing, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. How few they bring; what great multitudes they have never even seen. According to their theory nearly all the sheaves are lost. If I were to raise a great crop of grain, and when it was ripe, if I were to do all I could to save it and fail as completely as they have, I would think myself a poor manager. In 1880, according to their own statement, nearly seven-tenths of the human race had never seen a preacher or a Bible. Then nearly all the sheaves are lost if their doctrine is true, but thank the Lord it is false. People say to us, You do not save any one but a few Old Baptists. You never heard an Old Baptist say that. Benedict, the Missionary Baptist historian, says all the old divines taught that all the Savior died

for he saved. God said to Abraham, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven. Paul takes this up and says, Therefore there sprang even from one, and him as good as dead, as the stars of the sky in multitude and as the sand of the sea innumerable. Can you count the grains of sand in a peck? John saw so many no man could number them, out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people. They said, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to loose the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. That is how many the Old School Baptists believe are saved. Paul says, As is the offence, so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many, not unto a few. When we treat on the subject of those God has chosen out of the world for his witnesses and to suffer for his sake, we say few, very few. So it is written, Many are called, but few are chosn. Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it. Gideon had only three hundred out of all Israel to fight that famous battle, but all the balance of Israel shared in the spoils. God chose the three hundred so he could show what he could do. He said, The people are too many, lest Israel should vaunt themselves, and say we, yes, we have gained this battle by our might. So it is here and there we find a few like Gideon's three hundred, ready to suffer and fight for the truth as it is in Jesus. Those who went lapped the water as a dog lappeth. A dog is the most faithful animal to his master we know, and will follow him through rain and snow, heat and cold, and if his master is so poor he cannot give him a crust of bread the dog will go and hunt something to eat, and come back and follow his master. So it is with God's true and tried people, they follow Jesus through evil as well as good report

and follow him through sneers, jeers and all kinds of abuse. Preachers will, when the church is too poor to help them, earn their own living, and then come and preach to them. Bringing his sheaves with him. The satisfying of the law, the saving of his people, and the place and time, are one thing, and the manifestation of it is another. The place where he saved his people on the cross, and when he came out of the tomb; the manifestation of this is in all time and places. The Bible says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, &c. Again, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. They shall show forth my praise. Again, In that day shall the great trumpet be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mountain at Jerusalem. Now, brethren, come and stand right here on this tower and look. See away yonder in the east in China. See them coming from away over there where there are no ministers of the gospel and no Bible. Bring my sons from far. How, you ask, were they saved? The same as yourselves. As Paul says, Therefore being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Now turn toward the frozen regions of the north. I will say to the north, Give up. O Look! See them coming. The ransomed of the Lord shall return. Hear them shout the victory through Jesus. Now, brethren, turn with me and look over there at that dark place, that is Africa, that is south, and to the south God says, Keep not back. No place to black, no one too poor. Do you know that Jesus was born in a stable,

among the beasts of the stall? Does not the Bible say, Out of every nation? Surely it does. Then there they come, millions for whom Jesus died and saved, according to our doctrine. which is true Bible doctrine, yet, according to the teaching of the Arminian world, are lost for the want of the gospel. Ah, yes, coming. Glory to God, coming, in spite of error, regardless of all the carelessness, corruption and neglect of men. Coming, and praising Jesus for saving them. Not a few Old Baptists, but as the sand of the sea, innumerable. Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." This "all" embraces all the Father gave him before time began. O how grand and glorious, how wonderful. Saved and coming, regardless of their ignorance, imperfections, mistakes and wrong doings. Coming singing:

*"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And Crown him Lord of all."*

Coming, money or no money. Coming if all preachers die. Coming if no one gives a cent to foreign missions. Wonder of wonders, glory of glories! This is the most wonderful doctrine ever preached. No wonder Paul wrote, therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Coming, even if they are deceived and do not believe, for Paul says, If we believe not he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself. For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. O, brethren, am I one, poor, little, sinful thing that I am?

The editors can do as they like with this. I have written too much.

Your unworthy, brother, if one at all,

Isaac R. Greathouse

 ARTICLES

**GOD MAKES THE WRATH
OF MAN TO PRAISE HIM.**

What things in the Bible are the most talked of, written about and dwelt upon as being the greatest of all God's works? Are they not those things brought about by the acts of wicked men? Take, for instance, the act of the king issuing a decree that all the male children under two years of age should be killed. On the one side of the scales we see the death of little children, the anguish of the mothers, heartrending scenes throughout the world; on the other side we see the babe in the manger, the little ark (hidden in the bulrushes) containing Moses, whom death, the king and all the powers of wickedness could not find. Were the scales balanced when Jesus sat thereon holding far from the maddened crowd his babes? On another pair of scales we see Joseph sold into Egypt by his brethren only because of God's revelation to him. Could anything balance the scales?

Let us see. There is a live Joseph storing up corn for those who sold him. Which was greater, God through Joseph, or the devil through the brethren of Joseph? Take Daniel in the lions' den. On one side of the scales let us place the king, with those who obeyed him; on the other side, God commanding the lions. Did they hear him? Do we not find a great obstacle in our way when we place the fiery furnace into which the Hebrew children had been cast on one side the scales? We need here One who can quench the violence of fire, One who can walk right into the furnace with his children and speak to the fire. Did the fire hear? Again, I see mighty Pharaoh and his vast army pursuing the Israelites on one side the scales. What can weigh down the other

side, when we see the Red Sea in front, the mountains on either side and the enemy behind? Could a simple word do it? Hear this: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." Where? Into the deep waters? Yes, because they shall not overflow them. They shall be driven back. Haman sits on one side of the scales, planning death for Mordecai, Jesus sits on the other, who wins? Delilah sits on one side, striving with all her might to take away Samson's strength. His hair is cut off and his eyes put out, surely now his side is too weak to have any weight; but see him in the temple, bowing himself as he holds to the pillars, asking God's help, and then answer. I can picture a prison, with the disciples of Christ bound with chains, on one side, what do I see on the other? A great quaking of the earth, and the prisoners set free. Now place Judas, Herod and the entire world on one side of the scales and the crucified Son of God on the other. Is there a balance here? He is risen a mighty conqueror over death, hell and the grave.

Pattie Woodard Anderson

ACTS XII. 5.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

Concerning the matter of prayer there seems to be much confusion in the minds of many people. Some seem to think that the Lord can be and is influenced by prayers, that the will of God is determined by prayers, that the Lord waits to hear the petitions of men before deciding in his own mind what he will or will not do. This confusion of thought regarding prayer arises from the human error of trying to conceive of the Almighty as being one like ourselves. This is an entirely wrong idea of God, but one which is characteristic of all human thoughts

of God. God being infinitely above the comprehension of the human mind, it must be that the human mind by no sort of effort of its own can possibly grasp one right thought as to who God is, or as to how he works. The Scriptures declare that God is of one mind and none can turn him, that he is the same yesterday and to-day and forever, that he changes not. Any idea of prayer which implies that God can be influenced by prayer, which seems to indicate that God is subject to change because of prayers, does violence to numerous declarations throughout the Bible concerning the true character of God. On the other hand, concerning prayer itself, it is not a matter within the control of mortals to know when to pray, or what to pray for. We cannot appoint times and seasons for prayer ourselves, for no one of us knows when or where it may please the Holy Spirit to indite its petitions in our hearts, and without the Holy Spirit leading and teaching us in this matter of prayer no prayer can be made. If the apostle Paul himself confessed it to be his infirmity that he knew not what to pray for as he ought, and if he ever went so far as to include the Roman brethren as being in this same weakness with himself, we are confident that not one of all the Lord's people since Paul's time has grown any stronger in this regard, and that it is still the weakness of every child of God that they cannot pray of themselves. The work of the Holy Spirit must be going on in the believer's heart if true prayer is ever offered up unto God. Since, then, prayer in no wise has any influence with the Almighty so as to in any sense change his plan or purpose, and since true prayer must always be, and is, the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the believer's souls, then prayer is not for the instruction of the Almighty to instruct him in his people's needs, but it is for the instruction and edification of those who believe in God. It is through the experience of prayer that believers

are shown their spiritual need of, and their entire dependence upon, God. If God has not all power in heaven and in earth what would be the need of prayer? Would it be worth while to petition a God that could not grant our petitions? We mention this because our enemies have said, and do say, that Old School Baptists have not much use for prayer. They say this because they think that the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God does away with the necessity for prayer; that if God has purposed all things whatsoever come to pass, and that all things shall come to pass just as God wills, whether we pray or not, or whether we want it to be so or not, why pray at all? Well, if prayer, as said before, be for the purpose of telling God what to do, then there is no sense in it, for whoever prays with the thought in his or her mind that God is in anywise to be influenced by the prayer is not really praying at all. Prayer arising from any such wrong notion of God is the fruit of nothing but the flesh, and has not the Holy Spirit for its cause. But, to come at the matter rightly, predestination is the very backbone and sinew of prayer. It is because God has purposed from eternity to do certain things for his children that he does by the intercession of the Holy Spirit cause them to pray for and to desire the very things which it is his eternal purpose to give them. Every true prayer, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, is in entire harmony with the will of God, never in harmony with the will or lusts of the flesh. The experience of real prayer cannot be otherwise than a crucifixion to the flesh, a humbling of our carnal nature. That is why, in ancient times, the posture of kneeling or prostrating the body and generally considered the right position for one to be in when praying. It showed outwardly the humiliation and self-abasement that was felt, or ought to be felt, inwardly in the soul by the one praying. As it is impossible for us with

our finite minds to know what is the will of God, and since every prayer worthy of acceptance with God must be in accord with his divine will, how necessary then, if we are ever to pray, that we be taught in some way what the will of God is in order to pray. Inasmuch as the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and since nothing in all the will and purpose of God is hidden from the mind of the Spirit, how well it is that God has ordained his Spirit to help us in this our infirmity regarding prayer, and to teach us how and what to pray for.

All this leads up to the subject of our text at the head of this article. The church suffered great persecution for Christ's sake during the days of the apostles and of the early church. The twelfth chapter of Acts records one of these persecutions. During one of the Jewish passovers, the authority of Herod, ruler over Judea as the representative of Rome, arrested Peter and put him in prison. This, of course, distressed the brethren greatly, and they prayed unceasingly for Peter's release. Did the prayers of the church cause or bring about Peter's release? No, positively not. Prayer never causes anything unless it may be the comfort and edification of the Lord's people, but as for prayer being the cause of any event in the history of men, or of the church, it is not so. Prayer is itself an effect or fruit of the Spirit, as we have said, but prayer itself is not a cause. It was all in the purpose and will of God that Peter was to be released from prison, and his release did not wait upon, nor was it caused by, the prayers of the church. How do we know this? Simply because Peter was one of those selected by Christ to preach his gospel, thus to feed the lambs and the sheep. Having thus a work to do in the vineyard of the Lord, he was perfectly safe from any vital injury until his work should be accomplished. It was just as impossible for Peter to die before his work was finished as for

the sun to be blotted from the sky. The prayers of the church did not lengthen Peter's life, nor did they effect his release from prison. His marvelous escape when an angel came to him and bade him follow, when the chains fell from his hands, when the iron gate opened before him and he went out safely into the street, all this was a demonstration of the power, not of effectual prayer, but of the power of almighty God, who alone is wonder-working. The prayers of the church were spiritual, because the Holy Spirit indited this prayer for Peter's safety in the heart of the church. Had not the Lord before determined upon the release of Peter the Holy Spirit would not have put it in the minds and hearts of the brethren to pray for him. True prayer invariably asks for what is already God's will to give. When the late president William McKinley was shot it will be remembered how special prayer services were held all over this country, and by various religious denominations, asking the Lord to spare his life, but he died. The will of God was not that McKinley should be spared. This proves that in all the so-called prayers that were offered up for his recovery there was not one single spiritual prayer. Had there been one true prayer in all that multitude, his life would have been spared; not that the prayer would have caused God to spare him, but the true prayer would have been the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit never gives rise to a prayer contrary to the will of God. Had it not then been the will of God to release Peter from prison the brethren would not have found themselves able to pray for his release. They would have been, no doubt, crushed with sorrow for Peter, but as to prayer, would have been dumb. We met a mother this summer who had suffered the loss of a dear child, and through all this child's illness she was convinced it was going to die, simply because she found herself unable to pray for its

recovery. The fact that she could not pray for nor desire its recovery was an evidence to the mother that it was God's will for the child to die. Had it been God's will for it to live doubtless she would have had in her heart a petition for it to live. This is an instance proving how prayer runs counter to one's natural inclinations. We are glad we have been made to believe in the immutability of Jehovah. What comfort to a poor soul could there be in a God who could be led about willynilly by the desires of now this one, now that? Prayer is an experimental exercise of the Spirit by which the believer is brought around into harmony with the will of God, not a process by which God is brought into our way of thinking.

Written by request.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

SOME THOUGHTS BY THE WAY

God is love. But do I love Him? What evidence have I? It is said again, Love is God. The origin of all that is good is from above. Man is corrupt in all his ways, he cannot attain unto anything good. A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Why and how do I love the brethren? It is because of the imputation of the divine life, the love of God shed abroad in the heart. Paul says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins." What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse of my soul? Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. If sons, then heirs of God and joint-Heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. We love him because he first loved us and gave himself for us—died for the ungodly. If God so loved us, we

ought to love one another. Do we do this? Do we love the church? Do we love his blessed cause? Do we prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy? Are we willing to make sacrifices for the cause, forsake father and mother, wife and children, home and lands for His dear name's sake? If God so loved us that we should be made the rich recipients of all the fullness of the riches of His grace, is it not but a small sacrifice upon our part to attend to the things spoken in his word, and not give heed to seducing spirits, fleshly feelings and hatred one toward another? By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. I know of no other way of manifesting the love of God and serving Him acceptably with reverential fear except as we love and serve one another.

*"Do not I love thee, O my God?
Behold my heart and see."*

ISAIAH XXI. 11

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth unto me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night?"

Well may we pause, and with reverence and solemn awe cry from the depths of our poor laboring hearts, Watchman, what of the night? With our beloved Zion, the silence of Dulmah thus crieth out of Seir. "The Watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night." Yes, the day of rejoicing has been in Zion, when we could indeed look upon Zion, the city of our God, and see Jerusalem and quiet habitation, where the glorious Lord was unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, a fruitful field indeed, when saints did long for the courts of the Lord and count it all joy to forsake all and follow the commands of their Lord and Master and meet in the assembly of the saints, when love reigned supreme; but a sad reverse has come, her glory has departed, few come to her

solemn feasts. One of old said, Is there not a cause? We answer, Yes, the love and glitter of the world, loving the wages of sin rather than the riches of the Kingdom, sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reaping corruption. The apostle has well said, If ye live after the flesh ye shall die. This is inevitable. May each of us ask ourselves the momentous question, Am I living after the flesh? May we find the response in our own hearts. The dear Redeemer said, seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. God grant that we all do this, that it may be our meat and drink to do our heavenly Master's will, that our daily inquiry may be, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? May each feel the solemn pledge when received in the church, and the joy of soul, and to feel as David, A day in thy courts is better than a thousand in the pleasures of sin (the world). Then will Zion's courts be filled again, and the voice of singing songs of praise unto Him who loved us and gave himself for us. "If ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come."

UNTO JOHN'S BAPTISM

I wish to present more fully than heretofore my reasons for believing that the twelve disciples whom Paul found on his second visit to Ephesus had not been baptized in gospel order, and that when the apostle explained the matter to them they were, by his direction, baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts. xix. 1-7.)

1. My first reason is the plain and only reading of the text. There must be a radical change in the construction of two sentences, verses five and six, in order to make them express any other meaning than that when these disciples heard what Paul told them about John's teaching those whom he baptized the

necessity of a belief on the Lord Jesus, then they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

2. Paul did not ask the men who baptized them, but unto what they were baptized; that is, what pattern or authority they had in view in receiving that ordinance. If John personally had baptized them it could not be said that they were baptized unto his baptism.

3. About twenty-five years had passed away since the death of John. If it were at all likely that these men had been baptized by him, how could they have failed to hear the baptism of Jesus and of the Holy Ghost during all those years? John's baptism was his own personal work. No one ever had the right to baptize in his name, or unto his baptism. Of the one hundred and twenty who were together after the ascension of Jesus, some may have been baptized by John. On the day of Pentecost, and from that day I do not see anything to warrant the thought that any were added to the church without being baptized. We do not read of any coming and being received in any church upon any former baptism. How strange it would seem to find, twenty-three years after the notable day of Pentecost, twelve men who had been baptized two or three years before that day, and yet in all that time had not even heard that there was any Holy Ghost, nor known the baptism of Jesus.

4. Paul had been at Ephesus some time before, bringing Aquila and Priscilla from Antioch, and leaving them there. At that probably his first visit to Ephesus, he did some preaching and reasoning in the synagogue, and soon left them. Some time after (Acts xviii. 24), Apollos came there. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, but not perfectly, knowing only the baptism of John. He spoke for some time eloquently and diligently, teaching the things of the Lord so far as he knew them. Whether he or his imperfect instructors baptized

these twelve men we cannot tell. He had not been teaching long before he was heard by those who were fully instructed in the gospel, and they faithfully expounded to him the way of God more perfectly.

These twelve disciples were found at Ephesus on Paul's second visit. They seem to have been recently baptized, and likely they had not heard Apollos after he had been more perfectly instructed and had begun to preach the gospel of Jesus clearly.

5. The apprehension that the validity of John's baptism is involved in this question, has undoubtedly led some to try to re-arrange the sentence so as to make it express the idea that these men had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but had never known it till Paul told them. Our object and effort should be to find out what the inspired Scriptures do really say, without reference to what we might think they ought to say. The validity of John's baptism, as his personal act, is not at all involved in this subject, but only his baptism as the example and authority to be had in view in administering the ordinance under the gospel. John's baptism ceased when he ceased to administer it personally.

However satisfied one may have felt when receiving baptism, if it was not administered in gospel order then it is not gospel baptism. The ordinance must be in the name of Jesus, and the faith of him who is baptized must be in that name. It must be in the fellowship of the gospel church, in accordance with the command given by Jesus to his apostles, and set in order by them in their acts and teaching.

