

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, Box 420 Keeling, Virginia 24566

NEVER ALONE

*"How many times discouraged
We sink beside the way;
About us all in darkness,
We hardly dare to pray;
Then through the mists and shadows,
The sweetest voice e'er known,
Says, Child, am I not with thee,
Never to leave thee alone?"*

*O soul, hast thou forgotten
The tender word and sweet,
Of him who left behind him
The print of bleeding feet?
I never will forsake thee,
O child, so weary grown;
Remember I have promised
Never to leave thee alone.*

*Take courage, way-worn pilgrim,
Though mists and shadows hide
The face of him thou lovest,
He's ever at thy side:
Reach out thy hands unto him,
And lo, the clouds have flown;
He smiles on thee who promised
Never to leave thee alone."*

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EDITORIAL



ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

Dear Elder Key:
Please find enclosed an article for publication in the Signs, if you think that it would be acceptable to the brethren.

We are nearing the end of another year of associations and we have had some enjoyable meetings in our area. I trust that you have also, and we would love to have had you visit us.

Best of love and fellowship to those I have met in your Country.

In bonds of love,
Richard.

No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord.



I read the above scripture a few days ago and the part that remained with me was, this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and it stayed on my mind for several days. I tried to talk on it at the Soldier Creek Association and as I said then it was a subject that could not be covered in one discourse if it lasted for hours. I did not even begin to explore it then and probably won't this time but it is such a beautiful subject and so vital to every heir of grace as they travel their course here in this time world. It encompasses all of their travels, experiences, hopes and trials as they run that race that is set before them, with patience; that race that must be run by faith using those guideposts left by former generations which does indeed lighten their way and lifts up the feeble hands and strengthens the weak knees as they press on. This heritage includes every step they take, every lesson they learn and every affliction that they bear in their journey of faith.

All men born in nature are endowed with a natural heritage which is common to all men; it includes all that makes him what he is in the flesh, his nationality, health, intellectual abilities, physical and mental abilities, likes and dislikes environmental position,

temperament and character. All these things make him who he is and are what determine what his aims and goals will be in this life. All men were created with these attributes, abilities and desires to qualify them to fulfil their place in history and fulfil the purpose for which they were created. This heritage includes only those things of the realm of nature and is bestowed upon them by the sovereign power and wisdom of God who rules heaven and earth, things natural and spiritual, and works them together to fulfil his own will and pleasure.

Man's heritage is the earth and the fullness thereof which were created by God for man's pleasure, comfort and sustenance of his necessities in life here in this time world. Man was given dominion over the creatures and commanded to be fruitful, to multiply, replenish the earth and to subdue it. This has been his quest, his occupation and his desire since that time but he has never attained to that goal. Solomon said, "I have seen the travail which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from beginning to end." This is as true today as it was in the day that it was first written. Man's heritage is the natural world and all that it contains to supply his needs and his desires but he will never, in the flesh, understand the reason and the meaning behind it all. As Isaiah wrote, God's ways and thoughts are as high above man's as the heavens

are higher than the earth. Man with all of his boasting of his advance in knowledge and intelligence is still limited to this natural realm into which he was born, and he has no means whereby he can go beyond those bounds which were set for him when God divided to the nations their inheritance and set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

In Psalms XVI vs. 6, David said, "the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places: yea I have a goodly heritage. I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel: my reins instruct me in the night seasons. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." David here is not referring to his earthly heritage or anything pertaining to the natural blessings with which he was endowed. He was speaking of a goodly heritage which he possessed, which included those lines that were fallen to him in pleasant places: lines of truth that were let down to him in heavenly places enabling him to bless the Lord who had given him counsel; lines of truth to instruct him in the night seasons; lines of truth to cause his heart to be glad and to rejoice and his flesh to rest in hope. This is the goodly heritage and it is common to all to whom these lines have fallen to manifest their portion in this goodly heritage of the saints of God. These lines of truth cause them to fear the Lord and this fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom: natural man does not pos-

ness or ever attain to this wisdom because they do not know nor fear him. These lines of truth are a basic part of this goodly heritage in the lives of all of the elect in all ages of time and they have not changed since the beginning of time. This is why David refers to their falling to him, they were ever there but were let down to him in heavenly places for instruction in righteousness and holiness. From the time that David was anointed by Samuel in the midst of his brethren the spirit of the Lord came upon him and he went forth in possession of this goodly heritage. It included all of his life from that time forward; his being taken from being a shepherd over his father's flock to being made the king over his Father's flock, the kingdom of Israel. It included all of his triumphs as well as all of his trials in life but through them all God sustained him and David was made to declare "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."

When man is born of the spirit of God, he is a new creature in Christ, old things (earthly values pride, self esteem, confidence in the flesh) are passed away and all things are become new (faith, hope, realized weakness and depending upon God) and all things are of God, and work according to his own good pleasure. Man for the first time is made aware of this spiritual realm around him and of his part (heritage) in it: and sees all scriptures of God's dealing with his

people down through the generations as part of his own goodly heritage and claims all of the promises as his own by way of the spirit of adoption whereby all cry Abba Father. When he reads of the experience of others who have been brought from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of this blessed heritage of the chosen vessels, he rejoices as though it was his own deliverance. When he meets brethren from afar, after only a few words of their travels he has the same love and feeling of kinship for them as for those closer whom he has known for a long time. Time is irrelevant in the things of the spirit as to love, fellowship, experience learning etc., the Apostle Paul was a mature Christian in an instant on the road to Damascus. Immediately he loved those he once hated, preached the doctrine he had once attempted to destroy with all the fervor he could muster. When one is changed by the entering into their lives of the holy spirit, it is a complete change dependent upon nothing but the will and purpose of God. The change is for a purpose, it is permanent and the purpose will be made manifest in the life of the individual as that which is wrought in them is worked out in their journey here in time.

Many obstacles will confront them as they travel in this new way, obstacles that are caused by this new way, things that would cause the natural man to turn back to the ways of the world so that they would not have to face these trials brought on them because of their turning from the old

ways of the world. These are trials to prove the faith that they now have; to prove to the individual that this is of God and not of man because they would not and could not continue in their own strength. As one sister said, in the early days of her experience, if she continued in this way for the remaining years of her life she would know that it was of God because she could not keep herself for a day or an hour. This statement was made almost sixty years ago and she is still travelling in the way and confessing that she can't keep herself.

This seems to be what the old prophet is declaring in the above scripture: there will be weapons formed against you, to try your faith, but that none of these weapons that are formed against you shall prosper. They were weapons of destruction but they shall not destroy you but they shall try you. As Paul wrote "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." The weapons and the temptations are all part of the plan and are under the control of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, for your good and his glory. Peter speaks of the trial of your faith which is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. These trials of your faith makes the appearing of Jesus in relieving you more precious to you

each time. When Paul prayed three times for the thorn to be removed, the Lord said my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness, and Paul proclaimed "Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Paul was made to rejoice when he knew that the thorn in the flesh, as distressing as it was to him, was also included in his way and that Christ was with him in all things.

The prophet then goes on to say, "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord." Oh, what a grand and glorious heritage it is that has been reserved for them that love God; those who are the called according to his own good pleasure, those who are blessed with a plan of salvation that cannot fail. A plan that was conceived in the mind of God before time began, assured by the death of his only begotten Son on the cross at Calvary and is being made manifest in the lives of every heir of grace by the Holy Spirit quickening them and leading them in paths of righteousness for his own holy names sake. This is the heritage that the prophet is speaking of and it is theirs with the gift of faith which they receive from the giver of every good and perfect gift. Their righteousness is of him because it becomes theirs with the entering into their lives of the spirit of God as the earnest of the inheritance that is to be realized in its fullness when their earthly journey is completed.

The goodly heritage of the children of the heavenly king is the most pre-

cious possession that they have in this time world: it is something that they will never lose because it is as the giver, eternal and sure to every one. It is the sum total of all of their experiences, hopes and fears, dreams and desires, memories, fellowship and love that they have had since they were made aware of their portion in this heavenly kingdom and of the glory that is reserved for those who are blessed to inherit it. In looking back over their lives it seems that everything of any importance began when this wonderful change came into their life. They remember the precious loved ones who were such a blessing in their lives as they first began on this journey, the love and fellowship that they shared with each other, the older ones gently leading the way as the younger experienced things for the first time and rejoiced with joy unspeakable as the beauty of this glorious heritage unfolded before them. How the younger would love to go once again to the older, after many trials of faith and express the love and appreciation for their contribution toward making the way a little easier and joyful. They fear to claim a part in this glorious heritage as theirs but how else can they explain their way, in lieu of the scriptures written by others who have been brought this way in generations past. One cannot return to former times but down the way others have come along bearing the same goodly fruit and a bond is formed, the same love and fellowship as with those of yesterday and you travel along together sharing the same hopes and

fears, trials and deliverances drawing ever closer together by the mutual love that only the children of God share.

All of these experiences and blessings, as beautiful and glorious as they are to the chosen vessels, in this time world are not worthy to even be compared to that portion of this blessed heritage that is yet to come. We have all of these blessings and joys in an earthen vessel which, by design, cannot truly understand and rejoice in the things of the heavenly realm as well as in that future time. When quickened by the spirit the child of God, in time, can only see as through a glass darkly the glory of this spiritual realm toward which they are looking, but it cannot fully comprehend the beauty and glory that is to be revealed to those for whom this heritage is prepared. They are as the ones of whom the Apostle Paul was writing, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child. I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." The children of God in this time world clothed in this body of flesh even though quickened by the spirit of God are as the child who knows in part and sees in part; but when delivered from this body of death and changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye they shall be delivered from these bonds that hinder them and they shall know even as they are known. They shall behold the fullness of the glory of God and rejoice and praise him in a way and manner that they could never do in these bodies of flesh. They shall understand the

mysteries and the reasoning and the purpose in all things being as they are, and shall spend an eternal span of time in the presence of God seeing him as he is and experiencing the reality of being spiritual and basking in the pure and undiluted love of God because of the absence of the flesh and the natural influences on the creature as he is here in this time world. They cannot really realize what that will be like but it will be far beyond the wildest imagination of man for the sheer beauty, glory and for the experiencing of utter joy, peace and happiness.

All of these things are also a part of this heritage of which they only have the earnest in this present time world, a little here and a little there, but that is to come, is just as sure and certain to every heir of promise as that which is now and that which is past. They are all part and parcel of this heritage that the prophet said is the possession of the servants of the Lord. Given by grace, received by faith and kept safe and secure through time by the eternal God ready to come to full fruition at the appointed time.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 73:26.

*My flesh and my heart faileth: but
God is the strength of my heart,
and my portion for ever.*

NOTE FROM EDITORS

With this issue we enter into the one hundred and sixty first year of continuous publishing of the "Signs of the Times". We could not do so without looking back and realizing how good the Lord has been to us all. Many of the editors and associate editors were blessed to serve for many years, and wrote many beautiful articles which was a blessing to many.

As we go forward now we pray God's blessings to be with us, we want you to participate by sending us articles to publish. Our readers are always requesting more articles of experience. We are admonished to be ready always to give a reason for our hope! Write your reason and share it with others.

We would like also to enlarge our subscription list. You can help us to do this, tell others about the Signs and maybe give a subscription to someone as a gift. We think every believer should have the Signs in their home.

Any suggestions on how to improve the Signs will also be appreciated.

May it please God to bless us in such a way that as each year passes we can count our blessings and say this is the best yet, and as the outer man perish, the inward man grow stronger. Bless us with enough afflictions to keep us humble and to esteem our brother as better than ourselves.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Readers of the Signs:

We have received a basket full of cards and letters and appreciate and cherish all of them but would like to share this one with the readers of the Signs.

Elder and Sister Lloyd Wall

Dear Elder and Sister Wall,

Who am I to try to write words of encouragement to anyone, especially to two precious, much esteemed children of God? Yet, I feel that I want you to know how much we missed you at the association and how our hearts go out to you during this trying time.

After I received your first thank you note, Sister Wall, I felt your sorrow and suffering in each line of it. I felt that I must attempt to pray for you notwithstanding my own cold-heartedness and my own feeling of emptiness. My thoughts were; Who am I to try to pray for them? Surely my prayer would avail nothing. That is true. If I in my carnal nature attempt to pray, it goes no higher than my head. Yet, I felt that I must make the attempt. There have only been two or three times that I have felt that I actually prayed for anyone. This time I did feel that the Lord heard (if He ever has heard me) my question that He have mercy on you, that He give you the strength to bear what you must, that He go with you all the way.

We know that there is so little that we can physically do for you. However, we desire to help in some way. We do know that the dear Lord is our only source of help and strength. May He continue to give you grace to feel His presence even in your suffering. We do believe that we do not bear any needless pain. He has a gracious, glorious purpose in every affliction His children bear. Many times we cannot see His purpose. Then we are called to walk by faith, not by sight. We must trust Him, for we have nowhere else to go. We believe that He feels all of our pain, our grief and our distress and holds us up so that we can bear it. Each one of us is made to look to Him for our all in all. He knows what each of us needs and has promised to withhold no good thing from us. How thankful we are that all of our salvation and all of our blessings are bestowed by His grace. Nothing depends on us or our efforts. All things are freely given us in Christ. May He ever keep us at His feet, praising and adoring His holy name.

In bonds of love,
Joyce Pittman

MOVED OR MOVING ?

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

The Editors

 QUERIES & ANSWERS

 ARTICLES

Query:

Should the churches ever allow the Association, or any body of men formed by their combination, to dictate to them against their consent, it has ever been held that their liberties in such case will have passed away, and they become no longer churches of Christ, but tools of tyrants. A church of Christ has ever been considered, by genuine Baptists, the highest ecclesiastical power on earth.

Answer:

Associations are not considered absolutely necessary for the existence of a church or churches, but only as a convenient method of correspondence and intercourse among the churches, so that acquaintance and personal contact might be promoted among a larger circle of brethren than could be done in a single church or neighborhood. Much satisfaction also is found in obtaining the views and advice of each other on questions of importance in the kingdom of Christ. "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety," has been long held as a wise adage among the people of God.

Hassell History

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written 1960)

With a deep feeling of love, I would like to extend a hearty welcome to each of you ministers, messengers and churches of the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, our correspondents and visitors. We hope we are thankful to God for you all, and most grateful to Him for your fellowship.

David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." David lived in a time when there were many wars and many battles to be fought. After the battles were fought and the victories won, surely he could have said with the Apostle Paul, "thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We too, live in an age when peace on earth seems to be so unpredictable and the world is so tense. But you may be assured that God still rules all things, is still Captain of the battles and His banner over us is love. Not a single one of His will be lost.

So as I think upon this meeting as we are gathered together, many who have come from lands far distant, who have been given a mind to leave their homes and their work, others from our own little flocks nearby, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, with a desire to come together in unity to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Unity means a state of being one. Paul to the Ephesians said, "there is one body, and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord and one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all and in you all."

Christ is the head of the body, all believers in Him who have been born of that uncorruptible seed are members of His body, all together, one perfect body in Christ. So my dear beloved, as we hope to be members of this one body, how good and how pleasant it is that from time to time God does bless a broken remnant of His creation to be gathered together in unity. To speak of that great love that flows from heart to heart and from breast to breast. To render praise and thanksgiving to His great and matchless name and to talk of His mercies that endure forever. When the spirit is manifested, there is unity. There is love one for another, we can look over our brethren for good and not for evil. We are made to be humble; we walk and speak in fear and trembling trying to work out that which has been given us. Salvation is of the Lord.

We are not always blessed to dwell in unity. We are not always made to feel that great love, that closeness to the saints of God. Sometimes we feel to be on the back side of the desert. We become hungry and thirsty and you know just as the Lord appeared to Moses there, and Jonah in the belly of the fish and sent Phillip unto the eunuch down by the roadside, He knows where you are and though you become hungry, you will never perish,

though you are cast down, never will you be destroyed.

So my dear brethren, sisters and friends, may God bless us to dwell in unity. May we journey on together feeling that we are not alone, but that the Lord is our Shepherd. That we are one family, rejoicing together, sharing each others burdens, feasting upon the same spiritual food, drinking from that same fountain of living water and that some day we shall reach that city that is made not by hands but is eternal and in the heavens. We know that we have no continuing city here, that soon we too, will enter into the eternal, that the places that know us now shall know us no more forever.

May the love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Your little brother in hope,
Kenneth R. Key

HEBREWS 4: 1-4.

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN
ELDER JOHN LELAND
AND JAMES MADISON
COMMEMORATED**



JOHN LELAND

An interesting and important event in American history was recalled on October 4, 1953, when the Leland-Madison Monumental Park was dedicated near Orange, Virginia. The site of the park marks the place where Elder John Leland and James Madison met to discuss their differences pertaining to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States. This was in 1788.

The Constitution, as it was drawn up by the Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, did not contain a guarantee of religious liberties and free speech. Elder Leland, and those he represented, opposed the ratification by Virginia unless such provisions were included. This was a large and influential group of citizens, and it was not likely that the Constitution would be ratified without their support.

The following is quoted from an article in a Washington newspaper by Dr. Joseph M. Dawson:

“Authorities agree that Leland was a key man in obtaining Virginia’s ratification of the Federal Constitution. Without Virginia’s favorable action, in all probability the Constitution would never have been ratified.

“The Rev. John Leland though a native of Massachusetts, owes his place in history to his activities in Virginia from the time he went to Culpepper in 1775 to his return to Massachusetts in 1791. In that 16-year period, he proved to be a statesman as well as a flaming evangelist. Elected to the Virginia Assembly, he collaborated with Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Mason in behalf of religious liberty. He also baptized more than 700 converts in the region between the Ketchikan Mountains and the York River. He was affectionately called Parson.

“While Leland enjoyed the friendship of the leaders mentioned above, he opposed Madison’s election to the Virginia Ratification Assembly because Madison’s document lacked a Bill of Rights. At a picnic near Orange, the two men composed their differences and agreed on an amendment. Then Leland pledged his support, with the result that Madison was seated and Virginia ratified the Federal Constitution as amended.

“In the meantime Leland, on behalf of the Baptists, had written George Washington, saying, “when the Constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, feared that

the liberty of conscience, dearer to us than property or life, was not sufficiently secured Under the regal government mobs, fines, bonds and prisons were our frequent repast.”

“Although Washington belonged to the Established Church of Virginia, he sympathized deeply, as evidenced by his reply: “If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution formed by the conventions where I had the honor to preside might possibly endanger the rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would have never placed my signature to it; and if I now could conceive that the general Government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution.”

The first amendment to the Constitution, referred to above, reads as follows.

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

There is little mention in secular history of the part our religious forefathers took in securing this freedom for us, but we should be most grateful that in the purpose of God, He gave us

men of courage to fight for and secure our priceless heritage.

J.D.W.

FREDERICK W. KEENE



Keene, Elder Frederick W. The subject of this notice was born in London, England, March 28, 1856, moved with his parents to Montreal, Canada, in his fourteenth year, united with the New School Baptists in 1873 and began preaching for them in 1875. But becoming dissatisfied with their doctrine and practices he publicly withdrew in 1880 and in February, 1881, united with the Old School Baptists, was baptized by Elder William L. Beebe, soon ordained and served several churches, including Oakwoods Baptist Church, North Berwick, Maine. He was a gifted preacher, a fluent writer and greatly beloved for the truth's sake. In regard to his Christian experience he wrote as follows,

“During my boyhood days I lived and walked in the lusts of the flesh and shrank from nothing to gratify my carnal appetite. But God arrested my wild career. On the first Sunday in April, 1871, I sat in a New School Baptist Church in the city of Montreal and the preacher gave out his text, ‘Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.’ Instantly my soul was stricken, and all my vile anticipations were blasted, and the terrors of the Almighty made me afraid. What the preacher said in his sermon I have not the slightest remembrance of. I was a vile condemned sinner before the

Lord. My sins revived, they stared me in the face and I felt myself a fit subject for damnation of hell. I feared that the awful curse of God would be poured forth upon me and perhaps before tomorrow. I shall die, and I shall go to hell. God will say to me 'depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil, and his angels.' My trouble over my sins continued and increased and I could see no ground for hope that there could be mercy for one so wicked as I. I began to loathe my sins, to sigh and mourn over my vileness, but no relief could I find. Again I attended preaching, and the minister announced his text, 'God is love.' I felt, 'Can it be so?' A little ray of hope shone in, and I wished it might be so. But in a moment all was dashed away, for I felt, if it be true, it could not be God loved me, and I sank yet lower in despair. But the Holy Spirit's still small voice said to my sin stricken heart, 'God is love.' Then indeed my heart was broken, and melted in sorrow before the Lord, and with a contrite spirit, I prayed for salvation, but the way of salvation for a sinner like me I could not see. Indeed, I thought I was adding to my guilt to think there could be pardon for such a sinner. Night came and I retired to my room imploring mercy, every moment I felt the Lord must soon come, or I must perish. While thus crying to the Almighty God, there came before me a vision of Jesus on the cross, and a voice said in my soul, 'Salvation is in my dear Son.' This was a gracious revelation, and while I was wrapped up with this sight, my heart went forth with all desire to Jesus that I might

know He was mine, that He died for me. Then I thought He looked upon me, so pityingly and said, 'Look unto me.' O my heart with all entreaty looked to him, and he looked upon me, and said, 'I suffered for thee.' Immediately my burden was gone and sweet joy and peace flowed into my soul. I wept and cried aloud for joy. This was the beginning of my hope of salvation in Christ, the Lamb of God. To write all the experiences of my soul from that sweet day till now would fill volumes. I was led by the Lord soon after this into the knowledge of the glorious doctrine of God our Savior." Elder Keene was a faithful pastor and his labors were blessed with abundant fruit.

Elder Keene has written many articles for the Signs in the past.

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST

PLENTY.

April, 1938.



Charles Wesley wrote, "Plentiful grace with thee is found; grace to pardon all my sins," and I am made to wonder if he was entirely destitute of that grace, even though he wrote and preached in defense of Arminianism for years.

Sometimes in looking back over past trials and tribulations we think we just were delivered - that if it had come any later we would have been gone completely, but, dear child of God, it cannot be too late. Neither can it be lack-

ing in power, grace and love to effectually deliver out of whatever may be our trouble. To talk about deliverance being too late, or insufficient, is to talk about God failing in some particular to fulfill his promises. Banish the thought! How can he fail? Not because of a lack of power, because all that is in heaven and in earth was given into the hands of our glorious, conquering Immanuel, that he might give eternal life to as many as were given him. Will he give unto them that life? Ah yes, little doubting one, he will, because he is faithful that promised. So faithful is he that all the glory, power, honor, majesty, love, mercy and grace are behind the promise. If the promises of God were based on the ability of man to the least degree then there certainly would be room to fear a famine, or to look for an insufficiency in the grace of God. But, dear brethren, sisters, strangers in the land, wayfarers and sojourners, it is not of man. It is wholly and without instrumentality the work of God. The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent. (1 Sam. xv. 29). So you can see that there is plenteous grace for all of our needs. Moreover, every good gift comes from him, and what a Giver of gifts he is!

*“My soul, repeat his praise
Whose mercies are so great;
Whose anger is so slow to rise,
So ready to abate.”*

*“High as the heavens raised
Above the ground we tread,
So far the riches of his grace
Our highest thoughts exceed.*

*His power subdues our sins;
And his forgiving love,
Far as the east is from the west,
Doth all our guilt remove.”*

Nothing lacking. Plenteous supplies for everything, and they come from a Giver who is without variation, and who is so much in one mind that there is not a shadow of turning. Here is a safe and secure place, dear saints, to find refuge. Here is a resting-place for the weary and wayworn. Here is strength, plenteous strength, for the weak-handed and feeble-kneed. Here is grace sufficient for those who are fearfully asking, When saw we thee sick and in prison and came unto thee? One of the beloved disciples leaned on the bosom of Jesus, and how longingly do we look toward such a haven, and how we would like to reach there.

What a sweet story of Rebekah! It would seem that she is a figure of the church. Behold the servant of Abraham as he comes to her and tells her of the richness of his master. He is greatly blessed (Gen. xxiv. 1, 35) of the Lord, and all of it belongs to his son. My dear children of God, when the Holy Spirit arrested you it made Jesus as the chiefest of ten thousand unto you. You were enabled to see him as having all power in heaven and earth, and you were compelled to say that you would go with the man. (Gen. xxiv. 58.) What was it that was done for you? It was plenty, and as far as you could see, beyond measure, because you had to sing with the poet,

*"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me."*

Unto her was given hearing, and the writer of old has declared, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."-Psalms lxxxix. 15. And none can ever hear unless the deaf ears are unstopped by the Spirit. Then on her hands are put bracelets, representing, to my mind, that unto the church are given the holy Scriptures as having everything necessary for all of her rules and regulations. Furthermore, that a bracelet is a complete circle, without beginning or ending. So is the love of God to his people. It is complete to them, and is from everlasting to everlasting.

It is written that this Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and that he was full of grace and truth. (John i. 14.) If he was full of it nothing could be taken from him nor added to him. Is not this plenty? Is not this everything that a poor sinner needs? But listen what is said in verse sixteen: "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." As he was full of it, so his children receive his fullness and lack nothing. Paul's letter to Rome tells us what a wonderful source of plenty and completeness the children of God have in him. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" 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."-Rom. viii. 16, 17. Everything that Jesus possesses in

heaven is ours, because we are joint-heirs with him. Oh what a land of plenty! Ofttimes we feel weak and heavy laden here and are almost ready to faint by the way, but ere long our Husband will come for us, and then we shall be carried home. Going home! What does it mean? Like a little child that has been long in the dark and thorny wilderness and is brought safe home. To a land of plenty; to a land of joy and peace; to our long sought home, where the sun never shall go down.

Submitted in love.
Elder W. D. Griffin

Philadelphia, Pa., June 1, 1905.



Elder F.A. Chick - Dear Friend:
- I would like to address you otherwise, but am not at liberty to do so. No doubt you will be surprised to receive a letter from me, but probably you may not receive this, as I may be ashamed of it before I get through and destroy it. A desire was created within me to write to you, telling some of the ways in which the Lord has led me for over forty-seven years, and his dealings with me. This feeling or inclination to communicate to you, manifested itself at the time you preached the funeral sermon of my brother-in-law, which is nearly two and one-half years ago. Why it should do so at that time I am unable to say, as I cannot call to mind now a single word you said then, but somehow

there was a peculiar drawing toward you at that time which I am unable to describe. I have refrained from undertaking the task, as I am so much of the time carnally minded, and it was my desire that when I did write I might be entirely free from all worldly cares or thoughts; but that time never appears to come, and I am made to repeat the expression which has been repeated so often, that when I would do good, evil is present with me, and always seems to be uppermost in my mind, which unfits me entirely for the task which I have undertaken; nor do I now feel any more fit for the duty than I did two years ago, so if I continue to write now I will have to depend upon the Lord to guide my thoughts; I hope I may be led by him, as I know full well unless he takes me in charge and guides my thoughts this epistle will be of no interest to you.

In viewing my past life it appears like a blank. Of what use have I been upon this earth? I remember Elder Wm. J. Purington made the remark at the funeral of my sister, in May, 1868, that I was spared for some wise purpose (as I was then the only child living out of five). All these years since, I have failed to see the wisdom in that purpose, although there is wisdom in it. I have that faith, even if I am too blind to see it. It appears to me that it would have been better if I had been taken away when I was young like the rest; I know that I would have escaped much vexation and sorrow, which torture me day after day; I know I should not murmur, but at times I cannot refrain; I know I am a very rebellious

creature, yet there are times, thanks be to God, when I am quieted for awhile; I am also at times led by the still waters, and made to lie down in green pastures. O what a pleasant place it is to be, no other place is to be compared with it. O could I always remain there, I am loath to leave it; but it is not the will of the Lord to allow me to remain in that place long at a time, nor does he allow me often to enter into such a blissful abode, but he knows what is best for me. He has marked out my road, and I must travel that road, and none other, although at times it may appear dark and gloomy.

This reminds me of an incident that occurred twenty-five or thirty years ago: I was away from home over twenty miles, and when I started for home it was raining, and very dark, too. The first few miles all went well, but it was not long before it grew very dark, and I could not recognize anything along the road; everything appeared strange; I became bewildered, I did not know where I was. I traveled on, passing numerous objects that I had seen many times before, but all looked strange now until within two or three miles of home, when a set of farm buildings that I approached looked familiar; then my mind went back over the road that I had come, and the various objects I had passed, and the numerous turns I had made, crossing over a railroad, turnpike, bridges, up hill and down dale, and at one time I crossed over a very prominent and wide road down into a narrow road with trees upon each side; it looked very gloomy, but on I went, knowing

not whither I was going. All this looked familiar when I looked back over the road that I had come, as I had traveled the same road many times before. I felt simple and foolish, and wondered how it was possible for me to travel over that road which I was so familiar with, and not recognize anything by the way. Thus does it appear my life has been spent. As I said, my road is laid out for me, and I must travel that road all the time, but I do not seem to know it; all the time I seem to want to go some other way, I am not content to travel the road that is laid out for me. To look back over the road, it seems as if any road would be all wrong, but the wisdom of an all-wise God is shown in laying out such a road. But while I am traveling this road it appears different from any road that anybody else travels: I do not seem to see anybody else in the same road, I appear to be traveling all alone; it is a lonely road for me to travel. True, at times I seem to cross the road that others travel, I see them occasionally, but they are traveling a different road from what I am, which makes me feel as if I certainly am on the wrong road, which troubles me. This brings to my mind the hymn 1033:

*" 'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought.)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not? "*

But there are a few things that comfort me: one is, I trust that I have a hope, if I did not, I would be much

more miserable than I am. Another is, I love to meet and mingle with those who I believe are the children of God, although many times I feel as if it were no place for me, and that I am not welcome among them. I many times am made to feel as if they had no love for me. But I know not where else to go to receive real enjoyment, and I feel like saying as did Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee," &c. I also feel that if this people knew me as I am, if they knew my thoughts, they could not possibly have any love for me, and they would no longer have any use for me. This road that I am traveling, and in which I am beginning to recognize the familiar objects by the wayside as I am nearing my home, is indicative that I am nearing my heavenly home, (I hope) and that the end of this pilgrimage is drawing near, and that this world is not my home. I feel like saying with the poet, I am a pilgrim and I am a stranger, I cannot tarry but awhile, do not detain me, for I am going to where the streamlets are ever flowing. While I do not wish to hasten the time of my departure, I do not wish it to be postponed, but I wish to wait with patience my Maker's call, wait until he says, Child, thy Father calls, come home. I have no fear of death, but believe it will be a happy deliverance from this vile world of sin and sorrow. There appears to be nothing worth living for; it is better to be at home with my God. My dearly beloved wife and I have been journeying along down through this pilgrimage together happily over thirty-eight years, yet I

find I am not traveling the same road that she is. I am very much like the dog that starts out to follow after his master's wagon through the country, and instead of trotting along in the road behind the wagon he is roving over the fields or through the thicket in search of game, and only when he crosses the road over to the other side to continue his hunt is he in the road. So it is with me, I am continually going in by and forbidden paths, gratifying the lusts of the flesh, and occasionally I cross the road that I should be traveling in, and am found on the other side, still continuing my hunt for something to gratify my sinful carnality. Thus does it appear that my whole life has been spent, making resolutions one after another to do better in the future, only to be broken as often as made.

My mind is carried back about forty-eight years, or probably more, when Elder Daniel L. Harding was pastor at Southampton, who preached from the text found in Deut. xxxii. 11, 12: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." That sermon has come home to me a great many times since. I am told the eagle selects some crevice among the rocks high up in the cliffs to build her nest and rear her young, and when they become old enough and strong enough to fly, the mother bird begins to tear up the nest, tearing away a stick at a time. In the language of the text, she stirreth up

her nest until they are compelled to make an attempt to fly, but as their first effort proves a failure they begin to sink, and down, down they go, and would be dashed to death upon the rocks below, did not the mother dart down underneath them and bear them upon her wings, as is said in the language of the text. Thus does it appear with me; my nest, so to speak, that is, this carnal nest which I have so often nestled in, has just as often been stirred up, and at such times I feel as if I were sinking down, down, each time lower than the previous one, and much deeper than any other mortal possibly can go, and if it were not for his everlasting arm, which is always ready to bear me up, I would give up in despair; but that blessed hope (although very small) still lingers with me and holds me fast. O what would become of me if I should lose that hope? But I have the blessed assurance that this will never be, so my poor soul at such times is made to be still and know that my Redeemer liveth.

Since writing the above I have been reading a few letters in the last Signs, and I find in each one many expressions that seem to speak my feelings, and describe my travels through this pilgrimage here below so much better and clearer than I am able to do. This makes me feel as if I had better stop and destroy the whole of it; but I have written just as my mind was led, and if there is nothing in it interesting to you, you may destroy it and attribute

all to my ignorance of the whole matter. I hope you will overlook all my shortcomings, which I know are numerous. I know it is impossible for me to even think a good thought, much less to act a good deed, unless directed by my heavenly Father.

I fear I am wearying you with this, but bear with me a little longer; it appears as if I cannot get at what I want in a satisfactory manner, but hope you may be able to glean a little of my thoughts and feelings. I know I am only skimming over the surface, not entering any depth as I wish, and if I should go on and write as much more I would not be able to tell the half; like the queen of Sheba, the half was not told her, as she said. I feel as if this subject is exhaustible, no terminus to it; it matters not how much is said or written upon this subject, there is just as much left as when we began, in fact it seems to expand, and its beauties seem to loom up with greater brilliancy. The noonday sun appears gloomy when compared with its effulgence.

But, my dear friend, I will close; I find I am not capable of doing as I would like. If you feel like answering this, or can give me any comfort in any way, I shall feel very thankful to you for it. I feel as if I needed support every day of my life, and perhaps the Lord may be pleased to send through you some message to me that will prove a "balm in Gilead" to my soul.

Ever your friend,
C.S. Fetter

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met at 10:00 A.M. Saturday on November 21, 1992 for the examination of Brother R.W. Akers if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Marvin Brumfield. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Elders: Lane Carter, Willard Cox, W.T. Conner, Noel Conner, Junior Conner, Marvin Brumfield and Larry Hollandsworth.

Deacons present were as follows: Herbert Dodson, Hancil Conner, Canton Akers, Lawrence Myers, Grey Ingram, Edwin Dyer, C.T. Abshire, Clyde Johnson, Posey Poindexter, H.D. Ingram, A.L. Shelton, Guy Holley, Donald Agee, Hassell Hale, Nelson Bryant, Jessie Tyree, Ira Powell, John Plunkett, Jamie Cooper, Woody Young, James Holley, Woodrow Abshire, Chester Haywood, Tommie Lovell, F.W. Murphy, and Tiras Conner.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as moderator; Jamie E. Cooper as Clerk; Elders Noel Conner and W.T. Conner was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Brother John A. Plunkett having been duly appointed by Pigg River Church, delivered

Brother R.W. Akers to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Noel Conner and W.T. Conner and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 3 Chapter, 1st Timothy. The presbytery being satisfied examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Junior Conner using Scriptural reference 4 chapter, 2nd Timothy, verse 1.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother R.W. Akers and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Pigg River Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Willard Cox.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1992

Mrs. James Burgin, TX \$2.00
 Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV 2.00
 Mrs. Reba Wise, TX 2.00
 Mrs. H.W. Jones, SC 2.00
 R.L. Fleenor, TN 7.00
 Mrs. Velma Estelle, AR 2.00
 Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA 2.00

Joe L. Hamrick, TX 12.00
 Dale Haygood, TX 2.00
 Hassel Allen, NC 10.00
 Mrs. Frances Townley, AR 7.00
 J. Allen Carroll, NC 2.00
 Mrs. Hazel F. Jackson, NC 2.00
 Mrs. Warnard Locke, KY
 In memory of Warnard Locke 5.00

OBITUARIES

BERLINE COX



God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our esteemed and beloved brother, Berline Cox. He was born to the late Franklin and Isabell Oakley on May 23, 1931 and died on July 19, 1992. He was married to Norma Smith in 1945 and to this Union were born two children, a boy and a girl. Brother Berline is survived by his wife Norma, his son Danny Noah, his daughter Betty Jean, one sister Mrs. Alice Manning and three grandchildren.

Brother Berline was a gentle and kind person one who extended his hand to those in need. He loved peace and tried to never offend anyone. He was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God and on a confession of faith, he joined Hancocks Church on September 14, 1974 and filled his seat regular unless providently hindered. He loved the church and the members and could be found, at church meeting time, at the door of the church, greeting the people as they entered. He not only attended his church but visited many others of the same faith

and order. He was blessed to attend his home church on the day that he died that night. He was ordained a deacon of the church in August 14, 1982 and God blessed him to perform the duties of this office faithfully.

His funeral was held at Farmers Funeral Home in Ayden, N.C. by his pastor, Elder J.L. Sawyer in the presence of many relatives and friends, and He was laid to rest in the Cox Cemetery there to await the resurrection.

We shall miss Brother Berline but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May God bless the bereaved family is our prayer.

Done by order of the church while in regular session of conference.

Elder J.L. Sawyer, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

BROTHER FRANK HALL

With sorrow for our loss but joy for his eternal gain we record the death of our dear friend and brother in Christ, Frank Clifford Hall, on July 5, 1992, following a lengthy illness. He was 61 years old at the time of his departure.

Brother Hall was born in Patrick County, Virginia on April 21, 1931, a son of the late George Hall and Beadie Hopkins Hall Craddock. He was a veteran of the Korean War and a long-time employee of Bassett Furniture Industries.

He was first married to Catherine Ahern, by whom he had two children:

Frank William Hall of Myrtle Beach, S.C. and Mary Lou Hall of Martinsville, Va. In November 1966 he was united in marriage to Estelle Koger, who survives him. His other survivors include two half-brothers Charlie Hall of Modesto, Calif. and Curtis Hall of Martinsville; two sisters Everine Chaney of Stuart and Mae Chaney of Ferrum; one half-sister, Ethel Greer of Ferrum; his two children.