How carefully and jealously should the order of the gospel church be observed and guarded. To the eye of faith that church is "the perfection of beauty," out of which "God hath shined." It is the order as established by the Lord, not the numbers, by which any organization is

known as the church of God.

Many are around almost any gospel church who have not been baptized, yet who are loved and held in esteem by the brethren as dear children of grace. They love the church, and attend with deep interest upon the preaching of the word, and yet they do not come in. We often try to show them that it is their privilege and duty to be baptized, but without avail. We often feel that we ought to be able to say the loving and powerful word that shall remove the hindrances from their minds, but it is not given us to say it. We have to learn that it is in the day of God's power, not in the day of our power, that his people will be willing. When any do come, and O, how easily and sweetly they come when the Lord opens the way, both they and we know that it was God's power, not ours, that brought them. If they never come, as is the case with so many dear believers in the Lord, we know that it was not God's purpose that they should be thus united with the visible church of God, as his witnesses here in the world. We still are bound up with them in the bundle of life, holding them in christian love and fellowship, though not being able to extend to them the hand of church fellowship. When they leave this world we believe they have gone to dwell with their Savior in glory.

Baptism is an ordinance of our dear Savior for this time state, but has nothing to do with the preparation of his people for heaven and its eternal glory. To that eternal glory and blessedness "many are called," even a great company that no man can number, "but few are chosen" to be of "the little flock." to whom the kingdom is given here in time, who shall stand as witnesses of Jesus in the world, as the church of God," the pillar and ground of the truth." For this church, and those individually who are members of it, there are appointed reproaches, and burdens, and afflictions,

and a yoke, and labors, and crosses, and daily dyings, and honors unseen by the world, and joys unknown to men, and conflicts; all of which are in some measure seen by the dear children of God without, but not shared in by them except in small measure.

But these things end with time. Our eternal state is not affected by them, nor is there any difference there between those who were in the visible church here, and those of God's dear people who were not. We cannot say to one, "If you will join the church here you will be the happier hereafter." The Lord gives his servants here a higher, holier motive to labor in his service than that, even his own glory. Love is in the heart of every redeemed soul when called by grace here below, the love of God, whether in the church or out, and that love remains when we go from earth to glory. In that blessed world of light all the redeemed shall join in the endless song of praise unto God and the Lamb.

Elder Silas H. Durrand

CONTRIBUTIONS

LIST FOR JULY 1985

Mrs. Jane T. Fagan, NC.....	\$ 7.00
E. W. Holland, VA.	2.00
W. G. Brown, SC.....	2.00
Mrs. Merkley Giles, VA.	10.00
Mrs. Novaline Stewart, NC.....	2.00
Carroll Ellwanger, NC.	2.00
C. E. DeBow, NC.....	2.00
W. C. Lake, FL.....	2.00
A. W. King, NC.....	5.00
Mrs. Ruth B. Pittman, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Brenda Johnson, TX.....	2.00
Mrs. W. N. Tilley, NC.	5.00
Mrs. Nettie Rice, VA.	7.00
James B. Pugh, AL.....	2.00
Mrs. Joel S. Alexander, AL.....	10.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA.....	7.00

Mrs. Ora Adams, VA.	3.00
Mrs. Celeste Welch, NC.....	2.00
Hardy Hill, TX.....	2.00
Mrs. Lucile McGee, WA.....	7.00
Mrs. Pattie B. Krewatch, DE., In memory Eld. John Wood...	35.00
Mrs. William Griffith, NY.	2.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA.	2.00

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Red Banks Church near Greenville, N.C. on October 11, 12, and 13, 1985.

All who believe and love the doctrine of Christ-Truth and Grace-are invited.

To get to the Church, go to the intersection of Highways 11 and 264 on the south side of Greenville. From this point go east on 264 to the second stop light past Pitt Plaza Shopping Center, turn right, go about 3/4 mile to the dead end of this road, turn left and you can see the Church.

Milton Fountain, Clerk
Route 1, Box 607
Richlands, N.C. 28574
Phone (919) 324-3205

HOPEWELL ASSOCIATION

The Hopewell Association will convene, God willing, with Liberty Hill Church, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, on Friday, October 18, 1985 and continue through Sunday.

The meeting house is between Highways U.S. 43 and Alabama 69. Signs will be placed on these highways and at intersections along the routes to the site. One may leave westward from Highway 69 near Windham Springs between mileage markers 170 and 171; or eastward from Highway 43 near Northside High

School between mileage markers 221 and 222 (along County Road 38 for part of the way); or one may leave eastward from Highway 43 in New Lexington along County Road 55 for part of the way, (leaving 43 between mileage markers 228 and 229).

If more information is desired, please call or write:

Levert Howell
82 Arcadia Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL. 35404
Dial (205) 556-5157

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Pleasant Valley Association will convene, the Lord willing, first Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in November, 1985 at Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas.

The meeting house is on Little York Road, between Interstate 45 and Highway 59. All believers in the truth are invited to attend.

Elder Gerald D. Shipman
Association Clerk

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fortieth annual session of the Sulphur Fork Association, the Lord willing, will meet with Prospect Church, Friday before the first Sunday in October 1985. Located east of Simms, Texas on Highway 67.

The meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m., on Friday, October fourth, and will continue to Sunday noon. All lovers of the truth are invited to be with us.

If further information is needed, call (214) 796-3011 or (214) 629-3561.

*"Pride goeth before destruction,
and an haughty spirit before a fall."
Proverbs 16: 18*

OBITUARIES

BROTHER ARELIIOUS DELPHUS BLEVINS

We of Mt. Peak Primitive Baptist Church of Ovilla, Texas are deeply saddened by the loss of Brother Arelious Delphus Blevins, our dear Brother in Christ, whom the Lord saw fit to call from this life on Thursday, March 21, 1985. We believe to rest in the Arms of his beloved Savior to be at peace forever more.

Brother Blevins was born May 25, 1901 at Keller, Texas to Brother G. T. and Sister Mary Carolin (Bird) Blevins. One of ten children which all preceeded him in death but one, Brother Gains A. Blevins of Keller, Texas.

Left to mourn his passing are his wife of 60 years, Sister Neta Pearl (Wallace) Blevins, united in marriage at Keller on December 6, 1924. Of this union there was seven children born, of this a son Elder Robert Lee Blevins, preceeded him in death in 1976, of the remaining sons are Alfred Arelious of Duncanville, Texas, Elgin K. of Jacksonville, Texas and Grundy Ward Blevins of San Antonio, Texas. Daughters Eula Wadsworth and Oleta Cooper of Midlothian, Texas, and Doretha Lipe of Ovilla, Texas. Twenty-five grandchildren and forty-one great grandchildren.

Brother Blevins united with the Primitive Baptist in the spring of 1929 at Ft. Worth, Texas. He was ordained a deacon the first Sunday in April 1960 at the Mt. Peak Primitive Baptist Church of Waxahachie, Texas.

Funeral services were held at the Methodist Church of Ovilla by Elder M. R. Alton and Elder R. A. Moore, with burial in the Ovilla Cemetery.

Be it resolved that a copy of this go to the family with a copy going into the

church records and to all of the many papers that he took and so loved, also often writing articles in them.

At conference time April 28, 1985.

Moderator: Elder M. R. Alton
Church Clerk: Alfred A. Blevins

LOUISE BAUCOM

Sister Louise Eaton Baucom joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church September 19, 1959. She was received by letter from the Church at Nashville, N.C.

She was married to Daniel Baucom, the son of Sister Fannie Baucom, one of our members here at Durham.

She was very direct and forthright in expressing her belief in our Lord and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and predestination of the elect to glory.

Her life among us was marked by faithfulness in attendance at her meetings and she showed a generous and helpful spirit toward those who were sick or needed help.

She walked softly among us for twenty-one years. After a brief illness she died August 12, 1980.

The members of Durham Church remember this woman with deep love and respect.

Catherine M. Humbarger
Church Clerk

JOEL MADISON HALL

It becomes my sad duty to write a memorial of a wonderful departed brother in Christ. It is a burdensome duty for I am so unworthy and fear that I cannot write worthy of the deceased.

He was born in Patrick County, Virginia near Lovers Leap, and was married to Miss Nellie Elizabeth Major, on January 25, 1922 in Amelia, Virginia.

He joined Dan River Primitive Bap-

tist Church June 9, 1974.

Brother Joel passed away April 12, 1985 in triumph of the faith in the Savior of whom he loved and served, and was faithful to the Church.

His first wife preceded him in death by several years. In December of 1973 he was married to Sister Berdie Cobb Saunders, also a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church.

His survivors are this wife and three sons: Joel Madison, Jr. of Reidsville, N. C., John Dillard and Frank Irvin of Greensboro, N. C. Two stepdaughters; Dorothy S. Henderson of Raleigh, N. C. and Wilma Anne Jones of Reidsville, N. C. Five grandchildren, five great grandchildren and four step grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, his pastor Elder D. V. Spangler was critically ill at time of Brother Hall's death. Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Kenneth Key officiated. Burial was in Dan River Church Cemetery.

I would comfort the bereaved ones if it were in my power but this must come from God.

Done by order of Church at Dan River in her Conference, May 26, 1985.

Elder H. W. Wray - Moderator
J. Boyd Minter - Clerk
Coley S. Strader - Committee

SISTER SAGASTA HUDGENS

Our hearts at Old Mt. Church were saddened to hear the Lord in his devine wisdom had removed from our midst a dear sister, on Sept. 5, 1984, Sister Sagasta Hudgens.

We will miss her, tho we feel our miss is her gain. She loved the church, and the doctrine, Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church April 14, 1979, and was baptized May 19, 1979 with her sister Carrie. She was a faithful and devoted member, attended regular as long

as her health permitted, then would sometimes ask to have meetings in her home. Her health was bad for several years, yet she bore her afflictions with patience, never complaining, often saying the Lord was so good to her.

Her faithful, devoted family did every thing loving hearts and hands could for her comfort. Sister Hudgens was not afraid to die, she had a sweet hope of a home above. We feel sure she is resting in Paradise, waiting for the Lord to come in a cloud, reunite soul and body, and carry His children home. Then they will behold Him and be satisfied.

Sister Sagasta Hudgens was born Feb. 1, 1924 in Sycamore, Virginia. A daughter of the late Robert L. and Annie Marie Dalton Brumfield. In 1942 she married Schaub (Slim) Nathaniel Hudgens, and lived most of her life in Danville, Va.

She leaves to mourn her husband, one son, Buddy Nathaniel Hudgens, Danville, two daughters, Linda H. Phillips, Fort Bragg, N.C. and Bonnie Meadows of Danville, and three sisters, Mamie Brumfield, Doris Rowlin, and Carrie McDaniels, all of Danville, Va. and five grandchildren.

Her funeral was held Sept. 8, 1984 at Barker Funeral Chapel, by her pastor, Eler H. W. Wray. Her body was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers. May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to his will.

Done by order of church conference
June 15, 1985.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

BETSY HUNT

Betsy Mangum Hunt was received into the Durham Church May 19, 1974 and passed from this life August 31, 1983. She is survived by her mother, Sister Sally Mangum, two sons

and several sisters and a brother.

Like many of God's people, she had come through much tribulation and she encountered distress and sorrow in her pathway, but the Lord had given her a hope of heaven and this was her treasure. For many months she suffered a terminal illness with great patience and submission to God's will—until the Lord released her spirit from her afflicted body. She looked forward to Heaven as did the writer who wrote:

“There is a home for weary souls
By sin and sorrow driven
When tossed on life's tempestuous
shoals

Where storms arise and oceans roll
And all is dark—but heaven.

There fragrant flowers immortal bloom
And joys supreme are given;
There joys divine disperse the gloom,
Beyond the confines of the tomb—
Appears the dawn of Heaven.”

Catherine M. Humbarger
Church Clerk

BROTHER DOWNEY MURPHY

Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church is once again sadden by the death of one of its members, Brother Downey Murphy. Bro. Murphy was born October 20, 1901 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. He passed from this life June 4, 1985.

Survivors include his wife, Sister Viola Murphy; two daughters, Virginia M. Owen and Arline M. Giles; One sister, two brothers, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

One thing that will always stand out in my mind about our dear Brother, is that he and Sister Murphy carried me to Chapel Church and introduced me to Elder O. K. Tench, who became our pastor some years later.

His funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Chapel. Conducting the service was Elders O. K. Tench and Denver

Simpson. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

We trust God will comfort and reconcile the family to His will.

Humbly submitted,
Peggy Wells

SISTER ELISE SLAUGHTER

The Lord in his devine wisdom has removed another dear sister from our midst, Sister Elise Slaughter on Nov. 14, 1984. She was the oldest active member at Old Mt. Church and was blessed to attend regular to the end.

She had visited her daughter in Richmond, Va., came home and visited each of the other chidren, and had gone to her son's home to make her home on Sunday, was carried to the hospital on Monday and died Tuesday. The all wise and merciful God did not leave her to lay and suffer. She often said that she was thankful to the Good Lord that she was blessed to fix her meals and wait on herself. She did not want to bother anyone. Her lovely family was always there to do any thing they could for her comfort and convenience.

Sister Slaughter was born December 13, 1895 in Pittsylvania County. A daughter of the late Thomas Davis, and Betty Marshal Davis, she lived all her life in the Mt. Cross Community.

She joined Old Mt. Church in Sept. 1917. Was a faithful and devoted member over 67 years. A mother in Isreal, loved by all that knew her. She loved her church, her family and friends, and above all the Primitive Baptist doctrine.

She was married to Deacon S. A. Slaughter who died March 9, 1973.

She leaves to mourn one son, Posie Slaughter. Three daughters; Naomi Clark and Nora Winn of Danville, Va. Marion McDaniels of Richmond, Va. One sister, Lillie Pennell of Danville, Va. 16 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, and 8 great-great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was held Nov. 17, 1984 at Wrenn-Yeats Funeral Home by her pastor Elder H. W. Wray and Elder Wallace Smith. She was laid to rest by husband in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait the call from her Savior, children come home.

Done by order of church conference,
June 15, 1985.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

HETTIE THACKER

Sister Hettie Thacker was received into the Durham Church on November 18, 1939. She passed from this life July 13, 1984 and her funeral was conducted by Elder C. B. Davis. She is survived by her husband, Mr. Burnice Thacker, and a son, Vernon Thacker.

Sister Thacker was by nature a very industrious woman who worked at public work for many years and faithfully performed her duties toward her family and home, but her love for the Lord and His people was the focus of her life. Even when affliction overtook her and she was confined to her home for many months, her love and interest in the Church did not wane.

She looked forward to her hope of heaven and eternal rest as did the poet who wrote:

"From thee, my God, my joys shall rise
And run eternal rounds
Beyond the limits of the skies
And all created bounds.

The holy triumphs of my soul
Shall death itself outbrave
Leave dull mortality behind
And fly beyond the grave.

There, where my blessed Jesus reigns
In Heaven's unmeasured space
I'll spend a long eternity
In pleasure and in praise."

Catherine Humbarger
Church Clerk

Signs of the Times

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Psalm 124

*If it had not been for the Lord who
was on our side, now may Israel
say;*

*If it had not been for the Lord who
was on our side, when men rose
up against us:*

*Then they had swallowed us up
quick, when their wrath was
kindled against us:*

*Then the waters had overwhelm-
ed us, the stream had gone
over our soul.*

*Then the proud waters had gone
over our soul.*

*Blessed by the Lord, who hath
not given us as a prey to their
teeth.*

*Our soul is escaped as a bird
out of the snare of the fowlers:
the snare is broken and we are es-
caped.*

*Our help is in the name of the
Lord, who made heaven and
earth.*

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 EDITORIAL

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love: Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”

The entire epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Church at Ephesus is, to my way of understanding, the richest in doctrine of all of his writings to the Churches in his day. It contains the fulfillment of his statement to the Elders of the Church in Acts 20, verse 27. “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” It contains some of the strongest language in the scriptures of the way and manner in which the salvation of the Saints is accomplished, the reason for it and the absolute surety of their eternal abode in the heavenly kingdom. These scriptures and others where the doctrine

of salvation by the sovereign grace of an Almighty God of heaven and earth is set forth so plainly, are the walls and bulwarks, the high towers that are round about Zion as referred to in Psalms 48:12, 13 and 14. They are the foundations upon which the City rests and from which the inhabitants strength is renewed as they walk about Zion and rejoice in the perfect work of their Savior and King. They acknowledge the weakness of the flesh, the changeableness of the creature from day to day as events and circumstances occur that cause them to change their plans, their priorities and yes, even the desires of their heart for the immediate present. These experiences cause them to rejoice in the scriptures which speak of the predestination of all of the elect family of God to an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for them. They are made aware, as they travel in this wilderness of sin, after the truth has been revealed unto them that they would never have attained to this blessed state if left to their own devices. They would have continued on in their vain pursuit of the pleasures of the world and the gratification of the fleshly mind and body, seeking its physical needs and desires and eventually died in their sins completely unaware of a heavenly kingdom and the glory and beauty of it.

The Apostle Paul learned all of this by revelation and experience and wrote much about the omnipotence, omnipresent and omniscience of the God of heaven and earth who created all things for himself and for the pleasure of his own sovereign will. These truths were made manifest in his life as he was turned from nature's darkness, where he had spent all of his life, thinking he was serving God, to the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There can never be too much said, or written, by inspired

men in all ages of time regarding these basic points of doctrine for they are the pillars upon which the foundations are laid. "For other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." They are the works of God as he manifests his presence to, and bestows his love upon the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. "According as he hath chose us in him, before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein, he hath made us accepted in the beloved." These are some of the most comforting and soul inspiring scriptures in the bible, especially to those who have been made to see what they were in nature and what they deserved, who have now given this gift by the grace of God and have heartfelt evidence in their bosom that they are indeed heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Their cry is now, "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past find out!"

In writing to the Hebrews the Apostle Paul refers to the milk and the strong meat or different degrees of their understanding of the scriptures. "For everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." It seems to me, as I read these scriptures that Paul is saying that some are exercised more, blessed to reach deeper into the scriptures than others. The milk and the strong meat are both doctrine, both are true and both are profitable to those that are blessed to profit by the teachings of them. Some are blessed, as Paul

was, to understand more than others and shunned not to declare all that he understood unto his brethren, and some are not so blessed. Some will endorse the scripture and appreciate the message, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And then question the wisdom of one who says, "I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Both scriptures are included in the whole counsel of God and are for the comfort and edification of the whole body. Both are truth, one is known and fully understood by God but believed and trusted in by the elect and the other is experienced and enjoyed by the heirs of grace as they manifest their love to God and one another as they journey through this vale of tears. The most beautiful experience is to see this love blossom and bring forth fruit to the glory of God and his Church.