In the mid 1950's Brother Hall joined Charity Church by experience and was baptized by the late Elder J.G.L. Hash. On the first Sunday in October 1969 he was received by Liberty Church and was rebaptized by the late Elders Bennie Clifton and Ben Martin. He was a loyal and faithful member the balance of his life, attending often during the afflictions of his last days.

His funeral service was conducted at Collins Funeral Home Chapel by Elders Bernice Joyce and John Wingfield and Pastor Eugene Koger. His mortal body was laid to rest in the Center Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Be it resolved: first, that we extend our heartfelt sympathy to Sister Hall and the other members of his family; and second, that we prepare three copies of his obituary, with one to be included in our church records, one to be given to his family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in Conference the 1st day of August 1992.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Paul Puckett, Clerk

ELDER AMOS I. HASH



Lord give me a quiet and peaceful hour in which to die" This I feel sure was granted our dear Brother, Pastor and Friend on July 17, 1992 when it pleased the God of Heaven to call Elder Amos I. Hash from his labors here in this time world. Elder Hash was the son of the late Elder J.G.L. Hash and Mrs. Nannie S. Hash, born June 8, 1916 making his stay here a few days over 76 years. Elder Hash is survived by his devoted wife of more than 48 years Anita Hash of Ferrum, Va. Also by three children, one daughter Brenda Hash Fariss, Buffalo Junction, Va. two sons Lane Hash, Sorrento, La. Phillip Hash, Ferrum, Va. Also four grand daughters and four grandsons. He is also survived by one brother John Hash, Nashville, Tenn. four sisters Ora Thomas, Stuart, Va. Gustava Sutphin, Hyattsville, MD. Ruth Jones and Virginia Hash both of Ferrum, Va.

Elder Hash lived most of his life in Franklin County, Va. except for a short period of time in Lee County. After this period of time he moved back to his native county to live out the remainder of his days. Elder Hash was a veteran of World War II and he was retired from J.P. Stevens Co.

In December 1954 he was received into the fellowship of Long Branch Primitive Baptist Church upon confession of faith and the reason for his hope, in Jan. 1955 he was baptized by his father. He was soon chosen Church Clerk which office he held for several years. In May 1959 he was ordained to

the office of Deacon. For many years prior to this date he was burdened with visions of the ministry. In June 1959 Brother Amos began his labors in the ministry. He was soon granted liberty to exercise his gift where ever the Lord cast his lot. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in Sept. 1961.

He served his home church from 1961 till his death, at the time of his death he was also serving Knob and Rocky Mount Churches. Bro. Amos also served Bell Spur Church for many years. He visited many churches and associations of our faith and order preaching salvation by grace. Bro. Amos was elected Clerk of the Smith River Association in Sept. 1959. He served this office until he was elected Moderator in Sept. 1984 which he faithfully served until his death.

Funeral services were conducted July 19, 1992 at Flora Funeral Chapel, Rocky Mount, Va. with Elder Hale Terry, Elder H.W. Wray and Elder Clarence Stone officiating. He was laid to rest in Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery to await the summons "Come Ye blest of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We believe that Bro. Amos is at complete rest. He will be missed by many and especially by the writer but we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May we all be made reconciled to His will for God knows them that are His.

May a copy be given the family, one for the Signs of the Times for publication and one retained for our Church records. Done by order of Long Branch

Church in conference Oct. 3, 1992.
Humbly submitted in love and hope by
W.G. Parsons.

Clarence Stone, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk
Nelson Nester, Asst. Clerk

PSALM 23.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

ELAH L. HEARNE

Elah L. Hearne was born November 2, 1899, the 6th child of the late Robert B. and Nora H. Bailey. She died October 24, 1992, of heart failure at the home of her daughter, Nancy Harris. Her husband, the late Thomas M. Hearne died in 1978.

Sister Elah was a member of Little Creek Old School Baptist Church near Delmar, Del. where she had attended since she was a very young girl. She was a faithful member and a firm be-

liever in salvation by grace, and her trust was in the Lord. She will be missed by her church and other sister churches of this area, as well as her relatives and all who knew her.

She was a jolly person with a great sense of humor, always ready to relate some childhood experiences about tricks her brothers and sisters played on each other when they were growing up, and she could always tell some kind of a humorous or witty story. She enjoyed entertaining in her home, but when she was no longer able to have dinners, she would invite church folks or relatives for a covered dish dinner at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Morris and Nancy Harris.

Besides her daughter, Nancy of Delmar, Del., she is survived by another daughter, Marian Lee Gordy of Laurel, Del., a sister Pattie Krewatch, and a brother, Robert Bailey, both of Delmar, Del., a foster brother, Leonard Bailey of Wilmington, Del., 12 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. A son, Robert Alexander Hearne, died in 1983.

Her funeral was conducted at the Short Funeral Home, Delmar, Del. by her pastor, Elder C.B. Davis and her body was buried at Little Creek Church Cemetery beside her husband.

Sister Elah's earthly journey covered nearly 93 years, and I think she fully believed that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Elsie R. Huston, Clerk

FRANK THEODORE SIMPKINS

Brother Frank Simpkins was born in Bluefield, West Virginia March 2, 1903. He was the son of the late Jessie Wade and Cora French Simpkins. The family later moved to Roanoke, Virginia where Brother Frank was reared in a Primitive Baptist home. The Lord saw fit to call our Brother from this low ground of sin and sorrow on June 7, 1992 at the age of 89.

He is survived by his wife Ella Conner Simpkins, one daughter, two sons, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren. He was a printer by trade and was retired from the Federal Housing Authority, Washington, D.C. in 1962. During his tenure of service with the Federal government, Brother Frank and his wife, Sister Ella, resided in Manassas, Virginia but moved to Roanoke, Virginia in August, 1968.

He was received into fellowship of the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 21, 1982. To all the church family who knew Brother Frank, he was a lovely member; a person with such a wonderful countenance - loyal to his church, a believer of the Truth and one who was often heard saying while he was sick, "I love the Brethren; the Doctrine; if God loves us that will be enough - I believe He does". He would often sing the beautiful hymns of Zion and pray. The writer feels so blessed to have known this Brother. I remember the seat he took in church and the joy which shown on his face while he was able to attend the meetings. When he became physically un-

able to attend, the absence saddened him. Nevertheless, he kept the faith and took his sufferings in stride. Most often he, or Sister Ella, would call to say that they would be unable to attend the meeting but to give their love to the members and friends and tell them they missed them.

Brother Frank loved for the members and friends to visit his home. Visitors were always made to feel welcome and loved and his conversation quickly revolved around his God and the blessings he felt he had received. Our Brother shall be missed by all who knew and loved him.

Brother Frank's funeral was held at Oakey's South Chapel on June 10, 1992 and was conducted by his beloved pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. Burial was in Rest Vale Cemetery at Salem Church, Floyd County, Virginia. May our loss be his eternal gain.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

Bob R. and John S. Collie, Jr.
November 21, 1992

ST. JOHN 17 : 1-3.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Signs of the Times

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THE END OF THE PATHWAY

*When we come to the end of the pathway,
Our weary feet wounded and sore;
When the last weary step has been taken,
And the steeps of this land are no more
When there's no longer need to strive
upward,
No more torturous heights to ascend,
Then the pathway that leads up to
Heaven*

Has come to its glorious end.

*When the last rugged peak is ascended,
The last fearful storm over past,
To the weary one, then sweet deliverance,
To rest in His bosom at last.*

*When our souls are received up in glory,
To sigh and to suffer no more,
Then we'll sing with a glad Hallelujah,
All pain, and all weariness o'er.*

*Till then we will press on with patience,
The race though so toilsome and long;
We will strive ever onward and upward,
Cheering our sad hearts with song.
With our Lord close beside through the
night-time,
With renewed pace we then hasten on;
And the trials of this wearisome pathway
Shall end on that beautiful Dawn.*

Mrs. W. J. Berry

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EDITORIAL



ELDER J. R. WILLIAMS

We shall try again as we've been asked, to write some of our thoughts on a following scripture.

That not by our knowledge, but by faith, some thought will be to some one's comfort.

First may we list a scripture found in Matt. 10: 18-20 *"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak,*

but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

This very attempt to write seems to me to trust not in the ability of the creature, but try our faith in God. Do we lack faith as we go speaking? Do we prepare a sermon? I, at least go most of my time in fear, what have I to present, and we know before hand nothing. I've been amazed to speak thoughts I never had until that time while standing and again having different thoughts after sitting down. Maybe this isn't the way of one called of God. I've never been sure of this, but this one thing I think I know, my path leads me in a way I knew not before. While I could beg for a smoother path, I can't ask for it to change, can you?

Such has the Lord's people gone in every generation, I believe, wanting to know what's ahead. We ministers, if indeed I am in that number, go seeking and searching as we stand before a God fearing people, afraid many times to go, feeling to have nothing, yet fearful not to attempt when asked. We never know the mind of God. He has declared that His thoughts and His ways are as far above our thoughts and our way, as the heavens are above the earth. Isn't this, if the above text was given in a natural sense, also in a spiritual way to all that fear His name, you are only a mouth piece for God. Men in their speaking as well as writing would like to know what's ahead, what man might say about it, think about it longer, research etc., that is man's way. If the thoughts or words or writing is directed of God, can it be

wrong? "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

An elder once asked me to write some. I answered I couldn't, He said, don't say no if you've never tried, you don't know. We may take notes or memorize a long sermon or article and still be of no value to those that are searching for that God instilled truth. Those apostles had to be inspired, what food they carried for the sheep was from God, and so it still is today. The minister or under-shepherd is only the carrier. Let us all be blessed not to try to add natural food to spiritual manna, it won't mix, if so it would spoil that of the spirit by pollution. He said we'll be hated of the world if we be His. Are we drawing closer to the world in our manner, or closer to the commandment of God. "Think not what ye shall speak." May His grace abide.

Elder J. R. Williams

CORRESPONDENCE

Brother Bill and Sister Mable:

Another year has passed and we have only grown older. Since Elder Preston's passing a year ago we have not attended church for lack of a pastor. But are blessed to feel the Lord's presence from time to time so we know that his promise to not forsake his little ones is as true today as it was to those to whom he spoke almost 2000 years ago.

In gospel bonds,
Lloyd and Florence Spikes
Elgin, Oregon

ARTICLES

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN LUKE 16: 19-31

Much has been said and written concerning this parable, and the Lord willing, I will give some of my thoughts and what I feel it teaches.

1. Verse 19: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." This is the state of all those who are rich in this world's goods. Also, they that are rich in their own righteousness and feel they need not the help of the Lord, in providing the means of their own salvation. The purple and fine linen represents their own works and self-righteousness which has been provided by their own efforts. And for the most part, they have much of this world's goods and temporal blessings, which they depend on to get them to heaven. They pay tithes to what they call "giving to the Lord," but the fact is that nothing can be given to the Lord, for all things are already his, and he said "if I was a hungered I would not ask you." And "what his soul desireth that he doeth." And Paul said in 1st Corinthians Chapter 1, "Not many mighty, not many noble are called." So this individual to his own satisfaction, has all that he

feels he needs to meet the requirements of being the Lord's disciple.

2. Verse 20 & 21: "And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores." Here we have a poor child of God, who in the early days of his realizing his helpless and ruined condition, that is willing to try anything to relieve his afflictions, and in this condition being so destitute, he grabs at straws so to speak. He felt to be the chiefest of sinners, undone without hope and God in the world. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. Here we have the "do-gooders" or "miserable comforters" who came to Job in his afflicted condition. In substance, they were saying, if you will just do this or that, then your troubles will go away. But they could not reach his case. When Job was afflicted in a similar condition, and his "so-called" friends came to offer help, he spoke to them in this manner: "But ye are forgivers of lies, ye are physicians of no value." (Job. 13:4). Nevertheless relief was to come to poor Lazarus, but man could do nothing for him.

3. Verses 22 & 23: "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." The poor beggar, Lazarus, having his trials and afflictions in this life, when he died was carried by the

angels into Abraham's bosom. We read this scripture, "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." (Matth. 8: 11 words of Jesus.) Note the difference in the place where each one went - Lazarus to Abraham's bosom and the rich man was buried. Also, Jesus told the thief on the cross, "today shalt thou be with me in paradise." When the rich man died and was buried, a different situation than that of Lazarus, who was taken to Abraham's bosom. It is said "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Right then he realized the torments of being in hell, afar off from where Lazarus was. The reprobate feel their torment and in my opinion, they have a certain knowledge of their punishment and also a certain knowledge of the joys of the righteous. For the rich man saw Lazarus afar off in Abraham's bosom. In this life, their situations are reversed. The reprobate have plenty - feel no need of anything, do not even feel the need of mercy, but always have the good things of this life, but lack that rich life of being with the Lord Jesus in heaven. But the Lord's people are poor and afflicted in this life, and as the poet said "poor and afflicted Lord are thine, among the great unfit to shine." No, they do not shine among the great of this world. Yet they trust in the Lord to be with them and he will in all circumstances, though at times we feel as David did on one occasion "has the Lord clean gone forever?" They will never, most of them, be blessed with

great riches in this world's goods. But they are the richest people on the face of the earth, having the Lord's rich mercy, grace and love.

4. Verse 24: "And he (the rich man) cried and said Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in torments in this flame." We also read "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9: 47, 48). Surely hell is a place of everlasting punishment as heaven is a place of everlasting life. The fire is not quenched - means it never goes out. This is not a place for the Lord's people at any time, even though in this life they have many trials and afflictions, but they are not everlasting. They shall never perish nor be consumed. Now the rich man did refer to Abraham as his father, but this was in the sense he was of Abraham's lineage, and he was not his spiritual Father. We read the scripture - "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our Father. Jesus saith unto them, if ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham." (John 8: 39, 40). So you see, though they were natural descendants of Abraham, they did not do the works of Abraham; or in other words, they did things Abraham did not do.

5. Verses 25 & 26: But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime received thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." This seems to settle the matter - Lazarus in Abraham's bosom (paradise) and the rich man in torments (hell). Even if they would, there is a great gulf fixed (yes' fixed by the eternal decrees of God.) God in his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, and by his eternal election of his people to eternal glory, has determined the destination of all mankind. And because He changes not, and what he does is done forever, as given in this scripture: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Eccles. 3: 14-15). Also, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. 3:6). There is no way by which a child of God can go away into torments; nor any way by which a child of the devil can go away into eternal life and joy. God's decrees are sure and certain. There is a remnant according to the election of grace, and those that were not embraced by that election and choice before the world began, will go away into everlasting punishment, pre-

pared for the devil and his angels. I am unable to conceive at any time that God's children are in torments, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.

6. Verses 27-30: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith, unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Just what the five brethren represents I cannot say, though I have heard several different versions of what they represent. But Abraham gave the rich man assurance, that if they would not hear Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. True repentance only comes one way and through the Lord Jesus Christ. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance; that is, you receive the gift and calling first and that then brings about repentance.

Many people witnessed the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, but the fact they beheld these things with the natural eye, and saw him in person, heard him speak on many occasions - this in itself was not the means by which one would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember on one occasion when he was talking to the Jews and they asked

him how long dost thou make us to doubt, he answered them in this manner: "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." John 10: 24-30). As Jesus told Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit." (John 3: 7-8). And no man can come unto me except my Father which is in heaven draw him. "So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:16).

In conclusion, as previously stated, it is inconceivable that the elect or chosen of God shall at any time be in torments, or experience the wrath of God as did the rich man. While in this life, Lazarus had many trials and afflictions, but was comforted being in Abraham's bosom. David said, "Many are the affliction of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." (Psalms 34:19). There is no indication in this parable that the rich man ever experienced after death, anything other than torments.

By the grace of God I am what I am, and may the Lord's name ever be glorified by His children in this life. I know, at most, I only have a few more years in this life, but one thing I know, the Truth I have endeavored to defend by the grace of God, will stand forever. Farewell vain world, I'm going home, My Saviour bids me come, Sweet Angels beckon from on high, then O how sweet to die.

Just a poor sinner saved by grace.

Elder Robert L. Miles
Plant City, Florida

"EXPERIENCE"

Dear Ones that I love,

May the Lord give me strength and words to write a few things that have taken place in my life which give me a reason for my hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I felt for some time I was a most peculiar person and no one could have the thoughts that I had or act like me. I was a sinner and there was nothing I could do but beg the Lord for mercy.

In the year 1932 I dreamed I was in a crowd of people. A bright star slipped over the crowd and some way it was made known to me that the star was sent to me. As the star began to leave, it looked like a mourning veil lifted off of me and went with the star. This was a pleasant dream and I wondered what it meant. Some time later it came to me that my sins were forgiven, which gave me great relief.

I loved being with the Primitive Baptist people and hearing them talk of God and His mercy. I felt that I would love to have a home with them. I wanted so much to be baptized but felt I was not worthy and must keep this to myself.

As time went on the desire to be baptized became stronger and stronger. When I was outside of the house I would think when I go inside I would tell Mama how I felt and she could tell me if it was my imagination but I could never seem to tell her.

My father was sick and the Brethren came to our house and held services for him. He was received into the church and it seemed the time had come that I must tell them part of what I have written. I was received also and baptized August 22, 1936 with my membership at Laurel Creek. I have enjoyed many happy seasons but have had many doubts about myself. I cannot do the things that I should, but do and say the things that I should not. I have no doubt where my strength comes from. The Lord has been so good to me.

On February 14, 1988, I felt so bad in different ways. I was on my bed early in the morning when a scene came before me. First it was an object that did not look very good, but a voice spoke and said, "Get behind me Satan" and then it was gone. Then a beautiful object appeared before me. A voice said, "We have come to be with you and comfort you", then it disappeared. The memory of this is still with me giving me much comfort at times. It seemed to me that the first

was the devil and the second was the Angels.

I have experienced some things that seemed very hard at the time but later I could see that it was for my good. I have had many blessings from the hand of the Lord for which I hope I am thankful.

I cannot write or tell it all as I would like but may He have all of the praise for now and always.

A Sister in Christ I hope.

Annie Reed

VOICES OF THE PAST

As found in the first pages of Elder Lamberts book, "Tried In The Furnace"

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He so minutely numbered the generations, set the bounds of their habitations and destined their paths, companions and maneuvers that I, Elbert Jefferson Lambert, should make my natural appearance on September 28, 1906 as the firstborn son of Charles B. and Ida Burchfield Lambert near Amity, Arkansas. I am the oldest of four children born to that union. My grandfather, father and I were born within one half mile of each other.

I came up the "hard" way. My father was physically weak, suffered much, and met many hardships trying to "eke out a living" on a little rocky farm in Clark County, Arkansas. He was very

zealous, but because of physical handicaps, was unable to realize his ambitions.

I received my early education at Elm School and Amity High School. It became necessary that I stop my pursuit for a higher education in order to help support our family. Therefore, I acquired a teaching license and began teaching school in my sixteenth year. I taught my first school at Dobyville, near Okolona, Arkansas in 1922-23. I taught at Dobyville, Hickory Grove, Lenox, Alpine, Elm and Cedar Bluff, all in Clark County, Arkansas, for the next few years. I was politically inclined and made every effort possible to become acquainted with all the people of that county.

When I was about seventeen years of age, I became a member of the Shiloh Church of Christ (Kelly division of Missionary Baptists) and began teaching Sunday School classes. I can well remember my first "testimony" given in a "testimonial meeting" at Shiloh Church. I quoted John 3:16 and explained it to the best of my ability. The brethren began at once to solicit me to enter the ministry. As a result of my attempts in speaking upon religious subjects, I was ordained to the work of ministry by order of Shiloh church while yet in my "teens."

I pursued the vocations of preaching, teaching, and farming several years. All this afforded me opportunity to give vent to my great zeal and high ambitions. I was very conscientious in everything I attempted. Continuous study and strenuous activi-

ties in early life had its lasting effect upon my nervous system.

On November 17, 1928 I was married to Myrtle Hancock, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hancock, granddaughter of the late Elder J.H. Langston, of Alpine, Arkansas. She gave birth to our only son, Charles Thomas, on April 6, 1930. She was immediately possessed of pneumonia and departed this life May 3, 1930. I adored her so greatly that the shock of losing my companion drove me to the point of insanity.

The year 1930 was an epochal year in my life. All earthly possessions were taken from me and debts accumulated. My health was impaired for life and my ambitions thwarted. Confidence in myself was destroyed and I was forced to give up teaching. Three cars were wrecked and I was made to "look up to see the bottom." Little did I know that behind a frowning providence was the smile of a gracious God! In that same year (1930) a son was born, Jesus appeared as my Savior, and I was added to Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ near Amity, Arkansas. I was baptized by Elder A.D. Wall and began to be exercised as a minister of God's grace in the same year.

Four years were spent wholly in the college of tribulations located in the Furnace of Affliction. The relief I experienced during this time was during the fleeting moments in communion with God and my brethren. I could never adjust myself to fit in the home of my father and mother who were keeping my son. I could not feel at

home anywhere and felt this would always be the case. I did not think I would ever marry again because I felt unable to assume the responsibility as the head of a family and that I would never be able to love anyone else enough to engage her companionship for life. I was mistaken in this idea.

I met and married Dessie Mae Williams, daughter of Leander and Mary E. Williams of Dalark, Arkansas, in the year 1934. The wedding was solemnized by Elder John T. Everett, November 18, 1934. This gave me a new lease on life. The Lord blessed us with mutual love to the extent that she was and is a real, true companion to me.

I was ordained to the officeship of elder by order of Cedar Hill Church, while the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association was in session with Whitewater Church, near Fordyce, Arkansas, third Saturday in September, 1934. We lived at Dalark, Arkansas for some time and I assisted in serving churches in that vicinity for several years. New Hope Church of Near Hope, Arkansas, was the first church I attempted to serve as pastor without assistance of other brethren.

We have had our place of residence at Dalark, Camden, Cullendale, Hampton, Tinsman, and Calion, Arkansas as well as Lillie, Louisiana before moving to Winnsboro, Texas in 1949. I re-entered the teaching profession during the period of World War II when there was a shortage of teachers and took the responsibility of principal, Tinsman High School, Tinsman, Arkansas and taught in the high school

there four years. With exception of this I have devoted my time to serving churches and visiting the brethren in the different sections of the country from 1934 until the present time (1955). I have visited churches in the states of Arkansas, Alabama, California, Delaware, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington as well as in the province of Ontario, Canada. I am now attempting to serve four churches as pastor; Hopewell and Good Hope Churches near Winnsboro, Texas; Paran near Hawkins, Texas; and Bethel near Eldorado, Arkansas.

Elder E.J. Lambert

“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.” - Luke xvii. 10.

The lesson taught in these words of our Savior to his disciples is that in nothing can we be of profit to the Almighty; and some reflections growing out of this are in my mind this morning to speak about. It seems exceeding hard to divest our minds of the idea of human merit in what we may do or say. We even turn the special gifts of God into occasions whereby to exalt ourselves, as though we had originated them, and out of our own storehouses

had offered gifts to God whereby his infinite fullness had been added to. And so again and again we are reminded in the Scriptures of our dependence and unprofitableness, that our pride may be humbled and our vainglory silenced.

Jesus had just before spoken to his disciples of faith which could work miracles; and faith always does work miracles, in the sense that it always does what sense or reason or human power can never accomplish. But though faith is itself the gift of God, the fruit of the Spirit, and being of divine origin works with divine power, so that human power is all excluded from any participation in the matter, yet we are all the time saying, “My hand hath wrought this great work, and my wisdom hath planned it;” and therefore Jesus proceeds to remind the disciples that after having done the mightiest works which faith can produce, they were not to boast themselves, as though they were thankworthy, or were in any way profitable to their Maker. Yea, more than this; so far would they be even then from putting God under obligations to them, that he would have a right to demand still more service at their hands. After they have plowed the ground or fed the cattle, he still has a right to demand that they shall gird themselves and wait upon him at his table; and even then they deserve no thanks. If afterward they sit down and eat, it is of his bounty, for which they are bound to return him thanks.

It must not be forgotten that this parable was spoken to eastern people,

the whole structure of whose society is different from ours. Their idea was, and is, that servants are bound to render all demanded service to their masters. In our day and land, where the relations of men to each other are different, any such service rendered from one to another would most frequently be met by the courteous phrase, "I thank you." But such an expression would be entirely foreign to all the ideas of eastern nations. There, a master would never think of thus acknowledging a service rendered by a servant. The master does not consider himself under any obligations to the servant, but the servant owes all his life and powers to him; and it is of his bounty if the servant receives his daily bread. Now the Savior uses this condition of things as a parable, and by it presents our relation to God. So likewise ye, after that ye have done all that is commanded you, count yourselves unprofitable servants.

1st. We are the creation of God. He has made us, and not we ourselves. He is the only self-existent Being, the only Being of whom eternity can be predicated. We owe our existence to his will. We are, because he is, and because he willed that we should be. Surely the creature must receive all. He can by no means render anything to his Creator. Therefore, when we have done all his will, we have only answered the end for which he created us; we have only rendered back to him that which came out of his own hand. In the Scriptures man is often said to have robbed God, but never to

have added anything to him. He said, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fullness thereof." - Psalm 1. 12 See also the connection. As God has made us, we ourselves are his; and as he has created every power within us, and all that we have, these things are also his; and so neither our persons nor our works can profit him anything, or deserve any thanks from him.

2d. It is God that upholds us and preserves us. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." - Acts xvii. 28. He gives us our breath, and upholds us by the word of his power. - Acts xvii. 25; Hebrews i. 3. How little conscious of all this are we! Yet he is so close to us that we exist in him, act in him, and without his presence we should perish. He has made us in order to do his will in us and by us, and daily he renews our strength. Each daily breath is proof of his continued sustaining power. If he withdraw, we shall cease not only to live, but we shall cease to be. Therefore all our service of praise and obedience is only the expression of power from God, every instant imparted to us, that we may be kept in life. We have therefore put him under no obligation to us.

3d. Not only has he created us, and daily preserved us in existence, but he gives us all things. Man in his vanity gathers the fruits of his husbandry into his barns; with the profits of his labor he builds houses, and purchases the comforts and luxuries of life. By his learning and wit he gains a great name among men, and he says, "See what my power hath

wrought!" Vain thought! Who gave him mental and physical power? Who sent down the heat of the sun and the showers of the early and latter rain upon the seed which he has sown? Who gave life to the seed, and prepared the soil in which it grew? Who saved it from mildew and rust and blight? Who gave favoring gales and smooth seas to his ships? Who kept his houses from the storm or fire? What has he that he has not received? - John iii. 27. Why boasts he as though he had not received it? How little we live in a realizing sense of the constant providence of God! He is the Giver of all. If any streams flow back to him, they are but seeking the place from whence they came out. If every river flows into the ocean, wherein is the ocean profited? Does it thank the rivers? Their cheerful and mighty and beneficent flow can continue no longer than old ocean wills. God in his immensity is the ocean, and all we do and say in his service are but the return of him of what he gives; therefore he owes us nothing. We cannot borrow from him to pay the debt which we already owe him. Therefore, from these three considerations it is manifest that we can yield him nothing. We are unprofitable servants if our whole lives are his.

4th But we have to do with sin and sinners. We have not rendered him his own. We have denied his power and goodness, and set at naught his authority. We are in debt to him. We have failed to obey his commandments. We have fallen from our uprightness, and are enemies to God. As such the

Bible speaks of all men. In connection with this also, some reflections grow out of these words of our Savior of which I wish to speak. Could an unfallen man, who should perfectly do God's will, have any merit before God? Could such a man present any holiness to God that would place him under any obligation in return whatever? A man can render service to his fellow-man that can rightly demand reward, because he meets his fellow-man upon an equal plane; but can he render any such service to God? It is manifest that the first essential quality that must belong to any meritorious work is that it shall be "self-originated;" that is, that it shall be performed entirely out of a man's own self, without being originated from any source outside of himself. If it be originated from any source outside of himself, it is to the praise of that source, and not himself. A man may demand praise or reward from his fellow-man for service rendered, because with regard to him the act was self-originated - it was performed from an equal to an equal; but we are not in any sense equal with God. It has been before proved that we must receive all from the Creator. No good work is from self. All our good works, if we have any, must be from God. We cannot take one thing which God hath wrought in our hearts and make it the ground of a demand for more. If God originates our good works, they cannot constitute any merit in us. If God has originated them, they must be to his praise forever. Can we then originate any good works, such as faith,

love, obedience, &c.? In answer, let us first consider that the Scriptures teach that man is wholly unclean, and his heart wholly evil. It must be manifest that evil cannot originate good. Evil only originates evil. To this the Scriptures and reason both agree. Let us look at the testimony of the Scriptures for a little. "A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." - Matt. vii. 18. "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." - Matt. xii. 34. That all men by nature are sinful altogether, is declared again and again. See the first three chapters of Romans, in which Paul draws up an indictment against the whole world, and declares that none are exempt from the condemnation there pronounced. Sin and death are the condition and doom of all men. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. God only can work good or originate it in us. If any man does work good works, it is because God has created him to good works, and foreordained that he should walk in them. - Eph. ii. 10. Every good and perfect thing is declared to be the gift of God, and to come down from him. - James i. 17. Repentance is his gift. - Acts v. 31. Faith is his gift. Eph. ii. 8. Love, hope, faith, and all the Christian graces, are declared to be the fruit of the Spirit. - Gal. v. 22, 23. Our good works he is declared to be the author of. - See again Eph. ii. 10; Isa. xxvi. 12. From all these scriptural testimonies we may surely conclude that in point

of righteousness we deserve no thanks, and cannot be profitable to God.

5th. From all this is manifest that we cannot make an atonement for our sins. If any price can be rendered to justice, it must be a holy ransom, such as justice can approve. But we have before seen that holiness is not in man except God create it there; and it is manifest that we cannot render to God his own work as our merit. Because I have one good thing from God I cannot rightly say, "Therefore I deserve another." Our works, which God has wrought within us, cannot atone for past sins; and all in fallen man is sin, except the works which God works within him. Redemption therefore must be of God; it cannot be of ourselves. Of myself I can neither pay the debts I owe, nor lay up treasures of righteousness after my debts are paid. Human merit is excluded from redemption, both as regards the atonement for sin and the sanctification of the sinner. Salvation must be of divine grace and not of creature works. Even the works wrought within us, of faith, love humility, &c., are not capable of paying the debt which we owe to divine justice, because they are the fruit of the Spirit; and the Spirit is not given until after Jesus has paid all the debt we owe, neither could it be given until after the atonement was made. In salvation, atonement for the sins that are past must precede all else. To this agrees the type. The people could not come near the sanctuary, and no worship could be offered there, until it was sprinkled with the blood of atone-

ment. To this agrees all Christian experience. No man has ever yet felt that he had one spiritual blessing from God, until he has felt himself sheltered by the blood of the atonement. If our works were perfect they could profit God nothing; they could not atone for sin. They must be created in us of God.

6th. But our works, even the best of them, are not perfect. Imperfection is true of all Christians and of their best works. To this the Scriptures agree. Disciples are taught to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive," &c. - Matthew vi. 12. Paul complains that he sins, and does what he would not. - Rom. vii. - John, in his first epistle, first chapter, says, "If we say that we have (present tense) no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The record shows that they were imperfect, and they did not hesitate to confess their sins and failures, as did Noah and David. Christian experience and Christian testimony to-day are the same. Not only do we positively and willfully sometimes go astray, but even when we are striving to do the will of God with the most earnest desire, we have to confess that there is often a mixture of wrong motives. Selfish desires arise and spoil our best work. There are often flies in the most precious ointment of the apothecary.

*"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do."*

If this be true of the Christian, the renewed man, certainly the unregenerate man can do no better. If the best

offering of him in whose heart Jesus abides needs the cleansing blood to make it acceptable to God, surely the work of the unrenewed man must be wholly hateful and horrible in the sight of God. If he that does all is unprofitable, where shall he stand who never has known what love to God and obedience to his law mean? Surely from all this the exceeding riches of the grace and kindness of God take on a new meaning, and must appear immeasurable. If a man is saved, how great is the exhibition of the love of God to him!

7th. From the text we may learn humility toward God. Humility is one of the graces of the Spirit. It is not a thing that can be created or called into exercise at our own will. As a principle, God himself creates it. It is not a subject of exhortation when we consider the principle in the heart; but it is scriptural and proper to exhort Christians to put it on in their life. As a principle in the heart, it springs out of right views of ourselves and just conceptions of God and of our relations to him; and what would be better calculated to increase a feeling of humility in our hearts than a consideration of the text at the head of this article? To feel that our God does not need us, that we can add nothing to him, but are unprofitable at the best, and must receive all from him, is a most soul-humbling consideration. And accompanying this grace, we shall also be humble in our deportment toward all our fellow-men. Since we ourselves are of no profit to the Almighty, none can be behind us. We are better than

no one else; and the feeling of the heart will be, Surely I am most unprofitable of all. It will not be hard then to esteem others better than ourselves. This also will make us lenient and forgiving to the faults of others. Ashamed of our own shortcomings, we shall feel how little right we have to judge others. The humble man is slow to condemn. He judges himself by a far sterner rule than he does any one else.

8th. From a consideration of the text we may also learn gratitude to God, the Giver of all. He does not exact from us even that which it is his right to demand; and, all undeserving as we are, he never wearies of supplying all our needs. We owe no thanks to him who pays a just debt; but how grateful should we be to him who, being under no obligation to us, yet does us a thousand favors, knowing that we can never by any means recompense him again.

9th. The text is also well suited to stir us up to obedience to God. Thus, and thus only, can we exhibit our gratitude and love. We know that we can be of no profit to God, but yet humbly and lovingly we desire to acknowledge his favors in the only way possible to us. Here speaks the spirit of the true Christian. The spirit of the flesh says, If I can put God under no obligation to me, so that I can secure some favor from him for what I do, what is the use of serving him? But the spirit of love and gratitude speaks another thing altogether. It says, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me.?"

Thus I have suggested some things that seem to me pertinent to the text. Many precious truths I have not alluded to. I have found profit to my own soul in these reflections, and I hope they will profit some one else.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life through Christ,

F.A. Chick.

(The above was written by
Elder F. A. Chick, Feb. 11, 1885.)

THE FLOCK

John x. 14-16. I am the good Shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine; as the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.



And other sheep I have; not distinct from those for whom he laid down his life, but from those who were under the Old Testament dispensation, and who heard not the thieves and robbers that were before Christ, verse 8, others besides the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or the elect among the Jews to whom Christ was sent, and by whom are meant the chosen of God among the Gentiles, who were sheep, though not called and folded, for the reasons

given in verse 3. These though uncalled, belonged to Christ, he had an inheritance in them, they were given him by his Father; he had them in his hands and upon his heart; his eye was upon them, and they were under his notice, inspection and care: which are not of this fold; of the Jewish nation and church, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; were as sheep going astray; and were scattered about in the several parts of the world, and were to be redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation: them also I must bring; out of the wilderness of the world, from among the men thereof, their former sinful companions, from the folds of sin and Satan, and the pastures of their own righteousness, to himself and unto his Father's presence, to his house of ordinances, to good fold of green pastures, and I at last to his heavenly kingdom and glory."

"There was an necessity of doing all this; it was the Father's will and pleasure, his purpose and decree, who had resolved upon it; and it was on account of Christ's own engagements, and obligations to do it; as well as because of the case and condition of these sheep, who otherwise must have been eternally punished.

"And they shall hear my voice; not only externally, but internally; which is owing to his powerful and efficacious grace, who quickens them, and causes them to hear and live; unstops their dear ears, and gives them ears to hear, and opens their hearts, to attend to his word, and gives them an under-

standing of it. Therefore, the gospel was sent among them: and there should be one fold and one Shepherd; one church state, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; the middle wall of partition being broken down, these two coalesce in one, become one new man, and members of one and the same body. And of this fold or flock, there is but one Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who is the rightful Proprietor, and whose own the sheep are, and who knows how to feed them, and does take care of them; though there are many under shepherds, who are employed in feeding them."

John x. 27-30. My sheep know 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. (Read carefully the 15 and 16 chapters of this book; they are very instructive.)

John xvii. 6-10. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. 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. (Read the entire chapter.)

The Acts of the Apostles. "This book in some copies is called, The Acts of the Holy Apostles. It contains an history of the ministry and miracles of the apostles of Christ, and is a sort of a journal of their actions, from which it takes its name. It begins at the ascension of Christ, and reaches to the imprisonment of the Apostle Paul at Rome; and is a history of upwards of thirty years; it gives an account of the first Gospel-church at Jerusalem, and of the progress of the Gospel there, and in Judea; it shows how the gospel went forth from Jerusalem, and was spread in the Gentile world, especially by the Apostle Paul, whose companion Luke was the writer of this book; for that it was written by him is very evident, from the beginning of it, it being dedicated to the same person, his gospel is, and of which he makes mention, and in the Syric edition, the book is called, The Acts of Saint Luke the Evangelist collected for the Saints. It was by him written in the Greek language, and, we are told, that there was a version of it into the Hebrew language, which was laid up in the library of the Jews at Liberias. Of the authenticity of this book, there has been no doubt among the ancients, only Cerinthus the heretic endeavored to discredit it, and it was not received by another sort of heretics, called Severiani, from Severus, a disciple of Tatian. It is a most excellent and useful work, showing the first planting of Christianity, and of the Christian

churches, both among the Jews and Gentiles, the spread and progress of it in the various parts of the world; what sufferings the apostles endured for the sake of it, and what success attended them, and is a standing proof and confirmation of the Christian religion."

The footsteps of the flock, are so plainly and connectedly marked in this entire book, that he who runs may read; comment is therefore not needed. I think it unnecessary to say more than to ask everyone of my readers, to read the book of Acts for himself.

J.K. Booton

**"AND THOU SHALT
REMEMBER"**

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years into the wilderness, to humble thee and to prove thee . . . And He humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger and fed thee with manna which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know . . ." (Deuteronomy 8:2 and 3)

"For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness; these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee; THOU HAST LACKED NOTHING." (Deuteronomy 2:7)

To the Household of Faith,
Dearly Beloved:

Recently, as I have read the foregoing verses, I have felt a compulsion to write a little of the sweetness they have brought to me as I meditated upon them, and "The years that are past."