The scripture at the heading of this article is Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 1, 2 and 3 and are the charge of the Apostle Paul to the Church at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. This, I believe, is the sincere milk of the word. Paul is not talking to those who have not been born of the spirit and who have no evidence of a work of Grace in their heart, he is speaking to the same brethren he has addressed in the three previous chapters. In the previous chapters he had written of the certainty of their calling and their salvation, now he is beseeching those same brethren to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Is this a different doctrine, no, he is beseeching them to respond to this holy calling by its evidence in their walk and talk in the church. As children of the heavenly king, surely the indwell-

ing of the holy spirit within one should manifest its presence in their heart and witness to those of like precious faith of their mutual faith and love.

The Apostle Peter wrote on one occasion, "This second epistle beloved, I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." Peter was not writing to the dead alien sinner, but to his brethren, and he knew that God was able to make them stand fast in the doctrine but for the love that he had for them and for God he wanted to remind them again of things they already knew. Peter knew of the weakness and frailty of the flesh and thought it good to manifest his love and concern for them again and again. Can anyone say that this is not the heartfelt longing and prayer of the soul that has been touched by the love of the heavenly king. This is the outward manifestation of this indwelling love of God's children toward their brethren as they travel this low ground of sin. These manifestations of love is fulfillment of Jesus Command, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Jesus said in speaking of this light, "And it giveth light unto all that are in the house." Not a witness to the world but to those in the house (of a like precious faith), and fellowship is enjoyed by all that see and understand the source of the light.

There have been many times in the past, when men have quoted these scriptures, charging and admonishing the dead alien sinner to change his ways, walk in good works and receive honor and glory from God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. There is nothing that could be farther from the truth, and the message they convey, or, to the ones the message is addressed to. These are the men that Jude wrote about, "For there are certain men that crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this

condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." These have caused great disturbance amongst the brethren as they quote the charges and admonitions as contained in the scriptures to all mankind, to encourage him to unite with them to further their own personal greed and goals. This has caused churches to divide and brethren to declare non fellowship because of these scriptures being used as a support for false doctrine. It is sad indeed that this has happened, and is happening around the country, and it causes much grief and heartache to those who are blessed to know and love the truth. Furthermore, it causes more distress by a reaction to these troubles as brethren hesitate to acknowledge or use and love them because of fear they will be charged with unsound doctrine. Brethren, this should not be done, the truth is the truth and should be preached as the truth of the bible regardless of how some may have used it to supposedly support a lie. "All scripture is given by inspiration and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Those who are born of the spirit of God will understand the truth and will realize, by their experience, that the scriptures are only to those who have been called and set apart by the grace of God.

The Apostles did not hesitate to preach all the Counsel of God and it should be the same today. The whole Counsel of God includes the absolute predestination and decrees of God which only He knows and understands fully, and it also includes the inspiration with which he infuses his children to cause them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling as he leads them in ways that also are known only by him. Some love to quote the absolute decrees of God which are in

the whole Counsel of God and yet shun to quote the admonitions; which is also in the whole Counsel of God, as was done in former days for fear of being called weak or unsound. The exhortations and the admonitions are for the comfort and edification of the Church today just as it was back in the Apostles day. The words mean the same thing today that they did back then and if spoken in love and prompted by the spirit will promote love, peace and harmony in the church.

If I know my heart, I love my brethren and my prayers are for their spiritual comfort and well being. I love them for the truths sake and would do nothing intentionally to hurt or offend them. I cannot believe that if prompted by the spirit which is love, you admonish or charge a brother to attend church, support it in every way, walk worthy of their heavenly calling, or any of the other exhortations which promote peace and harmony in the church is wrong, in fact, it is wrong to do otherwise if the opportunity presents itself. We practice this all the time with our children and loved ones in nature because of the love and concern that we have for their well being, and do not think of ourselves as hypocrites. How much stronger should be our desire for the welfare of our brethren in the spirit, and our desire that they walk in the spirit and glorify God with their whole being. This is what I understand to be the good works that the Apostle Paul admonished the church to be careful to maintain, because they are good and profitable unto men. They are comforting and inspiring to the children of God in their earthly pilgrimage and strengthens and refreshes them and encourages them to press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ.

This is sound doctrine, it is beautiful doctrine and should never be neglected because some have used the same words,

directed to the man in nature, to turn him from his evil ways and learn of God. This is the raging heathen addressing the vain imaginations of the people and it will accomplish nothing spiritual. Paul speaks of these in II Corinthians 11: 13-15. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." These speak great swelling words of vanity and quote scriptures from the head not knowing where of they speak, and deceive the simple who have not the gift of discerning the truth.

I believe that the indwelling spirit directs the saints of God in all they say and do and directs them in ways that are for their good as well as the Church. It is called the comforter and Jesus said, "*He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*" What beautiful and inspiring words of the heritage which belongs unto the children of God for their sojourn here in time. Surely, to constantly remind and encourage your brothers of this marvelous heritage is good and to admonish them for the weakness of the flesh which man is so susceptible to, promotes peace and is the work of the Comforter in all ages of time.

To my understanding this is the message that the Apostle was saying to the church at Ephesus. "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." He is saying, I love you for Christs sake and because of my love for you and for Him

and for the peace of the Church, I admonish you to let your calling be manifest in all places in the Church, that it may be a beacon to all of like precious faith. This is the spirit in which all admonitions, charges, exhortations, rebukes and instructions in righteousness are to be given and received.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

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CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Smithwicks Creek Church

Our Church is located at Route 1, Williamston, N. C. (Martin County). It was established in 1803.

Our meeting time is 11:00 every fourth

Saturday and Sunday.

Smithwicks Creek is the home of Treasurer and Deacon Asa J. Hardison. Elder J. T. Prescott is the present pastor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brethren Editors;

Please permit me to express my thanks to the many readers of our family paper for their many expressions of encouragement during this period of tragedy that has come my way.

So many telephone messages of love and encouragement, and the overflow of letters and cards of encouragement and good will that with my broken arm I will never be able to write a message to all of them. I desire to use your pages to express, in my little way, my appreciation

and tanksgiving to God for your words of consolation and encouragement.

It has been tragic for me to be confined to my home so closely, but the Lord has been good to me in giving me your words of encouragement and consolation and in blessing me to ascribe thanksgiving unto Him. I am doing as well as can be expected and hope to soon be able to resume my normal duties.

Your little sister in the best of bonds,

Lois C. Griffin

Route 1, Box 8
Elgin, Ore.
March 5, 1985

Miss Reidy Pickral
Richmond, VA.

Dear Sister in Christ:

Your letter in the January Signs stated that you transcribed a sermon from a tape. It gave me courage to ask a favor from you.

In the year 1965, Elder Spangler was here at Riffe, Washington, and delivered a sermon, the "Arks", I have been longing to see it printed in the Signs so all the readers might enjoy it as much as I. This is a cassette tape, would it be possible for you to have time to transcribe it for the Signs?

I realize this is very presumptive of me. From your letter in the Signs, I knew you have a great love for the brethren which prompts my asking so great a favor.

I am just an old woman who, if not deceived, love the doctrine of free grace. My hearing and eye sight is very bad. But thanks be to our blessed Redeemer, I still by the aid of a magnifying glass, am able to read.

Yours in hope of meeting in a better and eternal home.

Elva C. Spikes

(The following is the sermon mentioned above. Thanks to Sister Spikes for sharing it with us and to Sister Reidy Pickral for transcription.)

I feel inclined, the Lord will, to talk to you about a subject that probably was mentioned at Lloyd Spikes' while visiting here and for the last two hours, some way, I have had some thoughts concerning this, and as a foundation for whatever I might speak to you I'd like to read the first verse of the 7th Chapter of the Book of Genesis: "*And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.*"

I'm sure that Bible readers are familiar with this scripture and I would like to speak briefly, the Lord will, on the subject of the three arks found in the Bible and I know that if I speak about all three that I can't talk long about each one. We know at this time that God had commanded Noah to build an ark and not only did He command him to build an ark, but the same God who commanded him to build an ark gave him faith to believe.

In Hebrew it is said, by faith Noah, warned of God, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. So we could not leave out that important thing, that whatever there was embraced in the ark, it was the mind of God, and that it was built because God gave Noah to believe He would send a flood upon the earth.

No doubt, while Noah was preparing this ark the people thought he was crazy, preparing an ark! And probably the sun was shining. I understand in the scripture that each of the three arks—there are only three arks found in the Bible—were typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. And, as our salvation, these three arks are typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. They bring to our view a perfect salvation because in each of these three arks

there was a type of Jesus Christ, the saving of His people in every sense in which they would need salvation. The first ark was to preserve life upon the earth and was to protect Noah and his family from the wrath of God, and if we know anything about salvation we need that protection from God's wrath.

The second ark was the one that Moses was placed in that I mentioned probably while I have been here and was to protect Moses from Pharaoh who was a type of Satan, the power of darkness.

The third ark was where the Ten Commandments was placed when Moses came down from the mount after God had given them to him and it shows that Jesus our Lord is the one who kept the Commandments for us in that ark. And that was call the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God.

When this ark had been completed, God said to Noah, "come." God must have been in the ark, He didn't say, go into the ark, He said, "Come." I like that word "come" in the Bible. It's been used so many times so wonderfully, "come." I am told there will be a time when every subject of God's grace will hear the word, "come." Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Jesus said, Come unto me, etc. The thought is: God was in the ark. And thee only have I seen righteous, though there were eight souls in the ark saved from the waters. God looks directly at Noah. Thee only, He said. And we know about the clean and the unclean beasts.

In the construction of the ark, it had three stories; lower, I believe that's the way it reads, second and upper stories; it didn't say first, second and third—lower, second and upper stories. One thing about the ark, it is a type of Christ, there was only one door, and another thing about the ark, the door was in the side. And as we think of salvation, it was

the side of our Lord that was torn, that opened to us salvation and the door of heaven. And the door shall be in the side. I believe our dear brother mentioned it being pitched within and pitched without so that the water is kept out. It had one window, and in a cubic shalt thou finish the window above, and that speaks of the faith of the people of God. God had provided a way to them to see everything, that they always see them as they look up. That window was finished in a cubic above. I am sure that when the earth had gone down beneath the wrath of God, there was only one way for these people in the ark to look. Up, upward. Then after God had said to Noah and his family, Come thou and thy house into the ark, the Bible says *and the Lord shut him in*. Why, Noah couldn't even shut the door. After he'd been brought in the ark, the Lord shut him in, you notice how it reads: shut him in. For yet seven days and I will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood upon the earth. I used to wonder why the ark would be sitting seven days and no rain. Seven in the Bible, the number seven, is symbolic of a fullness and a completeness of anything. And the seven days represented that Noah and his family were safe before the flood began. It represented the safety of the people of God before they needed salvation. Seven days and I will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood. Oh, my friends, our soul has often asked, did I have a safety in that ark. The ark of grace, the poet calls it, the ark of grace:

In the ark the weary dove
Found a welcome resting-place;
Thus my spirit longs to prove
Rest in Christ, the ark of grace.

and the poet said,

Tempest-tossed I long have been,
And the flood increases fast;
Open, Lord, and take me in,
Til the storm be overpassed.

That poet could sing about this ark. And what happened when the windows of heaven opened and the floods came upon the earth. That which caused every hill to disappear raised the ark. Raised the ark! The wrath of God poured out on that ark, the safety of Noah in it is a type of the safety of the people of God. There was a time, my friends, when every hill disappeared and when only that lonely ark floated on the water as a type of Jesus Christ. There was a time when the eyes of God—that all He saw as He looked was the type of His Son. There was a time, my friends, on calvary's hill when the Son of God hanged there for you and I. That God looked at him He sees as the redeemer of His people, as the stroke of justice for us. One said, He looked and, of all, there was none to help and therefore mine own arm brought salvation. And the ark rises above the waters. The reason Noah was safe was because God had prepared him a place.

Another thought I want to briefly pass on about the ark. As the waters began to recede after the flood—you know why it was 40 days? I don't know why, but I'll tell you what I think. I have a reason for saying it. Our Lord was tried forty days in the wilderness wasn't He? Why, this journeying of Jesus after He came into the world, He was lead of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and He ahungered, and for Satan to try Him. So we all must be tried forty days. So the Israelites must be in the wilderness forty years. All of this is symbolic. The floods fell and finally the waters began to recede. And where did the ark rest?

You know, I read the Bible and you know suddenly I saw something I hadn't seen in all these years. You never reach a time you don't find something new in the Word of God. And as the waters receded the ark was right over Mt. Ararat. It wasn't by chance it was there, on the highest mountain. And I was filled

with rejoicing when I saw it said the ark *rested* there. It didn't by chance just be over that mountain. It rested. Our Lord Jesus Christ rested. Yes when the wrath of God had passed, you could rest. It rested on Mt. Ararat and then the raven and the dove were sent out. And it still found life upon the earth, still there was life when the olive leaf was brought in. The raven goes to and fro in the earth, but the dove found no place for the sole of his foot. It couldn't find a resting place and it returned the first time and we are told Noah reached for it and pulled it in. That's appropriate with that hymn isn't it? Ark, the weary dove. A type of God's church found a peaceful resting place.

My beloved hearers, have you found a resting place in Christ? Wonderful rest! Wonderful rest! There's no rest like rest in Christ. Your body may be weary, you may be tired but rest in Christ is different to anything else.

The second ark was when Moses' family had hid him three months. They couldn't hide him any longer. The decree of the King was that every male child of the Hebrews should be cast into the river. But in the face of that Moses' parents, the Bible says by faith they put him in an ark of bullrushes, another ark. An ark right down to the water where they were supposed to be drowned. In this ark of bullrushes, I mentioned it before, Pharaoh's daughter came down. And sometimes in my mind I see her as the one who was, in the purpose of God, to come and she looked at the child. He's weeping. She takes it and calls his sister and says, find a home for it and she takes it and Moses was reared in the house of Pharaoh as we might say. Pharaoh is a type of Satan. We only need protection or salvation in three ways. From the wrath of God for sin, from the devil and for someone to honor the Lord God for us. That's the only thing a man needs in salvation. And that was the protection of that and then we come to the ark of

the covenant. I want to talk a little while about that.

I love the expression in the Bible: the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God. And Moses was commanded to make this ark. It was a small piece of furniture as we think about it, I couldn't quote the dimensions at the present time but it was to be brought into the tabernacle. When Moses was called upon Mt. Sinai and God gave him the law the first time, Ten Commandments, when he came down he found, as our brother mentioned, the Israelites worshipping a golden calf. They couldn't keep themselves very well could they? Just as soon as Moses leaves them they go into idolatry. And you and I are just as prone today to forget the Lord as the Israelites were, when He leaves us. Moses threw down the tables of stone, to find his people in that condition, and God called him back again. And then He engraved them in stone and when he returned he put them in this ark. Moses couldn't keep them. The Israelites couldn't keep these Ten Commandments themselves. But there was a safe place for them. In the ark is a type of Jesus Christ. He's the One who has kept the law for us if it's ever been kept. Honored it in his life. And over the ark there was what we call a mercy seat.

You know I used to read that and I thought that's the most beautiful peaceful expression I ever heard. A mercy seat. A mercy seat. You know, God appropriately named many things. He had over this ark a mercy seat. He said to Moses, and there will I meet with thee. God has a meeting place for sinners. But it's above the ark and it's above the mercy seat and there will I commune with thee from above the mercy seat. How thankful we've all been that there is a mercy seat, a place one can sit down in mercy. And over the mercy seat there were two cherubims. The best I can understand, they were like two eagles. One of them is over here and one of them is

over there. The scripture says, "The wings of this one touches the wall. The wing of this one touches the wing of that one on that side, and the wing of that one touches the wall on the other side. To me it represents the old and the new testament because each one of these cherubims was facing the mercy seat.

And all the prophecies before the coming of Christ were a promise of His coming. There's no vacant space between the cherubims because the wing of this one reaches all the way, reaches to this one and so in my judgment the word of God has covered the period of all time that we recognize. And they looked at the mercy seat. The most precious possession the Israelites had was the ark of the covenant.

Somebody asked me a question at Natchez in the night about the ministers. She said I didn't answer directly. Sometimes we answer indirectly—how much honor we should give the minister, etc. And I said, you know, as the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness they carried this ark with them. It was a precious possession. The type of Jesus their Lord. The Ten Commandments were in there. When they had reached Jordan, why, the land they had looked forward to so long to cross over, into the promised land, they carried the ark along. And God gave Joshua instruction as to how they should cross over Jordan, and He said to him, make the Priest take the ark on their shoulders. I believe the minister of the gospel today is bearing the ark in preaching Jesus Christ. He has nothing else to preach. He's satisfied with His name, the name of Christ. He said, when you see the ark removed, borne by the priest, go ye after it. He didn't say, when you see the priest start moving—but, watch the ark. Watch the ark! How lovely to hear a minister bring the sweetness of Jesus' name to people. How lovely, as we listen to people exhort the name of Jesus Christ. They desire no glory, no

honor in the flesh. And He said, when ye see the ark removed, borne by the priest, go ye after it. Don't you keep so far behind them and when they were about to cross over Jordan, the priest stood in the midst of it with the ark on his shoulders until all the people passed over. God opened it up like a wall and it stood up like a wall.

Concerning the wandering of the Israelites, the ark moved when they moved. I read on one occasion about the ark being carried into the camp of the Philistines, their enemies, there was a plague there.

They may take His name but only those that have truly needed Him embrace Him indeed. They had the ark and no doubt they felt rejoicing. We have the most precious possession, the ark of the covenant in our camp. And everything began to happen: plagues, and the same ones decided, why thou art a curse in our camp, and we'll see what happens. So they took a milk cow, highly spoken of and they shut up the calf at home, and they put the ark on a cart. They said now if that cow carries that ark to the camp of Israel, we'll know its a plague. And you know, that cow left the calf. She went mooing but she had to go. There was no choice. Because the power of God overcomes every obstacle when it's His will for things to move. It sure does, even down to brute animals. We speak of it, we say it couldn't be, but it was! Shut up the calf at home and the cow leaves, goes mooing pulling the cart. Why? Because the power of God arranged it that way. You can never exalt the power of God too much. You can never abase a sinner too much.