The book of Deuteronomy was written by Moses in the last years of his life, to the stiff-necked and gainsaying nation of Israel whom he had led forty years through the wilderness from Egyptian bondage even to the very border of the promised land. The book consists largely of parting counsels, exhortations, warnings and above all, reminders of the way the Lord had led them, of His great faithfulness while He had been with them those forty years in the great wilderness. He brings to mind their rebellion, their gross ingratitude for all the Lord's benefits to them; how they murmured against the Lord, saying He had brought them into the wilderness to die; how they had looked back with desire even to Egypt; how the Lord, in His wonderful faithfulness, had afflicted them, then healed them; had suffered them to hunger, then fed them with manna; had permitted them to wander, then restored them - that He might humble them and prove them and make them to know the source of their supply. He reminds them tenderly that the Lord their God had known their walking through the great wilderness; that He had been with them, and says, "THOU HAST LACKED NOTHING."

If we are of the Lord's redeemed ones, I believe when we read these wonderful and precious reminders, we are moved, in loving gratitude, to fit them to our own pilgrimage as we have walked through the great wilderness of this evil and perilous world; which inclines me to speak briefly of some of the way over which the Lord has led me these past FORTY YEARS. My experience has been so unlike most I have read in the Signs that I've been reluctant to write of it. Indeed, at times, I have wondered if I had ever had an experience - at other times I have known I did. In the beginning, I did not experience the terrible condemnation for sin which some relate. This has come to me from time to time throughout the years as my experiences have taught me how frail and weak I am, and as I have been blest to see the loveliness, humility and holiness of my dear Redeemer; neither have I ever been given very much to doubts, as so many seem to be. But then, what parent finds it necessary to deal exactly alike with each of his children? The body of Christ is made up of individuals, with individual characteristics, individual desires, individual short-comings and individual needs, and I believe the Lord, in His great wisdom, love and mercy, deals with each of us as He alone knows best.

Forty years ago, in the fall of 1922, when just a young girl, I met and fell in love with a man - the best man, the most wonderful man who ever walked the shores of this world. One night that Fall, when I was going through a

bitter experience, He spoke to me, told me to look unto Him; that He would give me peace and supply all my needs. This wonderful man had written, rather had dictated, a great book, filled from cover to cover with "the things concerning Himself" and the bride He would one day take to be with Him forevermore. He sent me this book and I have had it these forty years, and, with exception of the Man himself, it is my most precious possession. Truly, each time I read it with supplied understanding, I find a new loveliness in the Man that I had not seen before. It soon became apparent that this wonderful man had loved me before I loved Him - before I even met Him, even before I was born; in fact, that my loving Him was BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED ME; moreover, His love for me was so great that, however unfaithful I might ever be, He would never leave me nor forsake me; that nothing either in life or in death could ever separate me from his great love. Oh, my dear Brethren, this wonderful man was The Man Christ Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. As I meditate upon the verses quoted in the beginning and look back over my own forty years walking through this great wilderness, I see myself just as Israel was - stiff-necked, hard-headed, wanting my own way and failing to see the Lord's gracious hand as He led me on. So many have been the pitfalls in my pathway, and it seems to me I have walked headlong into every one of them; so many have been the snares of Satan and I've been the victim of them all; so many times

I've looked with wistful gaze at the world and all its charms; so many times when the going was hard, I've wondered why and wished my lot were different. But in all my unfaithfulness, the Lord has been faithful, chastening me often and afflicting me, that He might humble me and prove Himself to me; and through it all, I can say with an overwhelming sense of gratitude, I HAVE LACKED NOTHING. His gracious and bountiful hand has supplied my material needs. It is true I don't have very much of this world's goods, but I have never had to go hungry or cold, and so far, I've never had to be a burden on or dependent upon anyone but the Lord. God forbid that I should ever, for one small moment, feel independent of Him!

He has also met my spiritual needs as He fed me with the gospel from the written and spoken word, has blest me with sweet fellowship and communion with Himself and His dear saints. Sometimes the waves of His great love have flooded my soul, bringing forth loving response from my heart. He has shown me so many times and in so many ways how much better are the things He has for me than anything this changing world could ever afford. Human beings change, even those we love the most, but He changes not! In the depths of distress and sorrow, He has spoken to me and comforted me. Not only that, He has given me a little foresight of that city to which I humbly hope I'm traveling, so that I do not dread, indeed sometimes I anticipate the prospect of leaving this old house for that eternal city

where the glory of our dear Redeemer will be the light; where there will be no more temptation, no more sin, no more need for chastening; where darkness shall nevermore dim our view of His dear face. What a glorious day that will be!

Just a few words concerning chastening and afflictions which I've been taught these forty years in this great wilderness. Paul tells us "no chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." How very true! I have learned through the years that each chastening has brought me closer to Him who inflicted it, and made me to love Him more as I was blest to see the tender love in the chastening hand. Many years ago when I was teaching, I found it necessary, because of disobedience, to punish a little boy of whom I was very fond. After I had punished him, I took him in my arms, told him I loved him, that it grieved me to have to punish him and I hoped I would never have to do it again. Through his flowing tears, the little fellow looked up into my face and said, "Miss Dykes, I love you more than any teacher I ever saw." In the years that followed, I have sometimes been like the little boy, when in affliction my heart was melted and I was made to look into the face of my dear Redeemer and say, "Lord, I never loved you before as I love you now." You see, the Great Teacher had assured me of His love, even as He found it necessary to chasten me.

These experiences on the way are teaching me, little by little, that His way is best for me, and I am instructed: "In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God, in Christ, concerning you."

Dear Brethren, in closing, I wish I could say, as Paul did, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith," but I cannot say that. The faith has kept me and so I can say, as Paul did on another occasion, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." By the faith of the Son of God! Let us watch closely for His footsteps as we journey through this great wilderness, until He comes again, whether the years be many or few.

Yours, in that inseparable tie,
Mildred V. Dykes



MY LOVED AND ESTEEMED SISTER: - I am going to try to write you a letter. This is the first I have attempted to write with a pen. Lila said she would write for me, but I thought I would try and write myself, as I have often been writing you in my meditations during my wakeful hours. Some nights I sleep and others I do not. Brother Alexander Campbell has passed away. Sisters Christy Graham and Annie Gillis are gone, too.

*"As star by star decline,
Till all are passed away."*

Oh how I appreciated the love and esteem of the church when they as-

sembled at our home at the November meeting. Surely it was a time of the singing of birds to my poor soul. I was brought into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love. When I awoke in the morning these words were upon my lips, He came leaping over the mountains, skipping over the hills. My Beloved is mine and I am his. I felt at that time it was all I needed and I truly was on the mountaintop for a long time. The time came when something began to tell me, Your Beloved only follows you on the top of the mountain, he does not know you when you are in the valley and in the caves of the earth, in your distress, and again I was brought low and began to murmur and complain. It seems so fresh to my mind. What was to become of me? On January 4th, after a night of no sleep, I felt I was tired out. The next night these words dropped sweetly into my mind, as if spoken by some unseen person,

“Though thy path be dark and drear,

And thy nights be filled with fear,

*There is one who loves thee ever,
He will leave thee never, never.”*

I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

I have written this with great imperfection. When I tried to read it I did not know whether to send it or not, but I am glad I can write even an imperfect letter.

Sarah Sinclair.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Greensboro Church will host the meeting of the West Country Line Union at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church the fifth Sunday in January, 1993.

All are welcome to come and be with us and a special welcome to all Elders of our faith and order.

Wayne Edwards, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va., a presbytery met December 5, 1992 at 2:30 p.m. for the examination of brother Wilton Supthin, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Junior Conner. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elder Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Carl Terry, Willard Cox, Clarence Stone, and Hale Terry.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as Moderator and W.G. Parsons as Clerk. Elder Willard Cox and W.T. Conner was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Elder Hale Terry having been duly appointed by Paynes Creek Church in conference October 31, 1992 spokesman for the church delivered brother Wilton Supthin to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Willard Cox and W.J. Conner using scripture reference Acts of the Apostles and 1 Timothy Ch. 3, vs. 8-13. 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 Clarence Stone. Elders Junior Conner & Carl Terry delivered the charge to the candidate. Scripture reference Holy Word of God.

The Moderator asked Paynes Creek if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother Wilton Supthin and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained candidate was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Paynes Creek, Floyd County, Va.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

Elder Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W. G. Parsons, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION



The Union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist will be held, the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in January, 1993 with Weatherford Church.

All who believe the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited to meet with us.

Phyllis Goad, Clerk

NOTICE

Copies available of **TRIED IN THE FURNACE** by: Elder E.J. Lambert. \$7.00 per copy, includes postage and handling.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 1992

Mrs. Audrey Dyer, VA	7.00
Homer Pettis, LA	5.00
Jimmy Cote, ME	10.00
James W. Huber, MD	2.00
Mrs. Erma C. Sowers, VA	2.00
Mrs. James Hutchinson, KY	2.00
Floyd K. Morgan, AR	2.00
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Ms. Amy Cruise, VA	7.00
Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN	7.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS	2.00
Mrs. Della M. Swan, LA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER JESSIE ALTIZER COX

It pleased our Lord to call our Dear Sister Home on September 16, 1992. She was born May 16, 1904 making her stay here 88 years 4 months. She was the Daughter of Johnny Lee and Lizzie Altizer. She was married to Poage Cox who preceded her in death in the year 1961. Unto this union were eight children born.

Surviving are five sons and daughters-in-law Philip Cox, Bernard and Bessie Cox; Piney Woods, Radford Virginia; Russell and Louise Cox, Radford Virginia; Coleman and Eunice Cox, Lynchburg, Virginia; Allen and Geneva Cox, Christiansburg, Virginia. Three daughters and sons-in-law Effie and Troy Higgs, Willis, Virginia; Reba and Esker Wade, Radford, Virginia; Glenda and Arnold DeHart, Bent Mountain, Virginia. One sister Georgia Roop, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. One sister-in-law Elsie Altizer, Maumelle, Arkansas; 22 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren, 4 great-great-grandchildren, many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Sister Jessie had been in declining health for many years being hospitalized many times. Her desire was always to be able to be out and go to Church again. She was a True Believer in Salvation by Grace Alone and loved to hear that preached. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in

the year 1948. She fought a good fight and kept the faith. Her funeral was held at Old Union Church on September 19, 1992 by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the Sumpter Cemetery to await the resurrection where all the redeemed will be with the Lord forever. We miss her at Old Union Church. Written by request of the Church at our last Conference Meeting by Dorcie Semones.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Dorcie Semones, Clerk

SISTER LINA POLLARD

It is with sad hearts that we, the members of Newport Primitive Church, attempt to write the obituary of our Dear Sister, Lina Pollard. She was born on August 27, 1904 at Veronia, North Carolina, and departed this life July 9, 1992, at Britthaven Nursing Home, Jacksonville, North Carolina. Her life span, that God gave her, was almost 89 years.

She was first married to Mr. Lloyd Thomas and after his death she married Mr. Roy Taylor and after his death, in 1966 she married Brother Lee Pollard of Newport, North Carolina.

Survivors include a daughter, Ruth Sanders and a son, William Thomas, both of Jacksonville, North Carolina, a step-son, Bobby Pollard of Newport, North Carolina.

Sister Pollard first united with the Old Bay Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder Hill Edwards sometime in the mid forty's. She later moved her membership to the Primitive Baptist Church at Wilmington, North Carolina, the one located on the Silver Lake Road. After she married Brother Lee Pollard, she made Newport her home as well as her church home. Our church records show that she was received by letter into the fellowship of Newport Primitive Baptist Church on September 17, 1966. Sister Pollard was a kind and loving member. She did not believe in sowing seeds of discord, but was one who worked for peace.

We were very close to Sister Pollard and her dear husband. From time to time they travelled many miles with us to church meetings. She cooked many good meals for church company and always welcomed the Lord's people into her home as long as her health permitted.

We feel that her step-son, Bobby Pollard, was a special blessing to her. He was very caring and even bought and furnished her with a car to drive, so long as she was physically able. Bobby would also cook her favorite foods and take them to the nursing home, where, due to blindness in her last few years, he would hand feed her.

Her funeral was held on Saturday, July 11, 1992, with a grave side service at Cedar Grove Cemetery in Newport, North Carolina, by Elder Johnie Carroll. Elder Carroll gave out one of Sister Pollard's favorite hymns, No.

38 in Lloyd's Hymn Book, and the little group from Newport Primitive Baptist Church along with some dear ones from Cypress Creek Primitive Baptist Church sang:

*"Dark was the night and cold the ground
on which the Lord was laid,
His sweat like drops of blood ran down
in agony He prayed, etc., etc."*

Though Sister Pollard is gone from us, her sweet memory will live on in our hearts. To know her was to love her. She was truly a Dear Humble Sister for her walk was orderly and her conversation was Godly. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord."

Family, Friends and neighbors gathered at the grave site to pay their last respects and say their goodbyes. We know that in this present life we will see her no more, but we hope to see her in that world that knows no end. When Jesus comes back to gather his elect from the four winds, we hope to be included in that blessed number that were predestinated unto the adoption before the foundation of the world.

It is agreed that we send one copy of this resolution to the family, one to Zion's Landmark, one to the Signs of the Times for publication and one to be recorded in our church records.

Approved in Regular Conference, this 20th day of December, 1992.

Elder Johnie Carroll, Moderator
Shirley Carroll, Clerk

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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" ROCK OF AGES "

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which
flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and
pow'r.*

*Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfil thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.*

*Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!*

*While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!*

Toplady.

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EDITORIAL



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS



That Jesus came into the world to save sinners surely no one professing to be a christian will dispute, but there is obviously a great diversity of opinion among the people as to whether he accomplished his mission, or left a portion for man to complete. However, the ones who have been quickened into life by the Holy Spirit and made to see their lost, ruined condition, and then given to see a crucified and risen Saviour, have no doubt that he did indeed do what he came to do. Their only doubt is, Did he die for me?

Let us examine what the Holy Scriptures say, for they are the record that God has graciously, and in his loving kindness and mercy, given to his elect children. In 2 Tim. 3:16 we read: *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* By this we find that the Scriptures are not written to all mankind, but to the man of God: the man of God being one who has been born again of the Holy Spirit. All men in the flesh are sinners and will be until death. John tells us that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:4) John also tells us: *"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for he cannot sin, because he is born of God."*

The nominal professors of the world teach that if a man will only believe in Christ and accept him as his Saviour he will be born again; but Jesus said, "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." If a man can chose his own natural father then might he choose God as his heavenly Father. Perish the thought! "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14). All men are born dead in trespasses and in sins. Death means, to

be separated from; and when Adam partook of the forbidden fruit he died. No, he did not die a corporal death, but he was separated from whatever standing he had with God, for God had said, *"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* When Adam died all of his posterity died in him, for they were created in him. Therefore all who are born of the flesh are born dead in trespasses and in sins; and we know that a dead man can do nothing. Therefore man has no choice in the matter. But if it were possible for man to choose, he would not choose God, because in the flesh he has only a carnal mind, and the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. To be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Therefore they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But 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. (See Rom. 8:6-9). Neither have the children of God chosen him, but, *"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."* (Thes. 2:13). There are those who are left to perish in their sins, and Satan works in them with all deceivableness of unrighteousness: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in

unrighteousness. (2 Thes. 2: 9-12). But unto the chosen Paul said, *"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."*

In these Scriptures we see a line drawn between the elect children and all those who are left to perish in their sins. The nominal professors say that God would be unjust if he chose some and left others to perish, and did not give all alike a chance to be saved. But God is just and holy in all his way, and if he cast all men into hell he would be just; and we believe we have already given scriptural proof that men would not choose to be saved even if given a chance. Jesus said, *"No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."* And *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out."* And unto some he said, *"And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life,"* Thanks be unto God that salvation is not of chance, but of the Lord. In Christ only can we have any hope of heaven and immortal glory, for *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* (Acts 4:12).

We read in Eph. 2:1: *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."* All who have been quickened, and given a hope in Jesus Christ, have asked, If it be so, why me? Why should God choose to bestow his mercy and grace upon such a wretched, vile, black sinner as I?

How can he be just and holy and yet justify me? These are questions of great concern to all who are blessed to ask them. Yes, blessed. To be blessed in this fashion is an evidence that you have been quickened into life. Those who have not been quickened cannot ask such questions, for they have not experienced this quickening. You may have many doubts and fears as to the truth of this, for Satan works mightily to deceive and destroy you. Yet do you not receive comfort from those who tell you of having the same doubts and fears? Did not Paul declare, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus came into the world to save sinners: of whom I am chief?" Jesus himself said, "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Jesus also said, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders: insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Surely we can rightly judge that it is not possible. Yet, as a son of God, you must suffer manifold temptations, "that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:7). And James tells us, "Blessed is the man who endureth temptations: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised them that love him."

When one has been quickened into life he is given faith, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." And you are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." You who are kept by faith are "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (I Pet. chapter 1). Faith to believe in Christ is always accompanied by hope, for without hope, of what good is faith? "But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8: 24-25).

"Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." To whom is this faith given? It is not to the natural man, for he cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, but it is to those who have received him. We read John 1: 11-12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," Now the question may be asked, Who are they that are born of God? God hath revealed this unto his elect in the Holy Scriptures in both the old and new testaments. In the 8th chapter of Proverbs we may read a very

beautiful description of the Son of God as he was with God before the foundation of the world. Read it yourselves, for it is too long to be copied here, but we will copy a few verses. *"The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."* (V. 22-23). And, *"Then I was by him, as one brought with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing in the habitable part of the his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."* The finite mind of man cannot comprehend our infinite God. We can in no wise conceive a being that had no beginning and will have no end, but by faith given unto us we believe it to be true. Christ said his delights were in the sons of men even before the world was spoken into existence, because he could see all things from the beginning to the end, for he had *"declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."* (Isa. 14:10). In Ps. 139:15 we read, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* The members which were written in God's book are the substance of which Christ's mystical body was formed in the mind and purpose of God before there was any of them. In I Cor, 2:27 we read:

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." These members hath God blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love: and all of this was according to the good pleasure of his will. (See Eph. ch. 1) These children which were given a life in him before the world was, were also given a life in Adam. In Heb. 2:13-14 we read: *"Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage".* *"In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he took on him, not the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."*

The children were under lawful bondage because of sin, and they were held in the prison house of death. This bondage meant that a price must be paid for their redemption, and the price demanded by God's holy justice was the blood and death of Christ; for he was the only one pure enough to pay the price, and the only one who could pay, for they were his own. They were

held in bondage under the curse of the law, but, *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,"* (Gal. 3:13). As our high priest he offered himself without spot to God, and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. If Christ had not risen from death, justification would not be ours, and we would yet be dead in trespasses and sins; but when Christ died, we as his body were baptized into his death, therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. (Rom. chapter 6). By his death and resurrection Christ has freed us from the law of sin and death that we might live unto God, and it is in Christ that we live and move and have our being.