No doubt it was a great day when the camp of the Israelites saw the ark coming. Coming! And the hand of man wasn't bringing him back either. Wasn't bringing him back, the hand of God was bringing him back.

And so I want to leave you people think-

ing of it, with the thoughts I've scattered presented about the ark. This was a complete salvation that God typified there and the anti-type can never be less than the type. So our hope, our consolation, our joy, everything we have, is because God has ordained it so. Our Saviour said: "I thank thee Oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes." You know how God's way is in revealing things —to hide things is to leave them unrevealed. That's the only thing necessary for God to hide things, is to leave them unrevealed.

So these three arks were typical of our Saviour. The scripture abounds from the first chapter to the last with Christ. I said last night, if you take Him out of the Bible you'd just have two lids left. That's all you'd have. Jesus Christ, who it is said is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

A few personal remarks I'd like to make now: When I was a boy I was thrown with a people that believed that the work of regeneration was the work of grace and that sinners were passive in regeneration. But they held the doctrine that after regeneration we had the power and the ability to obtain the blessings of God if we'd obey Him. And you know that looked like a good doctrine to begin with. It looked so good, I said, I'll just obtain the blessings of God and I won't have any chastisement and I was foolish enough to believe that I could live without chastisement. Yet I found in the Bible that He said, "If you be without chastisement of whom all are partakers, you are a bastard and not a son." But time went on. Suddenly, in May 1919 I was sitting under a minister who was standing in the pulpit preaching and he was preaching from the first chapter of Hebrews, "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," and

suddenly my friends, something hit my heart like a dart. That I must speak in His name. I've got to talk about it to His people. I went home that afternoon and put up the horse and walked the pastures, wondering about what I had felt: I said, Lord, take this burden off of me. Time went on and the burden wasn't removed. I wrestled day and night. If I am a minister of the gospel I am not a volunteer. But I love to preach it when God blesses me.

I remember one of our daughter's, expected to lose her on one occasion. And I said this is the wrath of God upon me. The judgments of God because I hadn't spoken. Have you ever felt those things? The judgments of God, and every time things would get worse as the burden became heavy, I'd say: Lord, take it off, I'll speak. And when it eased up I was just as hard again. I'm just as hard-hearted.

Finally, we had a brother-in-law who lived in my home. I loved him very much. I would say he was closer to me than any brother I had, we lived in the same house. He was critically ill. He had said to me many times as a boy, David, I think you are going to have to preach. The brother would say that, though he wasn't a member of the Old School Baptist, he united while he was down sick. I just want to tell you a few things of my life before I leave you, because the most of you I'll never see you again, not here.

A few days before he passed away he called me to the bed, he said: "I'm goind to die, and I want to hear you talk before I die." And I tell you I was trapped. I knew if I refused to try to speak to him I would carry it to my grave. I remember, my friends, going to a barn on our farm and bowing down before the Lord and asking Him, Lord give me strength.

Some of our neighbors gathered at our home at 2:00 or near about that hour and my father opened the service and I tried to speak a few words. I didn't feel I

was blessed but when it was through he said, I'm satisfied. Two days later I stood by his bed and heard him say, "I see the angels coming for me."

My friends, they had come for him, I learned obedience, if I know anything about it, through sufferings. I had to have fellowship with my Saviour. I learned that this matter was not optional with men. I learned that if I had a blessing God gave it to me before the world and my Saviour. I learned the doctrine of predestination I'm preaching, if I know it at all, before God opened my mouth. I tried not to believe it.

I remember one of the first times I ever stood up. I took the text: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. Are ye not much more valued than many sparrows? Yea, even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Why? Because I believe that doctrine. I can't be fed with this doctrine of part works and part grace. Not a poor sinner like I am.

A man was in my congregation and what I said that day appealed to him in such a way that the next week he came to see me. I had small children, I was having a hard time in life, and he said I want you to go to work for me, I believe the doctrine you preached. I worked twelve years with that man from that sermon. Now, to me these are the providences of God. My hearers, God has been good to me. Good to me! Wonderful, so wonderful to me. I can't praise Him enough. I know I'm talking about personal things but I just want to tell you how it came. (A smaller voice on the tape said: "It's wonderful, wonderful, keep on!")

I believe that every minister who exalts the name of God goes into the depths to learn that doctrine. He cannot feed the flock of God until he's been there. And I can tell you the pathway he comes. I can tell you the mountain tops and the

valleys. I can tell you of the sunshine and the rain. I can tell you of the winters and the summers. I can tell you of seed time and harvest. I'm talking about everything. And that God has provided in the wonders of His grace and His people are kept before him and He said even a sparrow doesn't fall without me. I use to think He said, "his notice" but He said "without me." I feel like I'm among a people that believe that doctrine.

If I didn't believe it, I wouldn't be here tonight. The sovereignty of God over all worlds, all things, all events, "life, death hell and worlds unknown hang on His firm decree, He sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be." You love that hymn? Sometimes you can sing it from way down here, yes.

Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod!
My soul stands trembling while she sings
The honors of her God.

Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Beneath the folded leaves.

But the precious last verse of that hymn is:

In thy fair book of life and grace,
O, may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!

God will never give His glory to another. And the glory of His Son shall never be detracted from whatever happens in the world by men, Christ sits on the throne. And my beloved hearers, He's conscious of your needs. He's a great High Priest who's gone to heaven who can be touched. Touched! Touched with a feeling of our infirmities. I like to think of Steven when he was dying. I like to think Steven saw heaven and he said, I see heaven open and I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And his face was like an angel's. Good way to

die wasn't it? Have you ever felt if death comes, all is well? Have you passed that state of fear that you had no more fear? When? When the Lord was there.

TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

May shew forth in type of the cross that the elect of God's people do have to take up and follow Jesus. The children of God did not have a cross to carry until Christ came and put within them his spirit which is a righteous spirit. Neither did they have a warfare or a godly fear even, they walked even as others until they were born again of the holy spirit not to save them, but because they were already saved being born again, brought them into the light and knowledge of the truth. Then they had a cross and warfare and a godly fear and they do keep his commandments and follow Him, Jesus Christ the son of God. Matthew 27:32 tells the one that carried the cross, "And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; him they compelled to bear his cross."

Concerning the cross that Jesus was nailed to at the place called Golgotha, I have heard many of the brethren say that Jesus carried his cross, but he did not for he was without sin. He, Jesus, had no cross to carry, not even a wooden cross, but his children do have a cross to carry for they are sinners.

Now let us take a look at Mark 15:21, "And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross." This seems to look so very plain to me. Now let us go on to Luke 23:26 and it says, "And as they led him away they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian coming out of the country and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus." I think where so many misunderstand this scripture is in John 19:17 which

reads, "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha, where they crucified Him." This doesn't mean that Christ was carrying his cross but speaking of him that did carry the cross which was Simon. I hope I am making myself clear on this matter or scripture. To me this should be enough and if I am not right on this matter, would some brother or sister please let me know.

By the word cross is understood Gebret, made of wood. Two pieces of wood put across where they cross with right angles at the top as a "T". The cross was the punishment of the vilest slaves and was called a servile punishment; this punishment, our servile punishment, this punishment our saviour underwent. Matthew 27:35 This penalty was so common among the Romans. Pains, afflictions, troubles, and unprosperous affairs were called crosses, and the verb crucifixion was used for all sorts of chastisement and pains of body and mind. Our Saviour says often in his gospel that he who would be his disciple must take up his cross and follow him. Matthew 16:24 He must submit readily to whatsoever afflictions God lays upon him or any suffering that befalls him in the service of God even to death itself. Cross is taken for the whole of Christ sufferings from his birth to his death but especially those upon the tree. Eph. 2:16, Heb. 12:2 And for the doctrine of the gospel; that is of salvation through Christ crucified, Cor. 1:18. False teachers who pressed the observation of the law of Moses as necessary to salvation besides faith in Christ are called enemies of the cross of Christ. Phil. 3:18. Because by such doctrine they did really oppose and undermine the power and merit of Christ and sought to avoid prosecution which they would have been exposed to had they preached salvation only by Christ crucified as the apostle Paul was, Gal. 5:11. To crucify

is not only for putting to death on a cross, Matthew 27:35. But also for subduing sin: for breaking the strength and mortifying, suppressing the motions and breakings out of corrupt nature. Gal. 5:24, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with affections and lusts." Christ's death on the cross has not only merited reconciliation with God but is to subdue and mortify lust of the flesh. Gal. 2:20, I am crucified with Christ, it is said of them who for some time have made profession of religion and afterwards turned opostates that they crucify to themselves the son of God afresh. Heb. 6:6 that is they shew themselves to be of the same opinion with those that did crucify Christ and would do it again were it in their power. The apostle tells the Galatians that Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified among them. Gal. 3:1. They had been as fully and clearly informed of the nature and design of Christ sufferings as if all had been transacted in their sight. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. In Hebrews 12:2 "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. In Matthew 10:38, And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me. The elect being the only ones that is given to do this, being the only ones that has a cross are a warfare or a godly fear in. Cor. 1:17-18 says for Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect, for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

In Colossians 1:20, And having made peace through the blood of the cross by him, to reconcile all things unto himself; his children being saved on the cross by

the blood of Jesus Christ; and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me.

In hope,

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VOICES OF THE PAST
"he being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XVI. 9.

"And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

"And I say unto you." Jesus did not speak like other men. The officers that were sent to him said truly, "Never man spake like this man." He taught not only in a different manner from other men, but upon a different principle. The words of his that are written by the pen of inspiration are not words by which his teaching is to be done, but the words which tell how his teaching has already been done. The written words tell to the enlightened understanding what the spirit and life of those words has already written in the new heart. "The words, that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi. 63. When he said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," he said in words what his Spirit always says within his people. These words do not express a proposition on his part which mayor may not be complied with by those to whom they are addressed, but they tell what has been, and is being

wrought in them by his creative power. They express the same invincible power by which God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, as he now shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When Jesus says, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," he did not present a condition to those to whom he spake while they might or might not fulfill, but he declared what he speaks with living power in the hearts of those to whom he gives spiritual life, and which they can, in the Spirit, no more refuse to obey than Adam could refuse to breathe when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This speaking of Jesus is not to the fleshly mind and heart, but to the new head, and the flesh responds to these living words of Jesus as it is moved upon by the power of spiritual life. These spiritual powers are always inclined to perfect obedience, and when they are in exercise, by the grace of God, then they become effectual weapons of warfare, pulling down the strongholds of fleshly opposition, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exaleth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. ix. 4)

"And I say unto you." Not as one man says something to another which it will be profitable for him to hear and attend to, but as the Creator says to the creature in that creative work by which he is "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." When we come to the true meaning of the words of Jesus which are at the head of this article, we shall find in them not a recommendation of a course that will be for the benefit of his people to follow, but a command which has already been written in their hearts. Here is the difference between the legal character and the subject of gospel grace. Here is the difference in principle and action between the

unjust steward, who is a pharisee and is covetous, and who sees in legal things only a chance for self-exaltation and emolument, and the gospel character, who has been given an honest spirit, and who sees in legal things the just requirements of a holy God, whose name must be glorified. Here is the difference between the teaching of this world's wisdom to "the children of this world," and the teaching of the wisdom which is from above to "the children of light."

The unjust steward made friends with his lord's goods, or riches, by requiring of his debtors less than they owed; and his lord (not our Lord) commended him, not for honesty, but for a wise forethought and care to provide for himself against the day of adversity. His wisdom was earthly, sensual, devilish, but it was wisdom in a worldly sense, and looked to his worldly advantage. It pertained only to worldly things, and was eminently selfish, and it was only commended in a worldly sense. It is only as using the wisdom that he thinks will best advance his interests that he is commended by our Savior to the attention of the children of light. They are not directed to do as he did only in one thing, and that is, to diligently pay attention to the dictates of the wisdom which belongs to them, as he diligently attended to the directions of the wisdom of this world. The Savior said, "Be wise as serpents," but he did not say, "Be wise like serpents." The children of this world are compared with the children of light to the disadvantage of the latter in one thing only, and that is, that they are wise in their generation, looking after what will be best for themselves in this world, while the children of light are not wise in their generation, when left to themselves to look after their own interest, but are constantly liable to turn aside from the path of true wisdom, and cannot therefore trust in themselves to guide themselves for one moment, but must be led constantly by

the dear Savior.

That point in which they are liable to fail of true wisdom is their tendency to make use of the wisdom of this world, which constantly holds our allurements to them to follow its lead. And how often they follow the lead of that worldly wisdom, looking for the advantages it promises, until they are led by it into trouble, desolation, famine and death. The true wisdom of the child of God is to always distrust the dictates of earthly wisdom. Therefore from the beginning of his experience he is turned away from the ways of this world, and taught a different way and a different wisdom. This is indicated here.

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." To make friends with those riches was to use them unjustly, as the pharisees (the unjust steward) did; to make friends of them is to experience and acknowledge the justice of their claims against us; to honestly own our full indebtedness, and to ask no reduction, even though we have nothing to pay, but must give up our own selves to satisfy the claim. For the mammon of unrighteousness undoubtedly means the things of the law. The word mammon simply means riches, wealth personified. Unrighteousness here does not mean anything evil or wrong, but the lack of righteousness or value. There is no real value in a pattern or in a type, but only a representative of value; there are no riches in an account, but only the representation of riches. The things belonging to the legal dispensation had no real righteousness in themselves, but they were important as representing the "true riches" of the gospel dispensation. And these true "riches of righteousness" brought forth in the gospel, which belong to the children of light, are only committed unto them after they have been found faithful in regard to the riches of unrighteousness, or the things of the law in which there is no righteous-

ness, but only a typical representation of righteousness. One has made friends of those legal riches, the commands, ordinances, types, accounts of the legal dispensation, when he has acknowledged the justice of them. Under the law an Israelite had paid the debt when he had given up himself to be sold for it. Then the claim was settled, and in the year of jubilee he went free with no claim against him. No charge could be brought against him, for the law would stand his friend. So the law is the friend of the poor sinner who has acknowledged the justice of its claims against him. The moment he feels that he is justly sold under sin, that he is justly condemned, and feels that his condemnation is just, that moment for him the year of jubilee has come, and he is received by the very law which held such a claim against him, into the everlasting habitations of the gospel.

All of this chapter to the eighteenth verse confirms the view of the text which I have thus briefly suggested. The Pharisees were covetous, so is every one who justifies himself before men. These are those who depend upon the works of the law for salvation. Though they appear to men, and to themselves, to be true servants of the law, yet in their hearts they are covetous, and do not really care for the honor of God, nor seek to magnify his law, but are seeking their own honor and riches. They are not faithful in that unrighteous mammon, or riches, which belonged to another man, and under which they were known as servants, because they had not faith. As soon as one is born of God he has faith to see the true requirements of the law. He feels that its claims against him are just. He can say, "The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Now he wants the law honored. He could not accept deliverance at the expense of the law, it would be no deliverance for him. He is faithful in these riches of the law, though there

is no righteousness in them, yet they represent righteousness. There is no real value in the page of the account book which shows the great debt he owes, but it represents the true value, which he knows ought to be paid. It represents true riches. He could not dishonor those riches, that holy law, by accepting any release upon the payment of half or four score. He feels in his soul the truth which he does not yet understand, that every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, that the whole debt must be paid.

"That when ye fail." There is a time when every living soul must fail, and that is when he sees the amount of his indebtedness under the law of God, and the justice of it. When that is seen and acknowledged, then the time of failure comes. Ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Then all at once the law ceases to hold us, the soul is delivered, and we are astonished and amazed to find ourselves at liberty, freed from guilt, and rejoicing in a sense of righteousness. In his own time and way Jesus appears as having satisfied the law, and it is the riches of that legal dispensation, the accounts of that law now satisfied, which receive us into the gospel, the city of habitation. The righteousness which that law represented is now fulfilled, so that nothing can be laid to our charge, and thus the gates of the holy city are opened unto us, never to be shut any more.

Silas H. Durand

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/01
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

 ARTICLES

ECCLESIASTES IV. I

“So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.”

In this book of the words of the wise man, Solomon preached the vanity of all things under the sun; or, of all earthly things, and having considered them, one by one, has by that wisdom with which he was especially inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, pronounced them all vanity and vexation of spirit. And the truth of his preaching is witnessed by all those whom God has made wise unto salvation. No amount of earthly possessions can secure happiness, as will appear from the parable of the rich man, who proposed to pull down his barns and build larger, when on the very eve of his anticipated ease and pleasure, his soul was required of him. Poverty also has its inconveniences and perplexities; and when all is accurately summed up, the full amount is vanity. Yet it is in the earthly nature of mankind to “Stretch their arms like seas, and grasp in all the shore.” To the enlightened child of God all things below the sun are vanity; and all earthly things are a vexation to that spirit which is born of God; which is called the new or inner man; and whose conversation or citizenship is in heaven. Although the things below the sun may feed and nourish our fleshly nature, that very flesh which lives on earthly sustenance is a vanity and vexation to the heaven-born spirit. And that spiritual life which feeds on immortal bread, lives on Christ, by living faith, eats his flesh and drinks his blood, can find no comforter under the sun, no food, no consolation or spiritual enjoyment from earthly or sensual things.

“So I returned,” that is from the pursuit and contemplation of other objects’ “and considered the oppressions that are done under the sun.” Literally the world is full of oppressions, and we see the oppressed bearing the yoke. In our favored land, where we have the most liberal and by far the best form of government under the sun, still we find oppression. The strong oppress the weak; the rich too often oppress the poor; the wise and cunning oppress the weak and simple, while the oppressors are themselves oppressed in turn, by that which inflicts on them care, toil and labor. Anti-Christ oppresses the children of God, and has drenched the earth with the blood of the saints, so that in the world, or under the sun, the saints must have tribulation. They are a poor, oppressed and afflicted people, who trust in nothing under the sun, they trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God.

“And behold the tears of such as were oppressed.” The bitter tears wrung from the streaming eyes of the widows, the fatherless, the poor, the injured, the robbed and the spoiled, among men in nature, as well as the peculiar trials, and flowing tears of the oppressed, persecuted and afflicted saints, are a witness of the correctness of the wise man’s conclusion, that all below the sun is vanity, and vexation of spirit.

“And they (the oppressed) had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.” Can this be said of the saints of God? It is true God’s people have a holy and heavenly Comforter. “Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.” But that Comforter is the Holy Ghost; is God himself, and their comforts are spiritual and divine. The wise man does not speak of things above; but of things which are under the sun. The comforts of the oppressed saints are above the sun; they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in *heavenly*, not in

earthly places, in Christ Jesus. And as they are in him, they are not under the sun, in the sense in which the wise man speaks, for Jesus is higher than the heavens. They have no comforter in earthly things. Although in the kind and gracious providence of God they are provided with as much of the production of the teeming earth as their heavenly Father knoweth that they have need of, and which they are to receive with thanksgiving, and use as not abusing it, knowing that its fashion passeth away, yet they are not to set their hearts on earthly substance, for it is all vanity.

*"What should we wait and wish for then,
From creatures, earth and dust?
They make our expectations vain,
And disappoint our trust."*

With the oppressors there is power, but not unlimited nor unrestrained; for

*"Death and hell shall do no more,
Than what our Father please."*

Power was given to anti-Christ to afflict the saints forty and two months, and power to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, &c., only until the purpose of God is accomplished, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. But the oppressed have no power to avert the oppression of earth, and of earthly things. They have no comforter in the things below the sun. God is their portion. He giveth strength and comfort to the weak and fainting, and underneath them are his everlasting arms. We should rejoice in the assurance that from all this vanity and vexation of spirit, God's children shall, in due time, be delivered, and be made more than conquerors through him that has loved us.

*"Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat,
And 'midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in your wise and gracious God."*

Elder Gilbert Beebe

ACTS V. 38, 39.

"Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Such was the counsel of Gamaliel to those who were madly engaged in the suppression of the truth, and persecution of the apostles and primitive saints. All their efforts thus far had failed to prevent the faithful testimony of the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, or to intimidate them. The Redeemer has said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and his words were no less omnipotent in the utterance of these words than when he called the world into existence, or when the tempests or the seas obeyed him. Indeed his very word is sufficient indemnity for the faith of all his children under all their trials and persecutions. He speaketh the word and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. The counsel of Gamaliel was rational and consistent, whatever were the motives which led him to offer it to the Jewish Sanhedrin, and they are equally as true and appropriate now as when the apostles of the Lamb stood accused before that council.

Refrain from these men. What men? The context shows the men alluded to were the apostles and witnesses of our Lord, who had been arrested and imprisoned for the testimony of their divine Lord and Master, and liberated by the angel of the Lord, and then re-arrested and again brought before the council. These men were the constituents of the gospel church in its primitive organization, and represent the church of Christ throughout all subsequent ages; for quickened sinners after having gladly received their word, were baptized and added to them, that is, to *these men*. And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayer, and the Lord added unto them

daily such as should be saved. The whole church is evidently included, and *these men* are still to be found on the earth, and still identified by the same discriminating characteristics: *steadfast in the apostle's doctrine*. Whatever new fashions, fancies or theories the religious world in its progression may adopt.

There was at that time, there has been ever since, and there still is a strange inclination manifested by the religious world, or the worldly religious, to oppose, annoy, perplex and persecute *these men* in a variety of ways; nor is the opposition which they encounter alone from the world. The Apostle Paul in admonishing the elders of Ephesus, predicted that, "Even of your own selves shall men rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Elsewhere he warned the church of God that "perilous times should come; that many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." All the violent persecution the church has endured from anti-Christ, the cruel and murderous edicts, restricted liberties as citizens of the world, the torturing racks and ingenious machines for inflicting dreadful physical sufferings, the executioner's block and axe, or the stake and fagot, have never proved so hurtful to the church of God, as internal disruptions, dissensions and disorders produced among her members; the sowing seeds of discord, scattering firebrand arrows and death, by false brethren; by men of corrupt minds, who have loved pre-eminence, and to acquire it have assailed the doctrine, character and reputation of the men of God. History informs us of no age in which the church has not been more or less infested with this description of opposition, except it has been when the fires of persecution from without have burned so violently as to render the religion of the Bible too unpopular and expensive to suit the carnal, selfish notions of nominal professors and grace-

less hypocrites. The only avowed enemies of the church with all their instruments of brutal cruelty, has proved a purgative, and the flames of persecution have had a purifying effect, while the treachery of ungodly men within her inclosure has had a corrupting tendency. But neither the one nor the other of these, however much they may harrass or perplex the saints, can ever overthrow the work of God. If the world or Satan had power to overthrow the work and counsel of God, the church would have fallen long ago. But God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure and it is his good pleasure that his little flock shall inherit the kingdom; it was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and in his own appointed time the God of heaven has set it up, and decreed that it shall stand for ever; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be moved, neither shall any of her cords be broken.

*"From age to age she has withstood
The utmost rage of earth and hell."*

But still, unshaken as is the throne of God, and unshaken as is his oath and promise, she remains perfectly secure, for God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God will help her, and that right early. She has encountered the storms of persecution, the floods and rains have assailed her ancient battlements with violence, but she fell not, because she is founded upon the Rock of Ages.

How very different are the counsels and works of men, when applied to matters of religion. Every scheme and device, however cunningly or wisely devised, and every human effort and application unauthorized by the precept of the King, shall certainly come to naught.

How many thousands of religious inventions, societies and institutions for evangelizing the world, arise with great pomp and promise, reach their climax and dwindle back to their original noth-

ingness. Others again in turn are constantly springing up, but all embodying the certain seeds of their own inevitable decay.

All that kind of religion which is or can be produced by the will or works of men, must come to naught. The fruits of modern revivals, which have been effected by excitement and fanaticism, have been like crackling thorns in a momentary blaze, giving a glaring but transient light, only to make the gross darkness which succeeds, the more frightful and doleful. And every failure has proved the soundness of Gamaliel's counsel, as all time shall show the immutability of the decree of him who said, "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

From what is thus clearly demonstrated, let hell despair, but all who trust in God shall rejoice, for they shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved; which abideth forever. What have the children of God to fear? The enemy may come in like a flood, but the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against the enemy. The heathen may rage, and men of earth imagine vain things, they may revolve to disband the saints, and cast their cords from them, but he that sitteth in the heavens shall hold them in derision, for it is written, "The enemies of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them." Nor do these fearful threatenings hang impending alone over the devoted heads of those enemies which are outside the organized boundaries of the church of Christ, for "If any man defile the temple of the Lord, him will God destroy." Then let the sinners in Zion tremble, and let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites. God will protect his little ones from all the rage of their adversaries, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him day and night. They who touch them, touch the apple of his eye, and it were better for them that a mill-stone were hanged about their

necks, and that they were cast into the depths of the sea, than that they should offend any of our Lord's little ones.

Elder Gibleert Beebe

SHOW MERCY

To keep a sweet and gentle temper in the midst of bitter opposition is real strength. It is true wisdom. A truly great man has the wisdom that is from above. It is "pure and peaceable." Such a man is not a bigot nor self-conceited. Great men are easily approached. Little men hold malice a long time, while those that are truly wise will not let the sun go down on their wrath.

A great man is full of mercy and easy to be entreated. It is hard for small men to forgive an injury or confess a fault, but men truly wise can do both. Much might be said of the wisdom that cometh from above. Without it we will never understand our lost estate before God, nor the riches of grace and mercy in our salvation.

Men truly wise abhor themselves in dust and ashes. They know what mercy is and are ever full of mercy to others. Those who know the sweets of pardon are ready to pardon those who trespass against them. Men can never admire the riches of His grace who have not seen the deep depravity of themselves. To be peaceable and to seek peace and ensue it, is true wisdom. Our behavior should nourish peace in every lawful way. We can be firm and zealous and yet, be kind. We can be peaceable with others, and yet love and stand for the truth, and a zealous, firm and peaceable spirit is what James insists on. "*The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men.*" We have been shown mercy by the Lord and should be glad to show mercy to others.

Elder J. H. Olyphant

"Messenger of Peace," 1913

CONTRIBUTIONS

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In Memory of Sister Ada Bond		
The Family.....	VA.	15.00
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MEETINGS

CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH

In compliance with the request of
Chapel Primitive Baptist Church,

a presbytery was called for the purpose of an examination, and if found qualified, the ordination of Brother Thomas Solomon for the full work of the gospel ministry.

The presbytery was organized with the election of Elder O.K. Tench as moderator. Elder Tench inquired of the church if it was of the same mind as to proceeding with the ordination of Brother Solomon. The church spokesman, Brother Clay Brown, answered in the affirmative. The moderator asked Elder Lane Carter to present the candidate to the presbytery for ordination.

Questioning of the candidate was by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth. Brother Solomon related his experience as to what he believed was his call to the ministry.

The presbytery agreed to proceed with the ordination.

Laying on of hands was performed during the ordination prayer by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth.

The charge was given by Elder Kenneth Key. Elder O. K. Tench also remarked to Brother Solomon about some of the duties of a minister.

The work of the presbytery was accepted by the church spokesman and Elder Thomas Solomon was delivered back to the church as a fully ordained minister by Elder Lane Carter.

Ministers present for the ordination:

Elders:

J. R. Hollandsworth	C. B. Davis
O. K. Tench	Junior Conner
Denver Simpson	Lane Carter
Raymond Goad	Rufus Brown
Larry Hollandsworth	Kenneth Key

Deacons present for the ordination:

Deacons:

Arthur Potter	W. W. Abshire
Hancil Conner	R. A. Eanes
Nelson Bryant	Claude Hopkins
Chester Hagood	Richard Stegall

James E. Cooper	Homie Dalton
Clay Brown	Stafford Houston
Jessie Tyree	Marvin Brumfield
Fred Murphy	Claude Johnson
Lawrence Myers	Harry Cannady
Herbert Dodson	Jimmy Holley
Hassell Hale	Junior Dent
W. T. Conner	Burnell B. Williams
Albert Hudson	Wilson King
Robert Shelton	Vance Duncan
Clyde Johnson	Coley Strader
Posy Poindexter	

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

OBITUARIES

CHESTER AVERY

At the request of Hancock Primitive Baptist Church, the Lord willing, we will try to write an obituary for our father, Chester Arthur Avery.

Our father was born in Pitt County, near Winterville, N.C. on April 30, 1906. He was the son of James Henry and Woodie Ann Brann Avery. He had eight brothers and four sisters.

Our father married Martha Margaret Tripp, who is better known as Betsy, on December 15, 1926. They were married while sitting in our father's car by preacher Walter Nobles of Winterville. Unto this union two daughters were born, Mrs. Doris Sawyer and Mrs. Bettie Sue Joyner.

Our father lived all his life in the community where he was born. He was a farmer. During his lifetime, he saw many changes in farming as well as in other areas.

During his younger life, he was not one to attend church regularly. Then on third Saturday night, August 16, 1958, he joined Hancock Primitive Baptist Church near Ayden, N.C. He was baptized the next day. It was a joyous time for our family. From that time on, he was always ready to attend church and he always like to arrive about an hour before services were to begin. He was always interested in keeping the church in good condition. He would often speak of the friendliness and love of his dear brethren of the church. He said that he loved Hancock and it was a sweet place to him.

In May of 1983, he was diagnosed as having lung cancer. Instead of having an operation, he chose to fight this disease on his own and with the help of the Lord. He and our mother fought this long, hard battle approximately two years. The Lord blessed our mother and kept her healthy so that she could care for him. The three of us did what we could to keep him as comfortable and happy as possible. During his illness, he was blessed with visits by many of his brethren, relatives and friends. At first, Daddy was able to talk with them and later as his voice faded, he could only look at them and smile. Even though he could not say so near the end, we knew he enjoyed seeing everyone of them. Then on April 9, 1985, at age seventy-eight, the Lord called him home.

Many years ago, our father had signed his name above hymn number 623, Hicks Farewell, in Lloyd's Hymnal. Although he never mentioned it to anyone, we knew he wanted it sung or read at his funeral. His funeral was conducted on April 11, 1985 at 3 p.m. at Farmer Funeral Home in Ayden, N.C. by Elder Reeves Smith and Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr. Hymn number 623 was read by Elder Smith. The words of this hymn were very comforting to our mother and to us. Our father

was entombed in the cemetery at Hancock Primitive Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Betsy; his daughters, Doris and her husband, Joe, of Winterville, N.C.; Bettie Sue and her husband, Edward, of Greenville, N.C.; two sisters, Mrs. Ellen Pilgreen of Winterville, N. C. and Mrs. Etta Pilgreen of Newport News, Va.; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Although he is missed greatly by our mother and us, we would not have him back to suffer as he did during the last two years of his life. We can only hope that it is the Lord's will that we can join him one day where there is no suffering and pain, only joy and peace.

Written by his daughters who miss him very much.

Doris Sawyer
Bettie Sue Joyner

L. BRIAN HILL

Once again, death has created a vacancy in our midst. Our esteemed brother, L. Brian Hill, passed away on March 2, 1985 at the age of 93. He had been in failing health many months before his death. He died in the Craven County Hospital, New Bern, N. C., and his funeral was conducted at Farmer Funeral Chapel, Ayden, N. C. by Elder Joseph L. Sawyer. He was buried in the Winterville, N.C. cemetery, beside his first wife, Clara Sutton Hill, who preceded him in death on January 20, 1976. He is survived by his wife Mrs. Cloie Hill, Winterville, N.C., three sons, Alton Hill of Winterville, N.C.; Willard Hill of Carthage, N.C.; and Simmons Hill of Ayden, N.C.; a daughter, Mrs. Helen Hardison, of New Bern, N.C.; nineteen grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and a great-great-grandchild.

Brother Hill was a man of compassion and integrity. He was an honor to his community, to his church and to his family. He was a neighbor in the truest sense of the word, always willing to share with others. Wherever there was sickness or death he would be there to comfort or to lend a helping hand where needed.

On a confession of faith, Brother Hill united with Hancock Primitive Baptist Church on July 15, 1956, and faithfully filled his seat as long as health permitted. He enjoyed going to church and mingled with the brethren. He also visited many of the other churches of the same faith. He visited in the homes of many of the brethren and he entertained many of the brethren in his home. When he visited these churches, he always carried others with him, especially those that had no other way.

He was ordained a deacon of Hancock's church on June 14, 1958, and he filled these duties faithfully. He loved the church very much and was concerned for its welfare.

We miss Brother Hill, but feel that our loss has been his eternal gain.

Done by order of the Church while in regular session of conference in May, 1985.

Elder Joseph L. Lawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk
Mable McLawhorn, Assistant Clerk

"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is wisdom."

Proverbs 15: 33

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

Proverbs 16: 18

Signs of the Times

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Hope and Fears

*How sweet the sound of Amazing
Grace*

*When blessed to feel it reaches our
case.*

*No words or tongues can ever express
How it brings our soul a feeling of
happiness.*

*The bible says by grace we are
saved*

*Not by words can our roads be paved.
It is a gift of God we are told
By faith we hope to reach his fold.*

*This doctrine of salvation by grace
His chosen ones will see his face.
If we praised him all of our days
We could never give enough praise.*

*Our life is mixed with hope and
fears
We look ahead to the coming years.
We need his mercy and his grace
And his guiding hand to win our race.*

Sister Mamie Bisher

*“Whatsoever ye would that men should do
to you, do ye even so to them.”*

Mat. 7:12

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EDITORIAL

The Trial of God's People

Iwould beg for grace to write this message of love and fellowship to you and that I might deal with the subject as becometh a follower of the good things of the kingdom of heaven. In the beginning let me say that it is not my hope to write as though I was writing to a people separate and apart from any other portion of the family of God. I would not make any attempt to divide the family of God into two groups, one group having this trial and the others not needing or not being worthy of the trial or being so exempt from being poor faltering sinners that they do not need trials along the way.

I do not say that there is one among us that feels to be exempted from this trial,

but if there is, then I do not have any message either of warning or of approval, but leave them where they have ever been, in the hands of God. If I have a scriptural text I would call it to your mind. In my humble judgment there is not a Bible character that is any better qualified by the grace of God, any better qualified by his own tutilage under the jurisdiction of the Teacher in Israel than Peter. I desire to refer to him as he referred to his brethren. More than once he called them, all of them, his beloved brethren. Let us be certain that we understand that he was writing by the inspiration of God to the elect family of God. It behooves us at times to contend earnestly, even firmly, even bluntly, that when Peter, or anybody else writes to the elect of God, the family of God, that none are left out.

I do hope that my mind is exercised by the same divine Spirit that was moving the beloved Apostle to write to the elect family of God. I desire to address each of you, as he addressed each of them as far as I feel towards those to whom I write, there are none left out. If the doctrine of the gospel of God's electing race is not for you, it cannot be said that I discriminated against you. As I have been contemplating to the greatness and loveliness and the universal extension of that glorious theme, I hope that there is not one anywhere, that these lines come to, that I leave out of my salutation to you. The only reservation that is laid down is that laid down by inspiration of God, to wit, that the subject is one that is for the elect people of God. It would be sad to relate, but would be out of my hands or the hands of any of my readers, including those that object to being included in the number that Inspiration moved the Apostle to write to.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you (I Peter 4:12). Everything in

these two short epistles were written by the Apostle to the elect family of God. In fact, every epistle inspired of God as written to the various churches were every word addressed to those of like precious faith.

To the Elect of God, those of like precious faith the world over, for every period of time, that particular communication is sent to every elect vessel of mercy. As the various gifts of God are brought in contact with these gospel truths, they are applicable to every beloved member of the body of Christ. Love is the ruling passion when a man of God is writing, or when it is applied to the church in unison all over the universe.

Now let us look at the background of Peter. I want it understood that I am not casting reflection on the apostle. As far as nature goes, none of us are superior nor inferior to any other of the subjects of grace. When it pleases God to give any of us grace, we are all on a common level. On the other hand, in our relationship with the works of the flesh, we are on a common level with our fellow man in the flesh. As we are all born in a fleshly state, we all follow the things of that state which we are born the first time. We are without exception, of the earth, earthy. Until there is a new birth, brought about by the divine work of the Spirit, we will only do the works of that fleshly birth. This kind of a tree will not, nor cannot, bring forth spiritual fruit. I realize that many people will rise up and attempt to tell us that a man does not have to do those things in nature. But we are told that a corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit. If that kind of a tree cannot bring forth good fruit, then it follows that a corrupt tree cannot help but bear fruit after the flesh. However, as soon as this corrupt man is born again, born from above, that he, being a new creature in Christ, that, then and there, that there is going to be some good fruit. The reason of this is found in the fact that there are

now, in the same house in the same body, two men with two natures.