The Scriptures often refer to us as sheep, and Jesus as the Shepherd, and Jesus said unto certain Jews, *"But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never per-*

ish." The eternal life that he gives was already theirs, for it was in him before the foundation of the world, but is given unto them at the appointed time of God when they are quickened out of their state of death. *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."* (John 5:25). This life can never die, for that which is eternal had no beginning nor end. Jesus is the firstborn from the dead: that he might have the preeminence, and he is the only begotten Son of God. We read Ps. 2:7: *"I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."* This was fulfilled when God raised him from the dead, (See Acts 13: 32-33, and in another place he said, *"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."* He is the only begotten, but if we were chosen in him then are we sons by adoption, for God hath *"predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."* And we read in the 8th chapter of Romans, *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,"* and, *"but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."* There is much more in this chapter concerning this, but read it for yourselves.

Jesus Christ is also the resurrection, and the life, and, *"he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and*

believeth in me shall never die." Our mortal body is going to die and return to the dust, but our life that is in Jesus Christ will never die; for it shall return unto the One who gave it. There is going to be a resurrection of the dead, when Christ shall return without sin unto salvation. The good and the evil alike shall come forth from the grave; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:29). We read in the book of Revelations what John saw. *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."* Praise be unto God for he hath given us life and a blessed hope in Jesus Christ the Saviour, for he is the first resurrection. And, *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."*

This is very long, but it is only a small portion of the things that have come to mind, and I trust that he has guided me to write to his praise, honor and glory. May he bless one or more of his saints to be comforted and edified by it.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

THE FEARS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

(Author of "Rock of Ages")

By Augustus Montague Toplady
(1740 - 1778)

"Within were Fears" (2 Cor. 7:5)



ear is, properly speaking, that uneasiness of mind, which arises from the apprehension or some impending evil.

Spiritually taken, fear, as it respects God for its object, is of two kinds, legal and evangelical: i.e. law fear and gospel fear.

Legal fear is an horror, occasioned by the mere expectation of punishment, without any mixture of love to the punisher. Such is the fear of the apostate angels; and such the fear, which agitates reprobate souls, when conscience is let loose, and when the thunderings and lightnings of God's fiery laws set themselves in array against the haters of Christ.

On the contrary, evangelical fear is peculiar to God's regenerated people and consists in a melting humiliation for sin, accompanied at times, especially in secret prayer, with gracious groanings which cannot be uttered; with a degree of self-abhorrence and of self-renunciation; with a longing for the favour, the resemblance and the presence of God in the soul. And all this, not from a mere wish to avoid punishment, but likewise from a concern for having lost the image of God's holiness, for having crucified the Sav-

our of sinners, and for having grieved and been estranged from the adorable Spirit of grace. It is easy to observe, that here is a strong mixture of love toward all the persons of the Trinity; and it is by this love (though perhaps weak as a burning thread, and small as a grain of mustard-seed) that evangelical fear is chiefly distinguished from legal. The letter is the unaffectionate awe of an indignant slave, who is forced to submit against his will, who hates the hand that strikes, who loves nothing but ease and dreads nothing but the lash. While the sinner, who experiences the fear which is evangelical, abhors sin for its own sake as contrary to the nature and command of the blessed God, and abhors himself for sin's sake, and because he is the subject of that detested principle which sets him at so great distance from the mortal likeness of infinite purity and excellence.

Concerning legal fear, we read, that *"there is no fear (i.e. no fear of that kind) in love: for perfect love casteth out fear"*; meaning, that the sense of God's love is no sooner shed abroad with full lustre and efficacy in the soul than legal fear vanishes away, and continues extinct during the shine of God's Spirit on the conscience. Concerning evangelical fear, we read, *"Blessed is the man that feareth always"*; who is tenderly solicitous to avoid any thing and every thing, which may render him spiritually unlike that holy, glorious and gracious Being, whom he ardently wishes to resemble and hold communion with.

But besides this filial, salutary fear, which is one grand mark of regeneration, a believer, while he sojourns upon earth, is liable to fears of a mixed, heterogeneous kind, which seems to be partly legal and partly evangelical. To this head may be referred anxious doubtings, painful misgivings and evil surmisings of remaining unbelief. These are occasioned, directly and immediately, by the imperfections of inherent grace below, and, remotely, by the permissive appointment of God, who has decreed, that perfect happiness must be waited for till we get home to heaven. Where our graces complete, our bliss would be complete too, for perfection of grace is glory itself.

In the meanwhile, it is even needful for the Christian traveller to be exercised with a thorn in the flesh; and to be at times in such a state as may convince him that earth is not his rest, or a mount whereon to pitch tabernacles of continuance; that he must carry his cross before he receives his crown; that he must combat before he conquers; and sow in tears antecedently to his reaping in joy. I believe from Scripture, from observation and from experience, that all God's people do occasionally pass under the cloud, and are baptized unto Christ in the cloud and in the sea of spiritual darkness and distress. Jesus Himself, though He had no sin, was thus baptized. All Thy waves and storms (said David, in the Person of the Messiah, and addressing himself to God the Father) are gone over me. Even from

my youth up, Thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind.

No wonder then that the members should be sprinkled with those waters, which were poured in torrents on the mystic Head. And let the suffering members of Christ's elect body remember, to their great and endless comfort, that even tormenting fears are perfectly consistent with the reality of grace. This was the psalmist's state and the psalmist's experience: Though I am sometimes afraid, yet put I my trust in Thee.

Hence it is evident that faith and fear, though not good friends, are sometimes very near neighbours; yea, that they often lodge in one house, i.e. in one and the same heart. Indeed, they seldom appear together: for when the one walks abroad, the other usually keeps within doors. When faith is alert and active, fear hangs its head and pines. When fear is lively, faith takes to its bed and languishes. So strong is the antipathy of the two principles, that the sickness of one is the health of the other.

They are perpetually quarrelling and skirmishing. And though fear now and then gives faith a home thrust, faith will most certainly (and sometimes she knows it) get the better at last, and survive her adversary. Yet, though faith will infallibly outlive fear, faith is not immortal. She too must die, and that by God's own hand: for she is so strong, even when weakest, that none can deprive her of existence but He that gave it. Her death will be a willing and a delightful one. When the hour comes, she herself will not wish to live

a moment longer. The soul, in which she dwells, being severed from its body and taken up to heaven, faith gladly and triumphantly expires under the meridian blaze of sight. In the meanwhile, there are times when, brightening into full assurance, she longs for her own annihilation, and is even straitened until it be accomplished. At length, having acted as the believer's companion and guide through the wilderness, she sees him safe to the threshold of heaven; and, the very instant he steps over that threshold, and enters within the veil, she takes her leave of him for ever.

As to fear, though she may, in some believers, keep pace with faith and even outrun faith during the greatest part of the earthly race, yet the waters of death (if she die not before) will kill her effectually and finally. The mere prospect of that stream may perhaps give her fresh vivacity and strength; but no sooner does she begin actually to touch that water, than she expires, and the renewed soul which had been, through her means, all its life-time subject to bondage, passes the river with courage, serenity and joy. Holy desire cuts the cable. Faith hoists the flag. Prayer spreads the sail, and God's Spirit breathes the auspicious breeze. All the graces of the heart are in exercise and ply their oars to the music of hovering angels. The dividing waters present a smooth expanse for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over. All is harmony. All is bliss. And thus does the precious freight, the disembodied soul, land in triumph on the golden coast, and hardly staying to take a

view of her dead enemies on the opposite shore, makes directly to the presence of God, and to the throne of Him that was slain.

Unwillingly I return to earth, and withdrawing my mind from a contemplation of the glory that shall be revealed, descend to consider the various fears to which all God's converted people, and myself among the rest, are subject while imprisoned in a body of clay.

Within are fears. For that sorceress, whose name is fear, can transform herself into a multiplicity of shapes, though she is in reality the same identical hag in all.

Sometimes she assumes the mantle of pretended humility, and whispers that "we must not give absolute credit to God's covenant and promises, nor aspire to the comfort and enjoyment of them, for fear of being presumptuous."

Anon, she wears the mask of caution: "Do not rejoice in God's election, and in Christ's righteousness, for fear of being a self-deceiver." Whereas, in reality, all who can embrace the free favour of God, and all who can lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, have a covenant right to both. And why should not they, who have a right to these, rejoice in the God to whose rich and immutable grace they are indebted for it?

At another time, fear accosts us in the garb of affected holiness. "You must bring," says she, a price in your hand to God the Father, or Christ's redemption will profit you nothing." Do not undervalue yourself by sup-

posing that you can do no good work before you are justified. I tell you, that you must work for life and justification. You must do good works in order to be accepted, and fulfill a string of terms and conditions, seeing you are to be saved for your works, because of your works, yea, according to the merits of your works." But thou, O believer in Christ, flee these abominable doctrines. Harken not to them, as you value the glory of God, the freeness of grace, and the riches of Christ, and interests of real holiness and your own happiness. Remember that the conditions of fallen man's salvation are two, and no more: namely, perfect atonement for sin and perfect obedience to the law. Both these conditions Christ has completely fulfilled, in the stead and for the infallible salvation of every soul that comes to His blood for cleansing, and to His righteousness for clothing. "To what end, then, serves faith?" To let thee into the knowledge, possession and enjoyment of this free and finished redemption. "And to what end serve good works?" Not to entitle us to God's favour, or even to pave (much less to pay) our way to His kingdom; but to glorify His name, to adorn His gospel, to evidence our adoption and benefit others on our road to heaven.

Fear very frequently mimics the voice of prudence and advises us as a friend, "not to bring odium and inconveniences upon ourselves by too strict a moral walk, and by a too resolute assertion of the doctrines of Christ." How bitterly did poor Peter weep for

having listened to this serene song! And what rending agonies of heart did he feel for his sham prudence, after the arrow of recovering grace, shot from the eye of Christ, had pierced his inmost soul! O Thou almighty Son of God, save Thy people from the fear of man. Not only pray for us, as Thou didst for Peter, that our faith fail not (and Thy prayer was heard: for his faith itself failed not, though his profession of it did); but pray also in our behalf that our faith may never even seem to fail.

Fear is sometimes apt to beset those who, of all persons in the world, should have nothing to do with it, unless to trample it under their feet. I mean, the ministers of God's Word. O Ye standard bearers of the Most High, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Good Mrs. Ayscough, who was burned for the Protestant faith, when she was offered her pardon at the stake on condition she would renounce the truth, cried out with holy indignation, "*I did not come hither to deny my LORD and Master.*" I desire to remember her words, every time I ascend the pulpit. A mincing, timid, partial declaration of the gospel is a virtual denial of Christ Himself. Rather die with the gospel standard in your hands than resign a thread of it to the enemy: like heroic Valasco, the Spanish general who, when the Havannah was taken by the English, scorned to surrender the national flag, and nobly expired with his colours wrapped round his arm.

But there are seasons of personal dryness when fear, like an armed man,

assaults the faith and liveliness of God's ambassadors. They are perhaps at a loss even for a subject to preach from. All resources seem to be shut up. They flit in their own minds from text to text, and for a long time can fix on none. They cry in secret, "*Lord, how can we spread the table for Thy people except Thou bring the venison to our hands?*" Or, with the disciples of old, "*Whence shall we have bread for the multitude, here in the wilderness? The dear people flock to the Word, as doves to their windows, and we, alas, have little or nothing to feed them with.*"

At such times of doubt and barrenness, cast yourself at large upon God, and distribute the Word as you are enabled. In all probability, the fishes and the loaves will increase in your hands, and God will administer bread enough and to spare. It is kind and wise in the Holy Spirit to make us feel that we are nothing, and that the excellency of the power is of Him and not of us. The lesson of dependence upon His arm of grace alone is profitable, though not always palatable, to our proud, deceitful hearts. To the glory of the divine faithfulness I say it, that for my own part some of my happiest pulpit opportunities have been when I have gone up the stairs with trembling knees and a dejected spirit: nay (twice or thrice in my lifetime) when I have been so far reduced as to be unable to fix on a text till the psalm or hymn was almost over. These are not desirable trials but they redound, however, to the praise of Him who has said, "*Without Me ye can do nothing*"; and whose

almighty love can elicit light out of darkness, even out of darkness that may be felt.

On the whole, let all God's people, both ministers and private Christians, come to the Lord by prayer for deliverance from the fears that do most easily beset them. Bind them up in a bundle, and throw them at the foot of the cross, and implore God's Spirit to shine them away. Be humbled on account of them, but not discouraged. Proclaim eternal hostility against unbelieving fear in all its branches; but know that it is God who must teach your hands to war and your fingers to fight.

No man appears to have been more subject to fears and cares than David, though he had been enabled to vanquish a lion and to slay a giant. What course did he take for relief in his hours of distress and tremor? He prayed to Him that is mighty to save. And his success was answerable. I sought the Lord, and He heard me; yea, He delivered me out of all my fears.

Several of the fears to which God's people are exposed have already been considered. The enumeration of a few more shall conclude the subject.

By Augustus Montague Toplady
From Gospel Standard
October & December 1990

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

To the Household of Faith:

That there is wickedness abounding and increasing in (so to speak) leaps and bounds, here in America, of that I have no doubt; and that we, in our flesh, cannot understand why God the Creator would let such occur, of that I have no doubt; but by the grace of "God," my mind is brought to remembrance of a passage of Scripture - sin abounds, that grace might much more abound and also - vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord. And after all; who or what is man? that he may question God's way or manner in His operation of His government as is His own good will and pleasure. There is oh so very much that is far beyond our understanding and except for those things of His that He is pleased to reveal unto us, we have absolutely no rightful understanding of them at all. Now I feel fully aware that God is in no need of my defense, but would (if God's will), remind us of some of His Holy words of Holy truths - I create evil, I made some vessels unto honor and some unto dishonor; some vessels of mercy, and some of wrath; Jacob have I loved. Esau have I hated, neither of them having yet been born to know good or evil. And to His afore chosen vessels of His mercy - My grace is sufficient for thee; I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden.

The very nature of man, in his flesh, is sinful, wicked and selfish; therefore he is totally without any self ability to determine any Holy truth concerning

the true and Holy attributes of "God," his (man's) Creator; thereby confirming that Scripture that saith - none are good no not one; as He looked down upon mankind upon the earth.

It is far beyond the comprehension of man, to even remotely perceive of what is - absolute perfection, why? by reason of man's own self's imperfection. Not by any means to infer of God's lack, in His creation of man and all things else, oh no not that; for on His part, as He looked upon it all, it all was good and very good, as is all that He doeth. Man is the committer of sins against his Creator God and His enlightened children are fully aware of the fact, that their sins against their "God" is exceedingly sinful; and yet with all the awful sins mankind has committed it has not changed even one iota, that which God saw would and shall be, all the way thru, from the beginning of time unto its ending, and all resultings that derive from it all so being.

But for the grace of God, hell would surely be the stay of all mankind, after this earthly world is no more, and that justly so; for no fleshly man or woman, has ever done even one thing, to merit a place in heaven and immortal glory. And so it is - Salvation is of the Lord. While God's afore chosen children walk upon this sin cursed earth, they are unable to fully comprehend of just how greatly and wonderfully they were graced, with God having sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ down upon this earth, on their behalf; to do everything necessary, to pave that strait and narrow way, for their travel on the

wings of His everlasting love, unto heaven and immortal glory, to ever be with their Holy Father, God, and to evermore sing ceaseless and undivided praise unto His great and Holy name; and so it is with His little children, while they walk in this wilderness and lowground of sin and sorrow, they (and I hope I) must remain, with only a sweet and precious hope in their breast, for a better place after this world is no more. I just so hope, this hope I feel, could be a lively hope in my Lord. I do so much desire that ALL my trust be in the Lord and God, for I can think of none other who could possibly be trustworthy, surely not in myself, of all things.

I am so sure that I have no doubt of this one thing, the merciful God has showered His blessings upon this poor undeserving sinner, all the days of my life; oh I would be so very thankful unto Him, if I could; but without His furnishings - I can do nothing, not even life, breath or have my being, I am just totally and completely helpless.

This past October 1992, my Creator God had kept and sustained this poor sinner for 80 years; I cannot tell you why He chose to sustain my unprofitable life, Lo these many years; except to say, it was His will, and so He has His Own purpose in and for so doing; and therefore, I must (if His will) accept it all as just that; for I feel and believe, that the fulfillment of His will, purpose and pleasure, is all that could really and truly matter, or be of importance in the whole being of all things. This hope I feel in my breast, is oh so

sweet and precious (it seems) to my very soul; and if it (as I hope) be a lively hope, then it must be and surely is - A free gift from God; for I assure you of this one thing, I never no never did even one thing or deed toward the earning of that hope.

The Old School or Primitive Baptist militant churches, in this part of the country, are dwindling down in numbers of members in each; and many of the church meeting houses are closed for good; and surely this seems so very sad to us; and yet whenever He be pleased to remind us of that very fact of Holy truth, that except it be His will, purpose and pleasure, for it so to be, then all the devils on earth and in hell, could not make it so; it is then and then only, we are enabled to in truth feel and say - Thy will be done O God.

Since the days of Adam, mankind has tried in every devise he could muster, to prove his Creator "God" to be a liar, that His word is false, thereby that Christ is non existent; for Christ, the Son of God, is the word of God.

The worldly of mankind to this day, are either saying there is no God, or in effect saying, He is weak, and of less intelligence, than is man. Some say man came from the monkey, some say he came from a fish, some say he evolved from one thing or another; While some say that there is a God, but yet He is in need of man's help; while either of the above does in fact say - there is no Three-in-One, true and living almighty God. To say that any man of himself can, in any way shape or form, aid another, even one

iota toward heaven and immortal glory, is in effect denying every word of Holy truth, and so is saying that Christ the only begotten Son of God, was and is without purpose. When it is said - this is a hard doctrine; if it is meant, it is hard to believe; I would say this - except one be taught it of God, it is entirely impossible to believe. Once one has been shown what he really is by nature, and what he must be by the grace of God, and has been given to in Holy truth love the Old School or Primitive Baptist and what they stand for, then that one will go to his grave still an Old School or Primitive Baptist.

For God's work in one is never in vain, for what God does is done forever. The riches of Jesus Christ, are indeed and in truth unsearchable; and so whenever we are blessed to hear an Old School or Primitive Baptist minister who is enabled to declare the whole council of God, what uncountable blessings were involved, in just this one enjoyment coming to pass; both minister and hearer were blessed with a desire to go, and blessed with a way to get there, and blessed with an Holy ear to hear, and a heart to understand, what the minister was blessed with or given, those precious words of Holy truth to speak. It is just as impossible for us to count all the blessings bestowed upon us, as it is impossible to count all the grains of sand upon the sea-shore. O that I might be enabled to in Holy truth, Praise "God" from whom all blessings flow. In hope, I could be one among you, I say - Dear Brethren: there just is no other name in heaven, or among the inhabitants of

the earth, could possibly be worthy of even one word of praise, honor or glory, both now and forever more. I say this to anyone, who may receive any good feeling, while reading this, praise only "God the Three-in-One" for it all.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

Jesus completely calls and equips His ministers. Tells them what to say. They don't go for money.

St. Luke 9:6 "And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere."