Now when the Lord Jesus Christ began to call His apostles to His side, Peter was right early one of those called. It is a sad note that right early that Peter manifested a spirit that, uncurbed, would lead to dissension in the body of Christ or in the church. However, in no sense of the word would I dare to insinuate that he was more unjust than his fellow servants. They were all, as all of us are sinners in the same way.

Now let me go back into eternity. God evidently determined to create a world. Regardless of how any one of my readers feel about predestination, there is not one of my readers that would attempt to build a world without a previously drawn blue print. All of my life among the Primitive Baptists, I have read the views of brethren that objected to the thought that God determined all things before the world was created, and yet not one of them all that would start out to build anything without previously having a blueprint. I know that not one man among them all would ever start to build a house or a pig pen or a world without first counting up the cost, and as far as he or she was able that they all would build the world or the pig pen or the house that they desired to build.

The text that Peter brings to our attention is a wonderful rallying point for those that is to be about bringing into existence. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing had happened to you." That is something that the receiver of the fiery trial did not have anything to do with receiving it. He or she was not consulted about it. If you have not got anything to say about me for saying that than that you do not like the appointment of the fiery trial. The evidence is that this fiery trial was designed by He that gave us all things.

As far as power and wisdom was, and is concerned, the Saviour could have called any one of the apostles to first go through this fiery trial. But it was Peter that was first led through this fiery ordeal and trial. It always brings the hardest epithets to one of the Lord's servants for them to suggest that Satan is ever involved in the welfare or the trial or the good of the Lord's people. Time and again, over the years have bitter pens and tongues lambasted any idea or thought that God ever had anything to do with Satan, or that He ever used him in any way for the good of His people. But I know better. Not much that I claim to know, but in this case I know better. Not only do I know better, but the enemies of the truth know that I know better.

Once upon a time the sons of men came to present themselves before God. Satan was among those that came. God talked to Satan. Had God not talked to Satan he would not have ever known about Job. There is not any way for Satan to have ever known the name nor the circumstances of God's servant Job had not the Lord introduced the subject. Let us ever remember that the Lord tries His people. Let the subject drop right at that point. The Lord tries his people. How many of them does He try? How many people has He? When Peter spoke of the constancy of his devotion to the Saviour, what did the other apostles say and do? When poor despised Peter went to sleep while the dear Gallilean was praying, how many of the others also slept?

When word came that the Saviour was dead, how many of the apostles were ready to go fishing? As you are reminded of your many denials of the blessed Saviour, of the cause that you have professed so many times before God and before His dear people, you and I are brought face to face with the fiery trial which is to try us all, even this fiery trial

which the beloved Peter first experienced and then lived through it many times in after life, realizing time and time again that it was given for the specific purpose of trying him. I feel again and again to say with Peter, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange things had happened to you. Me thinks I hear the groans, the anxieties, the yearnings as the inspired man writes. He is not only writing by inspiration but he is writing out of a heart brimming full of soul experience.

Every poor tried soul of Job's day looked upon the scenes depicted by Peter. I dare say, without Bible authority for a denial of what I say that every associate of Job felt the trial of their faith in the manner described by Peter. Isaiah felt it as the living coal was placed on his lips. I say without fear of successful contradiction that Samuel experienced the same feeling that every elect vessel has felt when our trial day came our way (I Sam. 7:12). I am not afraid to say that every elect vessel of mercy will be woefully tried by this fiery trial, which is to try them all. It is a joy and a satisfaction to closely scrutinize every text in the Bible and then to tell you in positive terms that every one of those poor sinners, yea, even all of them, shall be brought through the fire; that every one of them will be tried, and after the trial that they shall all be as gold. My precious readers, one and all, shall suffer this fiery trial. Every elect child of God will be subjected to this fiery trial. The Saviour was no exception, those given grace, they too, as was every prophet of old, every one that calls upon the name of the Lord. And do not forget, too, that he and she that belong to the elect body of Christ are to be tried with this universal trial. This trial is experienced by the Head of the church. Oh what a terrible price to pay for unworthy sinners. Oh, the depth of the riches

both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out (Rom. 11:33). How sublime is the trial of the whole church of God. Two parts shall be cut off and die. Prophecy is fulfilled in the appearing of the Shepherd, the law never did give righteousness to a single elect sinner. It too shall be cut off and die. That law never did save a sinner. No use for a trial here. Note it was cut off without a trial. But there is something, and somebody, even a numerous host that is to be tried. The beauty of this trial is that both the Saviour and those that are saved are both to be tried. All, in the land shall be cut off and die, except, EXCEPT the third part. Draw near dear saints of God. Behold the Lamb of God that is to take away the

sins of the world. He is to pass through the fire in trial for you. Notice poor sinners how intricately the Sacrificial Lamb and the whole Covenant of the sheep cote is embraced and linked together in what is to follow. Notice dear child how you are embraced in what is coming to pass. God is bringing the third part through the fire. Notice that this is in the singular, which alludes to Jesus Christ, and then look at the second part. He says, I will refine THEM as silver is refined, and I will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people, and they shall say this is my God.

The Lord willing, I will meet you there.

Elder W. D. Griffin

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



PLEASANT RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church was constituted in March 1882 and is a member of the Hopewell Association.

The Church is located eleven miles north of Gordo, Alabama and seventeen miles south of Fayette, Alabama in Tus-

caloosa County.

The meeting time is each fourth Sunday morning at 11 o'clock. Elder W. T. Posey is the Pastor.

Sister Dannie Strickland, Church Clerk
Star Route, Elrod, Alabama 35458

CORRESPONDENCE

My dear ones:

This day the dear Lord has given me a moment of peace, a calm from strife, a mind to think on Him, a mind to think of you, with love I hope.

I really don't know how to think on Him except to thank Him for the moment of peace; I thank Him for strength of mind and body. I work very hard, under pressure, and long hours. I don't have many things that most people have, but the Lord has given to me freely those things which please Him that I have. I love the Lord so much when He makes me to know that He is God, that He has blessed me with all that I have in this world. And I'm not talking only about those things which we touch and see; they are good in this life here but there is life beyond this veil. I thank Him so much that He has restrained my temper this day. He's even put a kind word in my mouth. What is better?

I know this state will not last long. Often within hours I am bounced from the lofty heights to the depths of depression with such force that I almost beg to be left in the depths. Oh foolish one that I am. I love this God who rules in heaven and in earth. Wisdom is His. And mercy. How wonderful that God knows our woes. Wouldn't you have problems trying to explain many things that need His mercy? He knows where we are and what we have need of. How wonderful! But more, He shall supply our needs.

Oh, my dear ones, you who hope to love the dear Lord and one another, I thank Him for you. You have been joy to me for many years. I have a beautiful picture of two dear ones who never knew I loved them. For eighteen years the heavy burden of being a sinner was

mine alone. The dear Lord in His time I hope blessed me to go with you and the way has been good. To me, I love those two to whom I never confessed love just as I love you. Death does not hinder this love.

On this day in October, the 10th day of the month, these thoughts have been with me. May the God of peace, mercy and wisdom be with us, and may it be His pleasure to make His peace known to us from time to me, as it seems good in His sight.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

VOICES OF THE PAST

"he being dead yet speaketh"

REPENTANCE

2 Cor. 7:10—*For godly sorrow worketh REPENTANCE to salvation not to be REPENTED of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

It has been almost two years since I have written anything for publication. In answer to the many inquiries relative to the reason for my silence: I must be frank with you, I must confess that I cannot find one good reason even though my carnal mind suggests many frivolous excuses. I have experienced much sorrow because of this neglect but I greatly fear that it is the sorrow of the world which results in death instead of godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation. I can, at this moment, sympathize with Job who said: "*I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*" I would but cannot write, So help me, Lord, I pray: Deliver me from this plight. Bless my hands this day. May I be blessed to pen, Words that Thou wilt give—To sink into hearts of men, That they repent and live.

The first question we shall attempt to answer is: What is godly repentance? The term repentance suggests a true mourning for sin and a fervent desire to be delivered from it. True repentance is always the result and experience of those who have been convinced that they are sinners. Am I convinced that I have transgressed God's holy law? Do I possess sorrow in my heart because of my many wrong-doings? Is this sorrow great enough that I will confess to my God, my brethren, and my friends that I have sinned? Do I hate my sins to the extent of renouncing them? If I can from the heart answer these questions in the affirmative I do have some evidence of true repentance. I am convinced that true repentance is the daily exercise of a true Christian. David asks in Psalms 19:12: *Who can understand his errors? Then he prays, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults."* Enough of my faults have been revealed to me to make me shudder, but I realize that I have many that I am not aware of. I am guilty of disobeying God's revealed commandments in the Scriptures. I am guilty of being polluted in my own carnality. I am fully aware of the fact that I am so awfully polluted and so terribly depraved that I am helpless in attempting to deliver myself. If saving repentance does not include the mercy of God given to us in Christ Jesus, I have no hope. Repentance is a change of mind or purpose. There is a repentance that need to be repented of. This repentance is worked by the sorrow of the world. Worldly repentance includes change of mind or purpose, but would only be a change from one error to another error. Worldly repentance is the result of a sense of danger and fear of wrath brought about by the workings of a natural conscience. However, godly repentance is the result of a true mourning for sin and an earnest desire to be delivered from it which is brought about by the workings of the Spirit of God in changing the natu-

ral conscience to a spiritual conscience. The conscience that has been spiritualized by the mighty working of the Spirit will do to follow. There are different kinds of repentance. There is the natural, legal, internal, external, and hypocritical repentance, as well as the true spiritual godly repentance.

The next question we shall consider is: Who is the author of true repentance? We find through sad experience that the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God. There must be something done for us, and in us, from without before we can repent or have a change of mind or purpose against self toward God. Repentance is not within the grasp, or reach, of the natural mind. The natural mind does not have the ability to change itself. True godly repentance must be the work of God. God promised it through prophecy by the hand of Zechariah. We read in Zech. 12:10 — *"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his own son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his own son."* Repentance is a grace or gift of God as is clearly affirmed in Acts 5:31 — *"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, FOR TO GIVE REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL, and forgiveness of sin."* Read the second chapter of Acts and you will note the effect of this God given repentance. Those who were "pricked in their heart" gave evidence of a change of mind and purpose. God had turned their hearts with his godly sorrow to make them fit subjects for external repentance. They brought forth fruit meet for repentance which caused them to be proper subjects of address to heed the command of Peter, "Repent . . ." Outward repentance would be nothing less than hypocritical if the heart and mind has not been changed. Inner repentance worked by God, is certain

to cause outward repentance. Jeremiah quotes Ephraim as recorded in Jeremiah 31:18-19 — *“Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord, my God. Surely after that I was turned, I REPENTED. . .”* The Lord performs a perfect work that will result in the desired effects. Turning and repenting are synonymous terms. I do not feel it would do any violence to the meaning of Ephraim’s cry to paraphrase it, using these words, *“Give me repentance of heart and mind, Lord, and I shall have repentance. Surely after my heart and mind was given repentance, I outwardly and manifestly repented.”* We will further prove that repentance is the gift of God by quoting Acts 11:18 — *“When they heard these things they held their peace and glorified God, saying, ‘Then hath God also to the Gentiles GRANTED REPENTANCE unto life.’”* Paul verified this in his instructions to Timothy relative to his duties as a minister as recorded in 2 Timothy 2:25 — *“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure WILL GIVE THEM REPENTANCE to the acknowledging of the truth.”*

The text implies that there is a repentance worked by a worldly sorrow. Your temperament, education, and the customs within your environment may cause you to experience a sense of guilt coupled with a feeling of helplessness which would result in an apprehension of danger. This painful feeling would not necessarily mean that your repentance was brought about by the Holy Spirit. I once knew a man who committed an ungodly act. Two years later it became publicly known that he was guilty. Then, he went to one whom this act had offended and said, *“I am very sorry. Can’t you forgive me?”* The offended one responded, *“Are you sorry that you committed the act? Could this sorrow be only because you were caught up with?”* The only sure test that repentance is worked by a godly sorrow is hatred for the sin and not for

the consequences of it. Evidence of true repentance is your fervent desire to be delivered from the sins themselves — not just delivered from the result of them. It is further proof that you sincerely seek this deliverance when you put forth every endeavor possible to refrain from committing these sins.

If our own internal experience harmonize with the teaching of the Holy Scriptures relative to repentance, we have evidence of genuine repentance. Paul experienced sin being mixed with all he did. He realized the presence of evil in the midst of his desire to do good. He declared himself to be a wretched man and wondered who would deliver him. His conclusion of this state of being was that with his mind he served the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin. He must look to the mercy of God through the merits of Jesus Christ for deliverance from this wretchedness. When we can see our experience in the experience of God’s children as recorded in the Bible, we have evidence of genuine repentance. If examination of ourselves prove that we hate our secret sins as much as we hate those outwardly performed, we have another evidence that we are in possession of genuine repentance. The hatred and forsaking of both secret and open sins prove a genuine repentance. Another evidence is that you desire sincerely to do the will of God; to walk and to talk becoming to saints of God. These things must be in us and abound.

Let us look to the verse following our text to note the specific things wrought by this godly sorrow that worketh repentance — *“. . . What CAREFULNESS it wrought in you, yea, what CLEARING OF YOURSELVES, yea what INDIGNATION, yea what FEAR, yea what ZEAL, yea what REVENGE. . .”* (2Cor. 7:11) One wrought upon with godly sorrow cares so much for the doctrine that gives, or proclaims, God to be the author of all things pertaining to godliness that he will not condone

any other doctrine. His care is so great relative to discipline that he will do his best to walk circumspectly so as to not bring reproach upon the church. His care is great enough to inspire him to seek the fellowship of those of like precious faith. The world would want to clear themselves of guilt by denying that they are guilty. It is not so with those who undergo this godly sorrow. We confess our guilt, acknowledge our error, pray for forgiveness, and do our best to rid ourselves from this error. The indignation manifested by those who have genuinely repented is a righteous anger against base things. We hate the things that are unjust and vile with a godly hatred. How careful are the Lord's people not to give approval to anything as righteous that would be in any way polluted with man's self-righteousness. The fear worked is the reverential fear of God. This is a contrast to slavish fear, or fear of men and devils. We eagerly and passionately desire to be rid of these hateful characteristics to such extent as to promote the greatest endeavor to reform ourselves, looking to the power of God for this strength. We are persistently pressing on, being graced with a godly zeal to attempt to rise again after each fall. The kind of revenge worked in us is not the revenge against persons, because this kind of vengeance is rightly exercised only by God; so, this revenge is against sin and not the sinner.

Awakening to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus is essential to genuine repentance. The immortalizing of the conscience by the Spirit of God gives knowledge of the laws of God and causes those who come under its stimulation to demand the same perfection that Divine Justice would demand. This is the reason that awakened sinners are never satisfied with their actions, thoughts, or words. We are made to constantly pray for mercy and strength. Our souls surely would be tormented to remorse and des-

peration, were it not for the knowledge of Christ and the belief in Him worked in us. Our God is a consuming fire that can destroy the adversary, is our only hope of ever being completely rid of sin and all of its consequences. This hope is based upon the truth that Divine Justice is satisfied only by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. Grace cannot be so amazing as it is to those who have been wrought upon in such a manner as to convince them and convict them of their sins. What a wonderful revelation to poor hell-deserving sinners to taste of God's mercy, and to behold the richness of His grace; to believe in Jesus Christ who both lived for us and died for us.

We read in the Holy Scriptures of "*Repentance to the acknowledging of the truth*"; "*Repentance unto salvation*"; and "*Repentance unto life*". What a perfect and complete work this repentance begets. There may be many who turn from one error to another error. There may be some who will turn to damnation as a result of the working of a worldly sorrow. Many, no doubt, will experience a repentance unto desperation and death. How sweet and how glorious it is to experience the repentance that is given us by God, which results in our embrace of the truth and our love for it! How sweet that life is that never ceases, to which we are turned when we lose confidence and a taste for worldly and carnal life! When our earthly life loses its beauty, our life which is from Heaven becomes our joy and glory. Our minds are turned from the overwhelming desire to lay up treasures which are from above. We are turned in our purpose in this life from the desire to please man to the desire to please God. We are turned from seeking the praise of man to seek the good will of our Heavenly Father. We are made to realize that it is God who holds the keys to Heaven, to death, and to hell. We seek for those to be our companions who are graced to walk in the paths of righteousness. This godly sorrow

causes us to realize that we have no continuing city here but we seek one that is to come whose builder is God. We turn from the "untoward generation" to a company of believers who have a goal set before them. We turn from the modernists in search for the "old paths" that lead to life eternal. We strive to walk in "the footsteps of the flock".

How thankful ought we to be for this godly sorrow that has weaned us from the things of this world in order that we be fit subjects to have our feet set upon a rock and to have our steps ordered and our goings established. This repentance needeth not to be repented of. We have no desire to love sin and self again. We have no wish for the allurements of this world to be renewed. We run with patience the race that is set before us. We do not put our hand to the plow and look back. We look to Jesus who is the author and finisher of so great FAITH. We have no desire to stay here longer than it pleases God. Sometimes, we yearn for our departure from this rugged and unpleasant life. Sometimes, we look upon death as not the end but the real beginning. We look upon it as the entrance into Heaven instead of the end of our journey. We think of it as the time we shall be clothed upon instead of being unclothed. We think of it as being the beginning of that ETERNAL DAY instead of being the night. How merciful God is to sinners to work in them such change of heart, mind, and life. May God give you the knowledge of this change being wrought in you, as you meditate upon these words. May your faith be strengthened and your hope greatly renewed as you call to remembrance the drastic changes that has been wrought in you during your sojourn here. May you be given to praise God for the wonderful leadings of His Holy Spirit is my sincere prayer as I close these remarks.

Elder E. J. Lambert

ARTICLES

FRAGMENTS

When the sun's rays reach the earth and rest upon us, then for the first time we know that there is a sun and know something of his character and power. It is only by himself that we can be taught of his existence and character. We can see him only by his own light. So we can know nothing of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, except what he teaches us by revelation of himself in our experience. Till his light and truth reach us we do not know that there is such a being, however much we may have heard others speak of him. We can only know him by an experience of his presence, love and power in our souls. We can only see him in the light of his own face, as David says, "In thy light shall we see light."

When the heavens distil dew upon us at night, or manifest themselves in falling rain or snow, then we know them as we have not known them before. We learn of the clouds when their treasures of rain reach us. Then we realize vital interest in them. We cannot go up to the heavens for knowledge of them till they come down to us and furnish us a way by which to climb. When they touch us with their rain, or dew, or sunshine, or starlight, or with the vital elements of the air, then we can rise up to them.

The doctrine which drops like the rain is the only doctrine that can be of use to us, or that we can be vitally interested in. The speech that distils as the dew is that which brings true knowledge and heavenly comfort to our souls. All other doctrine and speech, however attractive to the natural mind, are too far away from the child of God to be of any real importance to him. He must have a doctrine that will touch the heart and

explain the mystery of the new life within him; not a doctrine, that he can study and speculate upon, but that he can feel, that he has already felt. He must hear a speech that will bring refreshment to his bewildered mind and to his perplexed and wearied soul, as the dew distils from all the surrounding atmosphere and refreshes the tender herb and drooping grass.

When the Lord send messages of love and instruction to his fainting people, those messages come thus, dropping like the rain into their souls, and distilling upon them as the dew in the nighttime of sorrow; "as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass." The parched earth calls to the heavens, and the heavens call to the Lord, who answers with a full supply for all the needs of his people, as he says, "I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth."—Hosea ii. 21.

Elder Silas H. Durrand

WHY?

“**O** Lord, why has thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?”—Isa. lxiii. 17.

This question does not express a bold and arrogant inquisitiveness into the secret purposes of the Lord, but is an expression rather of deep and reverent humility. The prophet is not charging God with the transgressions and hard-heartedness of Israel, nor is he finding fault with his dealings with them, though it may appear so to the natural understanding. The natural mind cannot search out the true spiritual meaning of the inspired Scriptures of truth, nor is it to the natural understanding that their rich and important mysteries are unfolded, but to the faith of the Lord's people. The things of the Spirit are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. The Spirit reveals them. They are first

known in the experience of the soul, and then recognized and understood as they appear in the word of truth.

The poor soul who has been brought to see himself a sinner against a holy God, as he looks back over his sinful life, is brought down into the dust before the Lord in shame and self-loathing. He never feels like charging any part of his sins and wickedness upon any other than himself, not even upon those who may have induced him to do evil things, much less upon the Lord, but feels that all the blame belongs to himself. The language of his soul would be, "I am condemned, but thou are clear." Yet he knows that God has sovereign power over all men, and that if he has not been as outbreaking a sinner as some have, it is because the Lord has in mercy restrained him. He knows also that if the Lord had so willed he could have kept him from the evil that he has done, and that he could have brought him to see his sins and to cry for mercy long before he did. But it does not occur to the quickened soul to thing that the Lord ought to have done so, nor to question his right and justice in leaving him to his own wicked ways. On the contrary, we know that it would have been just in him to have left us to act out all the evil that is in our depraved hearts, and to go down into destruction. Our wonder is that he ever made us to see and feel the sinfulness of our hearts, and to cry for mercy at all, and that he ever purposed salvation and joy and glory for such as we. And since we received this unexpected blessing of a good hope through grace, how often we have wandered in thought and word and deed from the Lord's ways. We know that at any time the Lord could have kept us from error and transgression, and could have kept our hearts soft and tender in his fear, if it had been his will. We know that, do we not? Does not any one know that? But what poor soul, when mourning over his sins, and experiencing

the chastisement of the Lord for them, ever thought of chiding the Lord for them, or of finding fault with him because he did not keep us from thus acting out the evil that was in our hearts? We know that we have no right to complain for the punishment of our sins. (Lam. iii.) We feel rather to say, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him."

But still we are sometimes in a muse, why the Lord has thus left us to err from his ways, or, using the prophet's inspired expression, "made us to err from his ways." The disposition to err was in our hearts, and it was his purpose that we should be left to manifest it. But why? We humbly and reverently inquire, is it that we may see that his justice requires us to be cut off from before him? We cannot complain of this, if it is so. David was left to the workings of his evil heart, and did evil in the Lord's sight, and against him, that the justice of the Lord might be manifest in his condemnation as a sinner, and that the glory of grace might be clearly displayed. (Psalm li. 4; Romans iii. 4.)

Instead of chiding the Lord, and complaining because he made his people to err from his ways, and hardened their hearts from his fear, the prophet is humbly pleading with him that he will withhold the wrath which they deserve, and that he will return unto them with mercy for his servant's sake, for the honor of his name. He would acknowledge with Jeremiah that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (Lam. iii. 22)

The natural man would at once question the justice of the Lord's condemnation of a man for doing what he had purposed the man should do. We can all see in our own minds the motion of an opposition to such a thing, and therefore, when left to our natural understanding, we either boldly deny that such is the case, and say that the Scriptures which

declare such things do not mean what they say, or else we take the bold ground that the Lord is really the author of sin, tempting and causing a man to sin, and then condemning him for it. But the quickened soul, taught by the Spirit, is far from ascribing sin to the Lord, or saying, when he sins, "The Lord tempted me to sin," for the Lord tempts no man (James i. 13), but he takes all the blame to himself, and really feels it to be his own, and yet he knows and acknowledges God's omnipotence, and knows that nothing, not even his worst sin, could have taken place contrary to God's purpose, and he knows that every manifestation of the depravity of his heart, in a sinful word or act, but the more clearly shows that the Lord is justified in his sayings, and that he will overcome when he is judged. (Romans iii. 4.) That the Lord does purpose that certain evil and wicked things shall be done by men, acting out a portion of the wrath and wickedness of their hearts, and that they shall be punished for the evil, the Scriptures clearly show by many examples. Those who crucified Jesus did what it was the determinate counsel of God that they should do. The Lord turned the hearts of Israel's enemies to hate his people (Psalms), he brought their enemies against them in battle that he might thus punish his people, and then that he might destroy the enemies.

This is a deep and wonderful mystery, but the quickened soul feels the truth even while the carnal mind is reasoning blindly, and trying in vain to harmonize the works and ways of God, with human reason. His judgments can never be understood by the natural mind of man, for they "are unsearchable," nor can his ways be discovered by human reason, for they "are past finding out." But the child of God, when led by the Spirit, accepts implicitly what the word of God declares, no matter how far he may be from understanding it, nor how contra-

dictory to each other different portions of the Scripture may appear to the mind. He never ascribes sin to the Lord, for he feels that he is himself the sinner, that it is man that sins, and he feels all the blame. He knows that nothing can exist, transpire or be done that God did not purpose, for then he would not be omnipotent; and yet when the Lord says concerning the terrible wickedness of Israel in the service of Baal, "which I commanded not, neither spake it, neither came it into my mind," we understand the perfect separation of the Lord from all that is sinful. There is not, there cannot be, any sin in the Lord's purpose concerning the evil and sinful acts of men. The sin is all theirs, and always theirs. The Lord's purpose is pure and holy, and ever tends toward his own honor, holiness and glory, and the salvation of his people.

In all the transgressions of his people of old he had a wise and holy purpose. In them, and in the punishments that followed quick upon them, they were all examples for us. They "all happened unto them for examples," and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come; the ends of the legal world, which are the aims or meaning and fulfillment of all the types and patterns of that legal dispensation. (1 Cor. x.)

Those who are exercised by the Spirit feel the importance of the sacred admonitions of the apostles. "Secret things belong to God." When they are revealed to us we handle them reverently. But the assurance of our souls that the Lord has settled his word forever in heaven, that all time is before him, that a thousand years are as one day with him, that he has declared the end from the beginning; all this does not hinder us from prayer and supplication, from pleading for mercy and forgiveness for our many sins; from calling upon his blessed name and entreating him to keep our feet in the right

way, and to keep us from sinning against him. All this trust and confidence in the Lord, as a God of purpose and predestination, does not make us less, but rather the more, anxious to do his commands, to walk in obedience to his will, to meekly exhort our brethren unto love and good works to strive with them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to warn the unruly and to reprove and rebuke where it is needful to do so.

The good conscience does not excuse sin. We find no excuse for the indulgence of our selfishness and sinful lusts in the truth that our carnal natures are not changed in and by the new birth. If we have been born again, we have the life and Spirit of Christ, which shall henceforth rule us, and bring Adamic nature into subjection. Here constantly exists a warfare. It is a warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The contest goes on. We cannot rest in fleshly ease. It will not satisfy us to assert that the old man is evil, and that we cannot look for any good from him. No, but we look for his evil suggestions and selfish inclinations to be denied. And where this dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body we shall feel and see suffering, and shall manifest the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh, and when we speak with our brethren, or write to them, or preach to them, our communications to them will be more than a mere repeating of the words and arguments of sound doctrine. There will be felt in what we say, a savor of what we feel and suffer and enjoy from day to day. The things by which we live will be seen; the mourning sore as a dove; the chattering like a crane or a swallow; the eyes failing with looking upward; the cry of the oppressed, "O Lord, undertake for me," the sweet answer of peace from the Lord, as in the case of Hezekiah. "What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it. I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of

my soul. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my Spirit."—Isaiah xxxviii. 9-22.

If there is not the life of an exercised soul, the struggles, pleadings, answers, in what we preach or write, it will be dry hearing of reading for the exercised people of God. In one we know personally we must see a godly life, a showing forth in the life "the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," or what that one says, however right in the letter, will be of no value to us. The truth of God's salvation felt in the soul, and manifested in the life, will cause the utterances of that one to have a goodly savor, and a holy power. Where there is a felt dependence upon a God of unlimited and eternal purpose and power, there will be manifested a deep and reverent humility, and a child-like confidence and trust. But a belief in a God with whom there is any degree or kind of uncertainty, any of whose favors or blessings are offered upon conditions to be performed by us, and left dependent upon our will, tends to manifest self-confidence and pride, instead of humility and godly fear, and to cause levity in speech and carelessness in act, instead of a trembling solemnity of soul, and a constant desire and prayer for the dear Savior's manifested presence and power.

Elder Silas H. Durrand

GOD IS WORSHIPED IN SPIRIT

"God is a spirit: and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."
John 4:24.

He is a spirit and the true worshipper must worship him in spirit and in truth, that is, he cannot worship him except in Him, or his spirit. He is too holy and too pure to be approached by the carnal of fleshly mind. It must be from heaven, and none is able to ascend

up to heaven and bring him down, or descend into the deep and bring him up. We must be still and know that he is God and a spirit; and that his spirit is in his word, and that his word is sent like the rain and snow upon the earth, and that the earth is not changed by the rain and the snow, but is made to bring forth fruit to the glory of his name, and that he holds the waters in his hands, and whatsoever his soul desireth that he doeth; and, without him, or his spirit, we can do nothing; and by him and through him we can do all things. His people believe on him through his word. He puts his laws in their hearts, and writes them in their minds. He will be to them a God and they shall be to him a people. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. I believe he works in them often "to will" before he works in them "to do".

I believe that every child of grace is made willing to serve him and obey him, and he has His laws in his heart; but his infirmities cause him to cry out and say, that he knows not how to perform. But as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

I believe he sent his only begotten Son into this low ground of sorrow to be made sin for his people, and to restore the law holy unto the Father; and that the Son learned obedience by the things which he suffered: or in other words, He went into obedience for his people; and, also, into repentance for them, and that his soul was exceedingly sorrowful; and that every one of his children must take his yoke upon him, and learn of him. They do not learn to obey, but they learn obedience by the things which they suffer. Jonah was called to preach to the Ninivites, but fled in another direction. But he was brought back by the omnipotent hand of God, and by it was qualified to preach that salvation is of the Lord, and learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Although he had obeyed the

Lord, and did obey him in coming back, I am sure he did not boast and claim any honor in coming back.

The carnal mind does not serve or obey God; it is not subject to his law. Peter tried to walk on the water, but soon found that he had not the faith to hold him up. He was also going to follow his Master, even unto death; but Jesus told him that he would deny him thrice before the cock should crow, and even a girl could scare him off from his resolution, this causes him to weep, and he is converted, and became as a little child, and is, no doubt, able to tell his brethren that they must receive the kingdom of heaven as such.

If I ever have obeyed and served the Lord, it has been through some mysterious way that has left me out of the whole matter. I know that those that are willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land, and I hope that I have experienced that; but, bless be God! I believe it was through him. After I hope that I had tasted that he is gracious, I was continually saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I wanted to go to the church, if it was the Lord's will; but it seemed as though some strange thing had happened to me. I had the will, but not the "to do". But after listening to a sermon by old Elder Amos Dickerson, which I believe was the gospel in its purity, to my surprise, I went in a sort of a dazed way, not knowing hardly what I said, and was received. So calm did I feel afterward, that I stood in the yard with my head bowed down, almost unconscious of my surroundings, when there was a dart in my mind—It might have been a messenger from Satan, a thorn to buffet me, that said, "If you were right you would not be so indifferent." But God has said, that we are not to be tempted above that we are able to bear; but in all our temptations he maketh a way for our escape. Just then a brother stepped up and tapped me on the shoulder and said, "You

have done right; you have calmed the tempest." I stared up and wondered how he knew that I had been in a tempest. It was like an apple of gold in pictures of silver. I now feel that He is a covert from the tempest, a shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and as rivers of water in a dry place. I thought of the expression, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I saw its precious meaning for the first time, that some how I had obeyed the command before I knew what it meant, and had learned obedience by the things which I had suffered. It left me out of the matter; and yet I felt it was in Him that I had moved and obeyed, and had my being. Studying over these things, I thought that whatsoever my hand should find to do, I would do with all my might; but some strange impression got hold of me, that I thought I knew was from Satan. It was an exercise of mind in regard to preaching. Right here I could write a volume. I was determined to resist the temptation, as I thought it to be; but, suffice it to say that I did finally make the attempt and, in process of time, gained some strength; and though I would be instant in season and out of season, take the advice of the brethren and make the attempt when an opportunity offered, forgetting that I had no right to say, "I will"; but "If the Lord will." So the next attempt was such a shameful failure that I wept over it for hours, and vowed that I never again would make the attempt, again forgetting to say, "If the Lord Will". Yet it is the most pleasant thought that I have, when I think of my failures and can glory in my infirmities, knowing that I obeyed, if I obeyed at all, in spirit and in truth; and that I have been cut off at every point, so that I can venture to say, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." I am now thinking of one of the dearest sisters that I know of, to the church, whose very countenance beams

with the grace of God. When she received a pardon of her sins, she pondered it over in her mind, and said she would go to preaching, but would never join the church. But on the morning of the meeting day, it seemed that her eyes were holden and the understanding of her heart closed, so that she got into her carriage and went to the place, having no knowledge of anything that transpired that day, till she came to herself, and the brethren and sisters were weeping and giving to her the hand of fellowship. She had obeyed the Lord and was now willing and obedient, and was eating the good of the land; but she surely obeyed in Him and could say, Not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory.

I mention these things to try to show that I believe in the working of his mighty power, and that salvation is appointed unto his people for walls and for bulwarks, and that it is eternal and reaches from earth to heaven, and that we know nothing save Jesus and him crucified. Some may be ready to say that I have thrown away the gift of exhortation, and would say, do not come to the church as long as you can stay away. But I believe no such foolishness; neither do I want to hear it: for the spirit and the bride say, come; and his servants sow the seed in the morning, and withhold not their hands in the evening, if they have any seed, but it is all of the Lord. But what I want need not influence other people.

I believe that Jesus is feet to the lame, and eyes to the blind, and that his people walk in him and him alone.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
H. V. Cole, Simpson, Va.

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PLACE FIRST THINGS, FIRST

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established. Rom. I:11

The man that wrote this epistle and our text was careful to place first things first. Unto God was ascribed all honor and praise for the Roman brethren, and not once did he attribute their steadfastness in the faith to themselves. Through Jesus Christ there was always thanks giving for these brethren at Rome as well as other places. The apostle's trips among them were all according to the will of God, notwithstanding the fact that he often purposed to come among them.

There is everything lacking in a man that is called to preach if he does not have a true regard for the churches. In fact, it is to be seriously doubted that one is called, who does not love the churches. This love is of God, and it cannot be denied. It may seem to be denied, but if it is not real then it is to be taken away. The truth of the matter is, that any kind of "don't care" is conclusive proof that one is still in the world and of the world. I cannot say too many times that predestination is the poorest thing in the world to hide meanness behind. I wish you to read that again, and note that I did not say that one who believes in predestination will try to hide behind it for their sin. For those who have an understanding in predestination are never inclined to so misapply the scripture. Predestinarians are careful in their conduct, desiring to shun evil and to maintain good works. And further the ablest predestinarians, including the apostle Paul, were interested in the churches which the Holy Ghost made them overseer of.

Every point of doctrine, order, practice, in fact the whole catalogue of scripture, was written by men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Not just a pet phrase

here, a disjointed sentence there, a portion of the old and a portion of the New Testaments put together, but the whole Bible is to be used by the man of God. It is all profitable alike for the things enumerated. Just why do we preach predestination? One of the reasons given is because Paul or Peter wrote on that. Why do we advocate election, effectual calling, final perseverance of the saints, resurrection? The Bible teaches it, this is the undeniable answer. That is true and none would deny us the right to rejoice with the apostles as they are blessed to bring out things new and old for us to glean from these subjects. But if it is good and desirable to get the 'thus saith the Lord' from the Bible in regard to doctrine, why isn't it as desirable from their viewpoint and instruction in regard to our walk before one another?

Do the ministers who are some of my readers, ever feel towards their churches as Paul did toward Rome? "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end that ye may be established." Now let us not get too hasty, neither let us be a laggard. You do not have this yearning just from reading about Paul having it. Religion does not come that way; duty is not that way; true and filial devotion and service does not come that way. The experiences of the followers of Jesus cannot be acquired by others who desire the same gift, but have not been wrought upon in like manner; however, when you are given to know the inward workings of the Holy Spirit, it is worth something to hear of someone else that has had a like experience. The doctrine is taught us by the Holy Ghost, and it is not to be learned by research work, although the Spirit may lead us into that. But it is to be noted that the Spirit does not teach us anything that has not been inscribed by inspiration. So, also, we are not going to be led into experiences and duties that those gone before us has not already seen and

felt.