In the previous verse, Jesus called His disciples to Him and gave them power over unclean spirits, and commanded them to go and preach. I would like to call your attention to the teaching of Jesus to these He is sending to preach. He told them to take nothing for their journey, no script, nor purse, and not even two coats. This shows how completely He equips them for this work. Also how vain, and futile all the frivolous things of this world are, so far as even helping to prepare them for this work. You will note by reading the preceding verses of this chapter that Jesus both calls, sends, and qualifies His preachers. Also you will note in Matt. 10:7, He tells them not only what to do but also what to say. Read, also, several verses below this last refer-

ence. He tells them how to act when coming into a house or city, what to do in case of those who reject the gospel, and what they are sent to preach. so it is all very completely arranged. They do not have to go to some earthly preachers' school as is the foremost thought of those who preach an earthly gospel, or as Paul puts it: another gospel.

Dear reader, let me ask you a question here. How many, so called, preachers do you suppose there would be today if there were no consideration of purse, script, shoes, education, nor a desirable livelihood? I feel they would be few indeed, were it not a fact that with the most of them purse, script, shoes, clothes, and a livelihood is the first consideration with them. The ones Jesus sends are different to this. They will go, and they will preach, and do the things that Jesus has sent them to do. The results of their preaching will fulfill the holy purpose of God. Like the rain and the snow that cometh upon the earth to water it, and to cause it to bud, and bring forth 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 whereto I sent it.***" *Isaiah 55:10, 11.* So, it is to be like the snow and rain. Do you know of anything we can do or learn of men that will cause rain? Do you know any way the grass and plants of the earth can keep from being watered when the rain falls? Can the grass, plants, or trees keep from

producing fruit, when everything is sent from God, and prospers to that end? I do not, though it often seems that rain does but very little good, that we are able to see. But, be it little or much, God sends it upon both the just and unjust - Matt. 5:45. Which is a figure of the preached word. When it comes it revives, and makes the grass, which is alive, grow and flourish, and bring forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold, as in the parable of the sower. To the grass which is dead it only serves to further its mortification, or causes it to rot.

2 Cor. 2:15, 16 - *"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"* So, we are not surprised when we see a child of God rejoicing and flourishing under the dewdrippings of the sanctuary of God's gospel nor, when on the other hand, we see one who is mortified, and who cannot see nor hear anything about it. That is not in any way comforting to them. The dropping of the rain makes manifest that which is alive, and also that which is dead.

Now let us quote St. Luke 9:6 again. *"And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere."* What were they preaching? THE GOSPEL, GOOD NEWS. To everybody? No, it is only good news to the poor, and that because of the blessing of God. He sends the preaching to them

not in word only, but also, in power and in much assurance, and the Holy Ghost. That is why it is good news to them. On the other hand, those who have eyes and cannot see, ears and cannot hear, and hearts and cannot understand, it is bad news and a stumblingblock, and foolishness, as is plainly stated in 1 Cor. 1:23. This accounts for the reason that the Gospel does not affect all the same way. So they went everywhere, preaching and healing, to the glory of God.

St. Luke 20:1 - *"And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priest and the scribes came upon him with the elders."* It is very significant to my mind that the reason the chief priests were so concerned about Him, and what He did and what He preached, is that He was preaching the truth, the good news, to the poor and brokenhearted, and to the glory of God, and not to the praise of men, and not the doctrine and commandments of men - Matt. 15:9. So, if He had been teaching anything else all the chief priests and all the high moguls would have been for Him, and would have been ready to receive Him with open arms. The reason they rejected Him and His gospel was as Jesus told them: *"Because I tell you the truth ye believe me not."* - St. John 8:45. As much as to say, If I would tell you something that was not the truth, then you would believe it, because you are equipped to grasp an untruth and would like it. So it is yet, in our day and time. The Lord's gospel truth, as it is

in Christ Jesus, none of the chief priests, or the high and lofty, and worldly preacher do not, and cannot see and believe it. They will do the poor servants of God the same as these did our Saviour. They will oppose and question those grand and glorious things of God, and His gospel. Not because they are not the truth, because they are the truth, but because they are not blessed to see the truth.

Jesus said on one occasion, *"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."* - Matt. 11: 25, 26. Not only could they not see, but this Scripture says these things of the gospel, and of the miraculous power of God was hidden from them, and was revealed unto babes. Do you think, dear reader, that they could find something that God has hidden from them? Regardless of the very extensive explanation that could be made on the above text, God was perfect in hiding the things from the wise, the prudent, the chief priest, and I think that He is the same perfect God now as He was then. The chief preachers of this land are in the same shape they were then. God also shows, in this text, He is perfect in revealing these same things to those referred to as babes, which shows they are not capable of themselves to receive these things, that God might be glorified in this work of revealing, as well as in this hiding it from the wise.

Now we come to *Acts 8:25* - *"And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans."* First I want to show, from this passage, that the two words, namely the Gospel, and Word, are used interchangeably, so wherever Word is used in connection with preaching or otherwise in the inspired writings of the Bible it means, or is equivalent to the Gospel. Christ is the Word, and Christ is the Gospel, or the good news to sinners, who have been made alive by the Spirit of God. To prove that He is the WORD we have only to refer to the inspired record in *Rev. 19:13*. *"And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called the WORD OF GOD."* Also, you should notice, and consider the language recorded by John, or St. John 1:1 - *"In the beginning was the WORD and the WORD was with God, and the WORD was GOD."* So from a Scriptural standpoint, the Word is God, and the WORD is Christ, and the WORD is the Holy Ghost. It is recorded, *"there are three that bear record in heaven, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST, and these three are one."* - *1 John 5:7*. Inasmuch as the three are said by inspiration to be one, then when the WORD is preached, GOD is preached, the HOLY GHOST is preached, CHRIST is preached, the GOSPEL is preached.

Now let us ask a few questions along this line. When the true WORD, or CHRIST, or GOSPEL, is preached,

does it do the person any good unless the Holy Ghost accompanies it? My answer is and the Scriptural answer is, NO. Take the language of inspiration, *"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."* - **1 Cor. 12:3**. You can see that the entirety of the Holy Trinity is involved, and are inseparably connected.

How could it do a poor lost and ruined sinner any good to preach to him, either the Father, God, or the Holy Ghost, as God out of Christ is a consuming fire - Heb. 12: 29. You may read also in this same chapter where even the greatly blessed servant Moses, when brought to the mountain of God's Holiness, did greatly fear, quake, and tremble. Neither he nor any of the children of Israel dared to touch that mount, without that Spiritual Rock that Moses smote, contrary to God's commandment, out of which WATERS gushed forth and they did eat and drink of this same Spiritual Rock, which Rock was, and is, Christ, 1 Cor. 10:4. There can be no gospel, or good news, to poor sinners, to the brokenhearted (and that is who the gospel is to) without Christ. No man can receive Christ without the Holy Ghost as I have already shown by 1 Cor. 12:3. So there is not any way for mortal men to describe the wonderfulness, mysteriousness, gloriousness, and sublimeness of Christ, the Holy Ghost and the gospel, and what it teaches, and implies in the good news from heaven and immortal glory

to a poor condemned sinner before a Just, Merciful, Holy, Righteous, Eternal, Unchangeable, Sovereign, All Powerful, Self Existent God. It is entirely beyond the description of mortal tongue or pen. The more we are given to see, taste and handle of it the more we are made to see our nothingness, our sinfulness and our shortcomings. The more we see the oceans of His love, mercy, pity, and compassion toward His covenant people, whom He chose in Christ Jesus before the world began as recorded in Ephesians 1:4, and many other places in the Holy Word of Inspiration, the more we see the greatness of God.

Dear reader, may God enable us to feel and taste these heavenly and glorious things, and feed there on, and grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, as Peter admonishes in 2 Peter 3:18. That we might be blessed to grasp the grand and glorious teachings, and implications, in behalf of God's children. No wonder Paul said, *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"* - **Romans 11:33**. It is unsearchable in its fullness even to the children of God, but those from whom it is hid there is not even the very slightest degree of any possibility of them being able to see into these gracious things. 1 John 5:7. The only reason why they have ever been understood by God's dear children, is it seemed good, as Jesus said in this last reference, to reveal these things to His people.

Acts 14:7 - "And there they preached the gospel." Preceding this short verse of Scripture, we find that envy, jealousy and hatred, toward the apostles had waxed very great in Iconium, where they were. They fled to the cities of Lystra, and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. If they had not been true preachers of the true gospel, they would have quit preaching. The reason they preached it was because they were sent by the Lord to preach His gospel. If you will notice here in the reading of these circumstances in connection with what Jesus said to them when He was sending them to preach, you will find evidence that He had sent them and they were carrying out the instructions of their Master, and so will all the true servants of God.

In Matt. 10:23, we read; **"but when they persecute you in this city flee ye into another."** That is exactly what they were doing in the above reference. Jesus had warned the apostles when He sent them out, they would be hated, and persecuted of all men for His name's sake - Matt. 10:22. If a man preaches a gospel today, in these times of great liberty, that is not hated, and despised, and persecuted, then you may know that it is not the gospel that the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles preached. Let me drop a thought here. Do you know of a people anywhere that are persecuted, and derided, and despised, and rejected as the poor, scattered and despised Primitive Baptists? The doctrine they preach is one of the main ones most of the religious professors instruct everybody to be against. The only way any of them can escape this persecution, and derision is to tone down on

the preaching of the true doctrine, and mix in at least some works of the creature - in some measure, at least, conform to this world. I know some who like the name Primitive Baptist who have done that, and they are getting along far better in appearance than those that do not do this. They have more members and larger crowds, but Jesus said, **"Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."** - St. Luke 12:32.

Elder R.W. Rhodes

EXPERIENCE

January, 1949

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." - 1 John 1:3



In this beginning of a new year we are mindful to meditate upon the things which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled out of the word of life. We have a desire to review the Lord's dealings with us, giving diligence to make our calling and election sure. We are writing this epistle to the household of faith beseeching you to note the waymarks along the path we have traveled. If it so be that you recognize the markers along the way as being the path you have traveled, then you have fellowship with us; if they be strange to you, then you can class us as a stranger to the household of faith.

It has been so long since we have written you that we feel some kind of explanation would be appropriate. A few months ago we were employed by a concern that required our services from eleven to seventeen hours a day for six to seven days each week. We were content to pursue this with the vain thought that at an opportune time we could again take up our communion with brethren and meditations upon the Scriptures. We held this position three months and upon its termination tried fervently for one month to renew our relationship with brethren and lay hold on the Spirit of God. It pleased God to cut us off and to make us know that our trials were in vain.

When we had given up all hope and were persuaded that we had been a deceiver and that our lot was with the wicked, the Lord graciously came to our rescue, renewing our interest and relationship with Him and our brethren. Prior to this wonderful renewing of the Spirit we tried many times to pray, meditate, write and sing, but it was so cold and formal that it made us shudder. As in the case of John we had to be shown again that Jesus was the Christ. Do you ever go down into the valley so low that you forget your dependence upon the grace of God and strive in vain to deliver yourself? Are your strivings and seeming zeal ever so formal and cold that you are condemned as a hypocrite?

Now I would like to go back in my meditations, the Lord willing, and briefly state to you some of the high-lights along the pathway that I have

traveled. I was born September 28, 1906 in Amity, Arkansas. I was brought up under the tutorship of religious parents of high moral character who taught that a home in heaven was gained by good works done by individuals here. I was taught that I was capable of performing these good works upon my own volition. I grew up as a regular attendant in Sunday School and church, and zealously studied the Bible from my earliest recollections. I began to speak in public before I was ten years old and was given the position as Sunday School teacher in my early teens. When I was fifteen I became a member of the Kelly Division of the Missionary Baptist Church, and on the next night gave a prepared lecture on John 3:16. I was often called upon to speak in the absence of ordained ministers, and while yet in my teens was ordained to the full work of ministry in that denomination. I had a bad case of "I-itus" feeling myself to be worthy of imitation and classing myself as being the most influential speaker in that section of the country. I was very zealous in revival meetings trying to show sinners that they were treading the path that leads to hell and urging them to turn, do right and be saved.

During this period of my career I think God taught me my first lesson. An ordained minister from Hot Springs, Arkansas had been selected to conduct a revival in the community where I was teaching school. Night after night he vehemently warned sinners to flee the wrath to come. He had labored hard to move them to action but not

one had come to the "mourner's bench." The night before the meeting was scheduled to close he came to me and told me that he had done all that he could do and had gotten no results, requesting me to take charge the next night and see what I could do. I agreed to do this as I saw that it was an opportunity for me to make a greater reputation.

I carried my Bible and notebook with me to school the next day and on my return stopped beside a brook and outlined a sermon on the theme, "*Sinners in the hands of an angry God,*" using as a text, "*Thou shalt be cut off and that without remedy.*"

I was anxious for the meeting to begin that night. I was blessed with oratorical eloquence to such an extent that hell was pictured so awful, and God as being so angry at their unconcernedness that when the altar call was made, many people flocked to the altar. I have never forgotten the anxious expression of fear amidst the tears on the face of the first one who extended her hand toward me at that time. Neither shall I forget the awful tones of the voice of Almighty God when He spake to me just before I took her hand in mine. This voice thundered, "Who are you, that you should invite?" My fears were made more terrible when that same voice convinced me that I was a sinner, a hypocrite and a liar. This was the first time that I had ever realized myself as a sinner. The blackest, vile person that I had thought of before seemed then to be my superior.

While I was in this awful frame of mind people tried to tell me how proud I should be to be able to move the people in such a way. Their intended flowers were as thorns that condemned me more. I slipped out of the house as soon as possible and tried to flee from that terrible condition. I tried to get myself right with God. The things that I had glorified in before were as filthy rags. For months and months I moped about as a condemned sinner finding no comfort or consolation in anything. I finally had given up the idea of making myself right with God when it pleased Him to teach me another lesson.

Circumstances over which I had no control placed me in a community far distant from my home where they had heard of me as being a preacher and had arranged for me to preach one Sunday night there. I was given this information only one hour before the service was to begin. My pleadings would not convince them that I had quit appearing before the public as a preacher. Being caught in such circumstances, I was finally persuaded that I could act the hypocrite at least one more time. I thought I could pick up one of my old themes and lecture to them, but I could not think of anything other than that I was a sinner.

Up to this time I had never heard of anyone posing as a preacher who would be so disgraceful as to confess himself to be a sinner. I went before a big audience unprepared, with a blank mind concerning the Scriptures. My foremost thought was that I was a

sinner. I was so upset that I did not go into the form of prayer, but groaned within myself, "God, have mercy on me." I have never known whether I read any scripture or not, but I was given to feast upon the power, wisdom and holiness of God. God revealed Himself to me that night as having all power in heaven and earth; who spoke and it was done; who commands and it stands fast. I saw Him as being so wise that He could consecrate the acts of men and devils to His own praise and glory. He appeared as being so holy that He had a wonderful and righteous purpose in everything. When I came to realize where I was that night, I closed the services, yet feasting upon the characteristics of God. I continued to enjoy these thoughts enroute home that night in my car alone. When about midway home, my thoughts were reversed from thinking upon God to thinking of myself. I saw a great gulf between God's power and my inability; God's wisdom and my foolishness; God's holiness and my sinfulness. I tried again in vain for months to span this gulf and get myself right with God. When I had given up all hope it pleased God to teach me another lesson.

Several months later I was teaching in this little town where I had this last related experience, when a member of the school board especially requested me to attend with him a Wednesday night service in the home of one J.H. Langston. Elder A.D. Wall, who then lived in Arkansas, was scheduled to preach. Up to this time I had never associated with Primitive Baptists and

did not know anything about them. I had heard that there was an ignorant people who lived in remote places who were called "Hardshells" whom I was taught to fear and ignore. I was informed that they justified themselves in the many devilish acts that they performed and charged all their meanness to God. I had heard that Uncle Henry Langston was a "Hardshell" and I quickly informed this man that I did not care to attend the service with him, giving him my reason. He immediately told me that he was surprised at my attitude and further added, "If I have ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here in this town." I told him that I would go with him for curiosity's sake as I had always wondered what I said that night, and that I had yearned for such experience again.

I went and Elder Wall was blessed to take up every question that had bothered my mind and answered it with the Bible to my entire satisfaction. Before he was through speaking that night I was blessed to view a character that I had never seen before. I saw Jesus who was very God and very man span the gulf that was between me and my God. I saw that dual character loom up before me with one foot upon the earth, and the other upon the throne of God in heaven. I saw Him stoop lower than the angels, yes lower than men. I saw Him as He reached down into the miry slime of the slough of sin, and even reach low enough to reach vile me. I saw Him as He picked me up and

washed me whiter than snow with His blood, and presented me without blemish, spot or wrinkle carrying me across the gulf and presenting me in the holiest of holies in the presence of Almighty God as a fit subject for that eternal city.

Such mercy and amazing grace I had never been able to behold before. I was made to cry out praises to His adorable name. I thought I had confessed Jesus as my Savior but found I had known nothing about Him before. I found myself speaking in a strange language that all my former associates knew nothing about and they concluded I was crazy. I began attending Primitive Baptist churches and to my surprise found that the ministers were telling my experience and thoughts far better than I could express them.

In the year 1930 all my earthly possessions were taken from me; my first wife died; my body was afflicted and my parents turned a cold shoulder to me feeling that I had disgraced their good name. In the midst of all this, and my feeling of unworthiness, I became a member of the church that same year and was liberated to speak in the name of Christ. I was ordained in the year 1934 and married a Primitive Baptist girl whom the Lord has blessed to be a sweet companion to me. She understands my infirmities, and overlooks my many faults and patiently shares with me the heartaches and tribulations attached to the career of a minister of the gospel. I have traveled among this people in the different sections of the country and find such

unity in belief that I am persuaded that all are taught by the same Teacher. I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He is our salvation both for time and eternity.

God has taught me in His wonderful dealings with me the doctrine of salvation solely upon the merits of Jesus Christ to such extent that any other doctrine is strange to my ears. I believe Jesus accomplished the law to a jot and a tittle, and His accomplishments were accredited to the account of the people who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. His blood covered all the sins that God's people have ever committed, are committing now or ever shall commit. This is not proclaimed because of any theory advanced by anyone, but because of the things that I have experienced.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

SOUTH OUACHITA UNION



The South Ouachita Union Meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, April 17 & 18, 1993.

The meeting will be held at Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, La. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 1992

Mrs. Charles Lovell, Va.	2.00
Eld. J.T. Austin, PA	7.00
Mrs. Lawrence Holloway, MD	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Helms, VA	2.00
Charles P. Hayes, AL	5.00
Mrs. Rosalie J. Bianco, TX	2.00
John W. Townsend, CA	2.00
Mrs. Mila L. Vantrease, IL	10.00
Eld. W.P. O'Neal, WV	7.00
Eld. Graydon Smith, LA	2.00
Mrs. Meta Mills, AR	7.00
Mrs. Robert Myers, VA	2.00
Charles Alders, TX	12.00
Eld. Gerald Shipman, TX	2.00
Mrs. Isabel A. Dickinson, MI	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Adkins, VA	3.00
Ms. Anne M. Pearson, MI	50.00
Mrs. Pauline Hutchisson, NC	4.00
Mrs. Myrtle Thompson, VA	7.00
M.T. Dalton, VA	7.00

OBITUARIES

MRS. OKLEY MARY BREEDLOVE



we bow in humble submission to the will of a merciful and kind Heavenly Father, who in his mercy has seen fit to call from our midst our dear sister and mother in Israel. Mrs. Okley Mary Breedlove. Although this brings sad-

ness to our hearts for we shall see her no more in this life. But let us rejoice and believe that God has removed her from a world of sin and sorrow and she fell asleep in Jesus, to wait for that call to be changed unto the likeness of Christ's Glorious body and to be ever with him in Glory. Believing that when Christ shall return to call (Awake O Sleeping dust) those that are his shall be changed in a moment and twinkle of an eye and the spirits of them he shall bring with him. Sister Breedlove became a member of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church in Jan. 1975 along with her husband Elder Ernest Breedlove who preceded her in death. She was born Nov. 11, 1903 and died Nov. 28, 1992 at the age of 89. Sister Breedlove was a believer of salvation by the Grace and the truth as it is in Jesus. At her passing she leaves to mourn two daughters, and five sons, 17 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren, two sisters, and a host of friends. And we pray that God in his wisdom and mercy will comfort them in their time of need.