The experience of Paul was for his day, and God inspired him and others to write theirs so that when we are led forth into these things we might have a true and tried criterion to go by. Let me ask again, do you feel toward your churches as Paul felt? Honestly, isn't it true that sometimes you long to go to them? I wish that it were the will of the Lord for me to tell my experience as a pastor. I am at a loss to express through the medium of words that you would not think what I write is incredible. I am still trying to serve each church that has called me, and I do not have a favorite among them. Each week for sixteen years there has been a longing desire for the time to come for me to start. This desire has not been as a result of diligent inquiry; it has not come, I hope, for filthy lucre's sake; it has not come, I hope, because the apostle longed to go to Rome, but I have wanted evidence that this desire was scriptural and acceptable to God.

I have had this desire from week to week, from year to year, in hope. If I have been sent forth in the kingdom, I have gone in hope, oftentimes not knowing whither I was bound and why. Yet this hope has had some knowledge blended in it. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren (I John 3:14), and sometimes I am blessed to enjoy this in my own feeling and not for someone else. I believe that God's people love one another, yet I do not think for one moment that we can love at option. We must be taught where our strength is, for it will not be the pleasure of God for us to walk long in our way. As we travel in hope we must remember that with hope there is faith and charity. Upon these three the apostle could say, I have longed to come that I may impart to you some spiritual gift. Faith laid hold on the having of that gift, hope kept Paul expecting to come, and his love for them did not abate.

The fish and the loaves were first given to the disciples. They were as helpless as any other member of that vast throng. It is a pleasure to sit at his command, and it is equally as great a pleasure to serve when commanded. He gave the disciples all they had, and they gave it to the congregation. All that Paul had was given to him. All that any minister has is that portion that has been given him. Unless I am mistaken in my calling, I believe every minister has things given him, and when given it is as a cup running over, and it produces a longing desire to meet the household of faith, to im-

part to them the things that have brought you so much joy. A faithful servant does not desire to lead his people into his diminished pershing strength, but they desire to see the churches established in the truth that is in Jesus. And this desire is not to come in great swelling words of men's wisdom, but in the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. And the food that feeds the congregation is the food that the undershepherd lives on. I am not writing on the duty of the church to her pastor, so I want to use this scripture on this subject, namely, they that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel (I Cor. 9:14), for Paul desired to be comforted together with the Roman brethren by the mutual faith.

All the scriptures are yours; the gospel is yours; the commandments are yours; all things are yours, but keep in mind that it belongs to you as from faith to faith. If there is not faith, there is not action in his service, whether it is the minister coming to the churches or the brethren going to the assembly of God's people, but if there is faith all the other virtues you can add. But you cannot add unless you have something to add. If the things enumerated are in you and abounding, they make you that you will not be barren and unfruitful.

Finally, I desire to write more on the

subject of spiritual gifts. Keep in mind that every good and perfect gift is from above. Drive a good solid stake there. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Put your second stake there. A man's gift will make room for him. Third stake please.

In precious hope of immortality
Elder W. D. Griffin

THE PATH

Path means an established way.

St. John 14:6: "*Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*"

St. Matthew 3:3: "*For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight.*"

Straight means upright and honest dealing. Strait means strict, distress, difficultly, narrow.

Job 28:7-8: "*There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.*"

I remember one night many years ago, when there seemed to be no rest for me. My heart was troubled. I walked out in my yard in the middle of the night and looked toward Heaven, as unworthy as I felt. I saw a strait path that divided the clouds as far as I could see. I felt within me a voice saying, therein you shall walk. I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing and in myself, I cannot walk that path. I am very fearful, depending on the Lord to lead me in the way he would have me go.

I Corinthians 10:21: "*Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils.*"

I feel the words we find recorded in St. Matthew 10:16 are to those blessed to walk the straight path, "*Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be*

ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

I have witnessed many divisions among the Primitive Baptist people over the years that divided associations, churches, homes, and families. I have seen many precious old brethren whose heads were blooming for the tomb so deeply hurt, who have been blessed to walk the strait path for many years.

II Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecutions." But, let us remember I Corinthians 14:33: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

Isaiah 32:17-18: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."

I feel and hope the Lord has led me in a path away from the things that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof is death. "For God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." I feel that he has blessed me with a quiet resting place for I am tired and weary of church trouble. But, if we are blessed to walk the strait path, it will make no detours around the things we must suffer for his namesake.

If not deceived, I feel I was blessed to find peace, love, and fellowship at Durham Primitive Baptist Church. I hope, for what few more days I have left in this path, before I go the way of no return, to see brotherly love continue.

As I look at the evening sun going down and watch the shadows upon the earth that all point to the east, I think of my own life. For my evening sun is sinking low and I am hoping for a few more crumbs from the Master's table. I pray for a peaceful moment to pass from this path of trials and tribulations, and I hope rest that peaceful rest that surpasses all understanding.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

*"In all the paths thro' which I've passed,
What mercies I've enjoyed!
And this shall be my song at last-
Cast down, but not destroyed."*

In thankfulness,
Clifton Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTION LIST
FOR OCTOBER 1985

Mrs. Della M. Swan, LA.....	\$ 2.00
Mrs. Irene M. Setliff, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Edd Glidewell, NC.....	2.00
C. W. McKinney, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Wall, TX.....	2.00
Mrs. Maggie Culp, KY.....	15.00
Mrs. Ester Cole, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. C.R. Hollandsworth, VA. . .	3.00
Mrs. Noma J. Smith, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Ida E. Palmer, FL.....	2.00
Mrs. W. B. Herndon, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Luther Procter, NC.....	2.00
Elder Noel Conner, VA.....	5.00
Mrs. Mary Messick, AL.....	5.00
Robert Saunders, NC.....	12.00
Eugene F. Osborne, MD.....	7.00
Jerry P. Cockman, NC.....	15.00
Mrs. Nellie G. Bunn, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Ruby A. Hawley, VA.....	7.00
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Mrs. V. L. Johnson, TX.....	5.00
Mrs. Ellie Wallace, LA.....	5.00
Elder David N. Bailey, WV.....	5.00

Mrs. Susie Williamson, NC..... 2.00
 In Memory of Elder W. R. Dodd
 & Mrs. Nannie Nuckols by
 Mrs. Jesephine Dodd, Va. ... 5.00

OBITUARIES

ADA MARSHALL BOND
 (1899 - 1985)

Sister Ada (our mother) died in her home the late evening of March 8, 1985 in a surrounding of intensive and loving care provided by her family.

Mother was born December 6, 1899 to Mary-Ellen (Quesenberry) and Elbert A. Marshall in Carrol County, Virginia. She married the late Isaac Shafter Bond of Floyd County, Virginia on January 18, 1920; they had six children.

Mother joined the Indian Valley Primitive Baptist Church in her early 20's. She and her family moved to Danville, Virginia in 1932 and later to Richmond, Virginia in 1952 where she became a full-time cabinet-maker. She endowed the homes of her children, friends, and other families in Richmond with items of woodwork that are a mark of her ingenuity and skill; indeed she was an artist with wood.

Mother joined the Richmond Primitive Baptist Church March 5, 1956.

Left to cherish the memory of this great lady, and to enjoy the legacy of her spirit and strength are her children: Dessie Mae Barbour, Eva Marshall Bond, and Francis S. Bond of Richmond, Virginia; Vera B. Harvey of Waynesboro, Virginia; Toby C. Bond of Houston, Texas; nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Another daughter, Clara B. Barbour of Danville, Virginia died in 1968.

Funeral services were held at Woodys

Funeral Home March 11, 1985. She was interred at Greenwood Memorial Gardens. By family tradition her pallbearers were those of close family members: Tanny Harvey, Tamera Harvey, Gerry Barbour, Cheryl and Mark Walker, Johnny Barbour, and Marshall Bond—all grandchildren, and Marvin E. Elderman, nephew.

Our adorable mother was a heroine and her life was one of success. She set her goals early in life and achieved them all. She was able to meet all hardships and struggles that obstructed her path through life with a faith and confidence that forced them aside and allowed her to pass unharmed.

Mother loved her church; it was the only one she ever attended. She gained so much joy and "spiritual food" from every service, and was humbled to be counted as a member. Two of mother's highest earthly values were her children and her church.

God has been generous to us; we owe him a debt of gratitude for allowing this precious woman to mother us these many years; a debt so large that not even our combined efforts could hope to repay.

The Bond Family

SISTER ANGIE CUNDIFF BROWN

Sister Angie Cundiff Brown passed from this life, June 16, 1985. She was the daughter of the late William Cundiff and Susie Perdue Candiff. She was born January 25, 1907. Sister Angie was married to Joseph Daniel 'J.D.' Brown.

Sister Angie was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptized April 14, 1963. She was dear and faithful member, and attended as long as her health permitted and always seemed to enjoy the gospel.

Those left to mourn her passing are, her husband J. D. Brown of the residence. Four sons; Calvin Brown, Hurt, Va., Orrie H. Brown (Pete), Martinsville, Va., Bradie G. Brown, Danville, Va., and Virgil Brown, Gretna, Va. A daughter; Bernice B. Richardson, Danville, Va. Two brothers; Redge Cundiff, Danville, Va., Harry Cundiff, Moneta, Va. Six sisters; Lizzy Amos, Moneta, Va., Ola Blankenship and Meem Brown, both of Roanoke, Va., Ella Maxey and Julia Arrington, both of Rocky Mount, Va. and Nellie Perdue, of Union Hall, Va. Four grandchildren.

Sister Angie's funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor Elder O.K. Tench. Her body was laid to rest in the Highland Burial Park in Danville, Va. to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Written in love and hope,
Carol R. Pickral

SISTER ELSIE MAE HARRELL

It is with sadness I attempt to write the obituary of our dear Sister Elsie Mae Harrell, who was born in Union County Ark. on Jan. 12, 1894 and passed from this life on July 30, 1985, after having been here on this earth 91 yrs., 6 months and 19 days. She was married to the late L.H. Harrell and a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church which she attended faithfully as long as her health permitted.

Sister Harrell is survived by one son, Hoyt N. of El Dorado, Ark. also two sisters, Faye Hogg and Clemmie Bishop of El Dorado; Two brothers, Fred Murphy of El Dorado and Doyle Murphy of Smackover, three grandsons and a host of nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder David E. Turner, at Rumph Funeral Home in El Dorado.

Sister Harrell loved the real truth ac-

ording to the bible for many years. We do believe that is one of the best evidence in this timely world of being a child of God by the new birth. She certainly believed in the doctrine of salvation by Grace, Love, Faith, and Predestination. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the first born among many brethren.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justified.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angles, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Written by the request of her family.

Elder David E. Turner

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Proverbs 9: 10

EMORY LESTER KNIGHT

The hearts of the brethren and sisters of Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church are saddened by the loss of a beloved brother.

Emory Lester Knight was born December 28, 1917, to Samuel Pinkney and Maggie Warren Knight in Rockingham County, North Carolina.

He was married to Florence Bailey, January 7, 1938, and the young couple made a home and reared their family at Route One, Summerfield, North Carolina.

Brother Knight was a well known respected farmer and merchant. He was a kind husband, a good father, a friend to the community in which he lived, and to all who knew him.

He joined Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church in March, 1972, and was baptized on the second Sunday in April, 1972. He was ordained as a deacon in February, 1975, filling the office with the best interests of the church foremost in mind. He remained treasurer of the church cemetery fund until a few months before his death, when he requested to be relieved of the post, as he could no longer carry on the duties required.

He was faithful in attendance to the church at Hillsdale, as well as the sister churches of Crossroads Union, as long as health permitted. He was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace and that not of self, but a gift of God. During the many years of close acquaintance with the brother, he proclaimed the mercies of God, and was led to believe that a Divine Hope had been given to him. Though severely afflicted with arthritis, he faced the suffering with courage, giving thanks unto God in being blessed to do what he could. His health deteriorated rapidly after receiving injuries from an automobile accident.

Brother Emory Knight departed this earthly life July 1, 1985. Survived by his wife, Sister Florence Knight; daughter,

Mrs. W.R. Grant, Jr., Jacksonville, Florida; sons, William Lester, Summerfield, NC, Rueben MacArthur, Reidsville, NC, Thomas Edward, Ridgeway, VA, Carey Lee, Ruffin, NC; sister, Mrs. Ora Lee Wright, Reidaville, NC; brothers, J. R. and Sam P. Knight, Jr., Reidsville, NC, John W., and Lawrence D. Knight, Summerfield, NC; ten grandchildren, three great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held July 4, 1985 at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church by the Pastor, Elder B. D. Hutchens, Jr. internment was in the church cemetery.

We have been led to believe our brother has gone home "where the morning stars sing together, and the saints of God shout with joy," those glorious words, "Worthy, Worthy, art Thou, Lord God Almighty." The song sung before the world was when, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and The Word was God."

Though our brother will be sorely missed, we desire to be made submissive to the Father's will.

Written by request of Hillsdale Church

A Friend in Christ, (I hope)
Mary C. Knight

SISTER SADIE SARAH MURPHY

The appointed days of Sister Murphy ended August 5, 1985. She was born December 10, 1894.

Left to mourn her death are one son, Doyle Murphy, Hot Springs, Ark., two daughters, Mrs. Maude Jounston, Norphlet, Ark., Mrs. Margret Beavers, Williams, Arizona, two brothers, Walter Williams, El Dorado, Ark. and Gorden Freeman, Arkadelphia, Ark.; three sisters, Mrs. Minnie Davis, El Dorado, Ark., Mrs. Lena Murphy, Norphlet, Ark. and Mrs. Jewel Ballard, Little Rock, Ark. 10 grandchildren, 15 great grand-

children and 18 great-great-grandchildren.

She was a member of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church for many years and greatly enjoyed attending church meetings. She showed much love for her brothers and sisters in the church and attended as long as health permitted.

She will be missed by all that knew and loved her.

Elder Graydon Smith
Rehobeth Church

BROTHER JOHNIE S. PAYNE

Brother Johnie S. Payne 84, of 841 Arnett Blvd. Died May 21, 1985 in Memorial Hospital of Danville, Va. after five years decline in health. Born Nov. 17, 1900, in Pittsylvania County. A son of the late Leroy Thomas Payne, and Nellie Allen Payne. His entire life was spent in Pittsylvania County.

He was married to Lucy Boaze Payne who died in March, 1979. Was baptized June 15, 1975. A faithful and devoted member, a firm believer, and loved the Primitive Baptist Doctrine, loved to talk on the scripture, and was blessed with a deep understanding. Was a joy to sit and listen to him, his pastor, and others talk in so much harmony. Was loved by all that knew him.

Prior to his retirement, he was co-

owner of Chatam Farm Supply, and in the 1940s he was the founder and operator of the Payne Supply Co.

He leaves to mourn three sons: John T. Payne, Morris A. Payne, and Jerry W. Payne, all of Danville, Va. Three daughters, Katherine P. Rigney, Baltimore, Md., Dorothy P. Walton, Dayton, Ohio and Nancy P. Burnett, Dry Fork, Va. Three sisters, Daisy Payne, Dry Fork, Va., Francis Womack and Alice Payne, both of Danville, Va. 14 grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, and one great, great grandchild.

The funeral was conducted May 23, 1985 at 2:00 P.M. at Wren-Yeatts Funeral Home Chapel by his pastor Elder H. W. Wray. He was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park by his wife, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, attested to the esteem in which he was held.

May the family be reconciled to His Holy will. Feeling sure their father and mother are waiting the coming of their Lord and Master to gather the jewels of his mercy, there to ever be with the Lord.

Done in order of conference at Old Mt. Church.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah H. Barker, Clerk

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalm 116:15

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GEORGE D. PEARSON

Brother George D. Pearson passed away on June 14, 1985 at Nash General Hospital at the age of 64.

He is survived by his wife, Nina Ward Pearson, two brothers, Cecil Pearson of Apex and Tom Pearson of Oak City; one

sister Mrs. Ruth Gerkins of New Jersey.

Brother George was a member of Rocky Mount Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church where he joined in April 1962 and was ordained a deacon in January 1964. He faithfully fulfilled all his duties well, for he loved the church and the people, always putting them first.

Brother George was widely known and loved and left an impression of kindness wherever he went. One of his outstanding characteristics was that he was a peace maker. We thank God for the life of this man. We feel that our dear brother is resting in peace with our Lord, by the evidence he showed in his life and the hope that he had in his heart.

Be it resolved that this obituary be submitted for publication to The Signs of Times, one for the church record and a copy sent to the Family.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Pastor
Nina W. Pearson, Clerk
(by Martha S. Armstrong)

SISTER GLADYS POWELL

A sleep in Jesus, came to mind when we heard of the passing of our dear sister, Gladys Powell. She was one of the most humble, loving, patient and kind person we ever knew.

Her children and inlaws said they had never seen her mad or heard her raise her voice.

Sister Powell was sick at home and in the hospital most of the time for a number of years, yet never complained, and would often speak of how good the Lord had been to her.

She joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist church Aug. 23, 1959. And was baptized Sept. 15, 1959. A firm believer, and de-

voted member as long as she lived. And loved by all that knew her.

Sister Gladys passed away April 12, 1985. She was born July 12, 1907 in Pittsylvania County. The daughter of the late Respass Payne, and Alice Booker Payne.

She was married to Deacon George Powell who survives, also two sons, Bobby Powell and Morris Powell, both of Rt. 1, Dry Fork. Two daughters, Marie P. Baurk, Rt. 1, Dry Fork, and Betty P. Booth, Rt. 3, Ringold, Va. Two brothers, Elder Raymond Payne, Rt. 1, Dry Fork, Va. and Luther Payne, Rt. 1, Dry Fork. One sister, Pattie P. Brumfield, Afton Rd. 12 Grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Her funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts Chapel, April 14, 1985, by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray and Billie Robertson.

Her body was layed to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to wait that blessed call, (come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world). May the Lord bless her faithful and devoted family, and friends that mourn, to be reconciled to his will. That our loss is her gain.

Submitted by the unworthy writer by request of the church.

Sarah H. Barker

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22: 6

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

Proverbs 25: 11