Services conducted at the funeral home by Elder Harold Johnson and she was laid to rest at Valley View Memorial Park, Hurricane, W.Va.

Written by request of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church.

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

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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NEVER ALONE.

By Eben E. Rexford

*"How many times discouraged
We sink beside the way;
About us all in darkness,
We hardly dare to pray;
Then through the mists and shadows,
The sweetest voice e'er known,
Says, Child, am I not with thee,
Never to leave thee alone?"*

*O soul, hast thou forgotten
The tender word and sweet,
Of him who left behind him
The print of bleeding feet?
I never will forsake thee,
O child, so weary grown;
Remember I have promised
Never to leave thee alone.*

*Take courage, way-worn pilgrim,
Though mists and shadows hide
The face of him thou lovest,
He's ever at thy side:
Reach out thy hands unto him,
And lo, the clouds have flown;
He smiles on thee who promised
Never to leave thee alone."*

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 EDITORIAL



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL



As our editorial for this month we are republishing the following.

Written in 1966.

GOD'S LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear,

we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (John 3:1-3).

This is the season of the year when everyone is talking of brotherly love, and peace on earth and good will to all men. The world says that God's love is to all men everywhere; and that the only thing that is required of them, is that they accept it. This is not the love of God that is set forth in the above scripture; and is not the kind of love that says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

I believe that one of the things that all of God's children have in common, is a heartfelt love for such scriptures as the one above, because their experiences teach them these truths. They may have many and varied experiences as they travel in this life: the Lord leads them in the way that pleases him, in making himself known to them as their Saviour and King.

They may have been brought thru heavy trials, sorrows and heartaches; or He may have revealed himself to them in a sudden mysterious revelation of his love, mercy and grace, in a way they themselves can't explain. There is one thing sure, however, it will be in a way and manner that will cause them to realize that it was performed by the sovereign work of God; and not the result of any works performed by the creature. They will begin immediately to search the Scriptures; and they love to hear of the

grace and mercy of an all wise, all powerful, omnipotent God, who works his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

They are made to acknowledge God in all their ways, and will no longer claim to be directing their own steps; or performing the works of God. They realize that they never would have chosen Christ as their Lord and Saviour since they did not even know that he existed until he made himself known to them. They now feel to know what the writers are speaking of in the scriptures, because the scriptures agree with their own experiences.

This love is bestowed upon God's children sovereignly, and independent of any conditions met by them; in the same manner as the rain and snow falls upon all the earth according to God's own pleasure. They realize that something wonderful has been done for them, and they sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound." Or they read, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us;" and rejoice with joy unspeakable, because they now have a hope that they are included with this people. This also causes them to understand the scripture, "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." They feel to be, indeed, a new creature since this change occurred.

Their walk, their talk, and their whole life has been transformed within them. It is not visible to the world at large, but it is readily visible to those who have been along the same path. The individual may think that he is doing a

pretty good job of hiding it, but this is the lamp that is not set under a bushel. It is seen by those who have been given an eye to see. The individual feels to be one alone at this time, for he desires to be accepted among the beloved; and yet he feels too unworthy to be counted among the children of God. These feel to be getting worse, instead of better. Their sincerest desire is to be kept from doing anything that would bring harm to the church, or to this precious truth, which is now their whole life. Oh, if they could only know the love and longing, reaching out to them from those who have seen the evidence manifested in their careful, fearful walk.

Their desire to be with the brethren, and hear them talk of these things, and sing the beautiful songs of praise; and to hear the gospel of God our Saviour proclaimed to their comfort and understanding. They love to hear of the power, predestination, foreordination, and purpose of God in saving his people from their sins, according to the good pleasure of His own will. How wonderful it is to believe a doctrine such as this, and then to have a hope that you see things in your travels that indicate God has so looked upon you!

As they continue to travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, reading the experiences of others, hearing the gospel preached, reading the Scriptures, and, finally, after all attempts to be better (in their mind) as a child of God, they are made to acknowledge that it is not in man that walks, to direct his steps; and to acknowledge

that it is only through the loving mercy of God that any will reach that heavenly home. All through this uneven journey they never lose sight of that hope that was set before them, when they were turned from their former ways. Though they will continue to have trials as long as they live in this world, in them all they will never lose that hope. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither our forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." There is no foundation to which their hope could be anchored, to be more secure. It is as sure as God is God, and that Jesus Christ the Son was sent into the world to redeem that which was lost. This is the hope that purifieth the man in whom it dwells. (1 John 3:3)

This love that is bestowed upon the children of God, causes them to love one another with the same love wherewith they themselves are loved. It causes them to have all things in common, and each to prefer his brother above himself. It causes them to desire to be found at their brethren's feet in humble submission to that bond of love that unites their hearts and minds in prayer to God, for the manifold blessings which they have received from His bountiful hand, and his loving kindness towards them.

Yes, what wondrous love is this, O, my soul! May it ever fill the hearts of God's children while they travel this wilderness of sin. This love is what lifts them up above the things of this life, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and feast

on the tender riches of God's grace. As it is written, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity (love)." The greatest gift is love. This is a beautiful gift, for nothing except good comes from any actions prompted by this love dwelling in the hearts of His children.

God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. The scriptures teach that "God is love," and, "We love him because he first loved us." Therefore, God in the riches of his mercy and grace, has given a little of himself to everyone of his children; and this is sufficient for time and eternity, assuring all the heirs of promise an everlasting abode with him. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God."

*"When love in one delightful stream
Through every bosom flows,
And union sweet and dear esteem
In every action glows.*

*Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above:
And he's an heir of heaven that
finds
His bosom glow with love."*

Herein lies their hope and prayer that this is the love that passeth all natural understanding, and that this is the seal wherewith their hope with Christ in God, is sealed.

May God bless the truth and seal it to his children to their joy and salvation for time and eternity.

Richard H. Campbell,
Memphis, Tenn.

CORRESPONDENCE

January 11, 1993

Dear Elder and Sister Williams,

How time seems to fly and especially as the years go by. But are we not surely thankful that God is in control, and it matters not that these finite minds are slowing down. And as we are blessed to meditate upon His precious word, there are times when we are surely given to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God," if we're not deceived. I surely believe that as Paul wrote in the 4th & 5th Chapters of Romans of the faith of Abraham, he was also talking to all of the household of faith in verses 23 & 24 of chap. 4, as he says, Now it was not written for his sake alone, that is was imputed to him, But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification," and then in the 1st 5 verses of Chap. 5, can we not take comfort! Surely that sweet hope is what sustains us as we sojourn here - can we wish for more? Indeed not, for we do believe, in God's grace and mercy we've given to feel that "He is our strength and our refuge, a very present help in trouble, unworthy as we know ourselves to be.

Dear Ones, I do hope all is well with you and your sweet family. And may God bless you with strength and guid-

ance throughout this new year. We look forward to a visit from you sometime this year.

With much love, in Christ I hope,
Cloma McLaughlin
Eustace, TX.

Brother Williams,

Having been led of God in the last year to give myself to diligent study of his word and particular of his sovereignty, the subject being much on my mind, while I was at work tonight I began and finished the following article. Thoughts came to my mind and I wrote them down on scratch paper to be rewritten later. I am submitting this to you and if you deem it fit and worthy to help any of God's people that are traveling this road below, please print it in the Signs of the Times. If deemed unworthy please discard it and I will be none the less well off.

This I believe the doctrine of God's absolute sovereign, predestinating, foreknowledge, that is not contingent upon man's believing but necessitates that the sheep shall believe. Whereby God elected, predestinated, chose, called and effected their new birth totally by his grace apart from any thing that the dead sinner could do. He effected this by the same power with which he raised Christ from the dead. Eph. 1:19-20.

The sheep's names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world. Not one name

shall be added nor one name deleted. Also the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. The deceived and the deceiver belong unto the Lord.

The doctrine of God's absolute government of all worlds, ages, times, things and men is the only doctrine that gives God absolute glory and shows the absolute depravity and inability of man to affect his salvation whatsoever. This leaves the unbeliever and nominal believer to cry, why doth He yet find fault. It leaves the believer prostrate before his Savior giving all praise, honour, and glory to God the Father and saying though you should cast me into the regions of the damned yet will I praise thee but O Lord be gracious and have mercy on this poor wretched sinner.

Where does all this leave me, it leaves me saying, I believe, Lord, help thou mine unbelief and what if some shall charge me with folly in this statement. I shall reply with the same question asked by the Apostle Paul. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect. What if some shall become irate and angry, to which I reply the wrath of man shall praise the Lord and the remainder of wrath He shall restrain.

This doctrine in no way impugns the righteousness, holiness and love of God. For all men stand justly condemned, their nature and sinful condition demand judgement. For truly Light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light. Yes he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy.

Thank God for shining such light of hope into this heart of mine II Cor. 4:6 May He spare me from the pious religionist that deny the Power of God that purchased them when they say He cannot save because man will not let him.

Not one shall attain heaven that is not purposed to be there. Nor shall one be in hell that does not deserve that just punishment of perdition.

To The Praise of His Glory Jesus, there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. Faith is believing that God is and that he shall do what he has said he will do. Surely the just shall live by faith. Jesus said ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. If the Son shall set you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Your in the hope of that high calling,
Larry W. Gibson

ARTICLES

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. (Eccl. 7:11)



he wise man of the world, is guided by his conscience to live morally right, and to walk uprightly before his fellow man. The spiritually wise, who are called foolish by the world, are guided by the Holy Spirit to walk uprightly before God. This spiritual walk of those guided by spiritual wisdom, is what

we hope to discuss, God being our strength.

The children of Grace once walked as the foolish. Their eyes were blinded and they sought their joys in the decaying things of the world around them. They were very busy choosing whom they would serve among the little gods of the earth. They were wise in their own eyes, following the way that seemeth right to a man, and crooked paths of self-righteousness. The blind led the blind and walked after the counsel of the ungodly. Those who walk after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh and not of the Spirit. This is not a good inheritance, for the simple inherit folly, therefore they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because they are flesh and blood. The things of the kingdom of God are spiritually discerned. Though they count themselves wise, in the light of spiritual wisdom and truth they are foolish and simple minded.

The question is, how can the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, to find the good wisdom with an inheritance? "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil that is understanding."

Dear reader, do you ever try to remember when the fear of the Lord entered your heart? When the scary tales of the devil and his cohorts took flight, as the evil spirits entered the swine and were choked in the sea? Do you yearn and long and try to pray, with me, that you actually experience Godly fear, and that you are one of the

foolish things of this world, that He chose to confound the wise? Did you turn from your former life of folly and begin to fear God of your own free will? Did you lift your feet from the miry clay and place them upon the rock, the sure foundation? I think not. You were told in your heart to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

Though we see through a glass darkly, and walk by faith and not by sight, if we are what we hope to be, the foolish things of this world have passed away, for us, and the inheritance that comes with spiritual wisdom is our meat and drink. Christ's sermon on the mount gives in detail the good inheritance; and those who will receive it.

Let us reread the text, "Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun." By it, there is profit. If we are wise in the fear of the Lord, and receive an inheritance (an unearned legacy) that profits us, the profit is as much a gift as the inheritance. Christ with whom we are heirs and joint heirs we hope, died to satisfy the law in our place, and gave us redemption from the law and salvation to life eternal. He took away our stony heart and gave us a heart of flesh. With this gift, he gave light, truth, and wisdom to understand there is no other way to enter the climes of immortal glory except by himself. He is the only door.

The new heart of flesh is wise to the source of its profit. It knows the roads it followed in folly. It knows the miry clay, the desert land, and howling wilderness from which it was rescued.

This heart that now is lowly, meek, humble, poor, and wise to its own short comings, looks to the Giver of its inheritance, for wisdom, strength and comfort. It dwells in the wisdom that, "Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way."

How do those who are wise in the fear of the Lord profit by this inheritance? They are filled with the needs of the inner man as dictated by the Spirit. He knows and supplies our every need, but not the whims and fancies of the flesh. We are held down and made humble, lest we become puffed up, but then He promised Paul "my grace is sufficient for thee." No matter what the problem, or thorn in the flesh, the child of God is hemmed in, and hedged about, by his promises, which are yea and amen.

They that mourn shall be comforted, the meek shall inherit the earth, the pure in heart shall see God, the merciful shall obtain mercy, and they shall sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "With the lowly there is wisdom," says David, "and the wise shall inherit glory."

Every good and every perfect gift is from above. The wise man knows himself to be lost and without hope, unless a power outside himself intervenes. All of his efforts have been fruitless, and judgment seems his doom. When Christ enters his heart and makes a new man within him, then can the little child of God say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Even though, to himself, he feels sinful, unworthy and

unfruitful, his brethren can see his new way, and his good and perfect gifts, shining through the old man. Faith, hope and charity are gifts that wisdom bids him use wisely and are profits from his inheritance. How wonderful to watch a Christian on the new road, as he is guided by wisdom. He walks it by faith, also a part of the inherited gift. Even though it is strait and narrow and hard, and though he falter and fall along the way, he is never lost nor utterly cast down. Why? Because his way is in the light and he is one of them that sees the sun. His feet are planted and kept in the way of life by the wisdom of that sun shining in his heart; by the love and mercy of that one that neither sleeps nor slumbers. To a way worn sinner, who knows his own wickedness and vanity; who has been taught his own foolishness, and has been made to know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, then to him, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

As all scripture is written for a profit to the man of God, to the children of God instead of the whole world, so is the wording of this text written to a certain people: "To them that see the sun?" Broken into segments it means: wisdom is good to them that see the sun, or an inheritance to them that see the sun, or profit to them that see the sun. So in reality, we have wisdom, which is the fear of God; inheritance, which is the promise of God; and profit, which is the comforting faith and hope in the fulfillment of those

promises, all pertaining to this certain people that see the sun.

I believe "Them that see the sun," are his people, chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, and that the sun in this instance is God. "For the Lord God is a sun and a shield." (Psalm 84:11) He chose them as heirs of promise and set their hope and faith before them, as the path they must walk, on which they will continue until they come into full possession of the profit of their inheritance, within the veil.

These are thoughts, poorly presented, on a deep and wonderful subject. I hope that I have not been allowed to do violence to its meaning, and would love to hear some gifted, inspired brother proclaim its deeper meaning.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

PSALM 119: 129-136.

Thy testimonies are wonderful; therefore doth my soul keep them.

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments.

Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXPERIENCE

Signs of the Times, January, 1938

Elder W.D. Griffin

Dear Brother in Bonds:



E.J. LAMBERT

I received your very comforting letter about a month ago, and was certainly elated over the contents, but wonder why anyone would stoop

so low as to even notice such a wretched character as I am.

Brother Griffin, I feel to hope that we have a few things in common. You age exceeds mine only about four years. In relating your experience you gave the "waymarks" so plainly that I believe we were brought over the same road. We are both members of the same faith and order. We have both been placed under the same yoke of the ministry. Having so many things in common, I am impressed to relate to you by pen some things of my experience along life's way if it be God's will. I have never attempted to write it before, but have been blessed to tell it in public a few times. It seems so different from the experience of most people that I very often doubt it being an experience of grace.

I was reared by very religious parents, my father being an ordained minister of the "Church of Christ"

(Kelly division of Missionary Baptists). Very few Sundays did I miss Sunday School and church services. I was reared in an Arminian atmosphere. I do not remember ever hearing the term "Primitive Baptist," or ever meeting a "Hard Shell," until I was grown. I was taught that there were a very few ignorant, devilish people, who lived in the backwoods, who were called "Hard Shell," whom I was to shun as a wild beast. Of course, I did not want to even meet one. At a very early age I, too, joined the organization of my parents. Being termed as one of the best "kid speakers" in our community, I was solicited to take part in the testimony meetings. When I was sixteen years of age, I obtained a teacher's license, and began to teach both literary and Sunday School. This, of course, helped me "practice up" on public speaking. Being first in the school-room, first in the Sunday School class, and first in the other community socials, gave me a good case of "Big I," and the foremost symptom of self-righteousness. Then I was solicited to preach, and having such a good opinion of myself, and seeing so many of my fellowmen falling so far short of me, I also thought it prudent that I should be clothed with the authority to tell them of their wicked ways, and admonish them to "get right." Therefore, I was ordained, and zealously pursued my task, and went along smoothly for a while.

Now dear brother, the saddest, most heart-rending and serious part of my experience I am about to tell. The thoughts of it even now makes me

shudder. One certain night, during a protracted meeting in our community, I was called by the "big preacher" from the city, to take full charge of the service. He called me the night before, and spoke thus: "Brother Lambert, I have been preaching here every night for almost a week with no results. No mourners have come forward. Tomorrow night I want you to make the altar call after you have preached." Of course I was elated over the opportunity to try my luck. The next day I studied the proposition seriously. I decided on the theme, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," using "Thou shall be cut off, and that without remedy," as a text. That particular night I must have been blessed with rhetorical eloquence, for when I made the altar call, old men, old women, boys and girls began at once to flock to the altar. Dear brother, I suppose you think I should have been somewhat overjoyed. Naturally I would have been, but alas! there seemed to be an audible voice which spoke, "Who are you, that you should invite?" This would not have been so bad if the answer had not come immediately by the same voice, "You are a sinner vile and needy." I wanted to run out the door and hide from every one. As soon as I could, I went away from there. Oh how miserable I was! On that night I saw myself a sinner for the first time, and I went about to right myself. The more I tried to do the deeper in sin I sank. I tried until I could try no more, and gave it up as a hopeless task. Of course I gave up trying to preach, but

I was still in possession of my credentials.

Some little time after that, I drove into a little town quite some distance from home, about sundown. Some of the people there knew I was coming, but did not know I had given up trying to preach, and had given out an appointment for me that night. As I drove in town the church bell began to ring, and I asked the one that I was stopping with what it meant, and he informed me that I was to preach that night. I told him I could not do it, but he informed me that it was too late to back out then. I saw the trap I was in. I was in a strange community, so decided to act the hypocrite and get up one of my old themes and texts and raise a reputation for myself in that community. But alas! I could not think of a thing. I tried to think of some Scripture and to take some of my Sunday School knowledge, but that had all sunk into oblivion. I know I tried to think soberly on the Scriptures, but I could not. I could think of nothing except how sinful I was, and I knew it would not do to tell them that, for instead of giving me a reputation I would lose it. A great audience was in front of me when I went behind the pulpit, and I was as blank of thoughts of the Bible as any one could be. If I ever prayed I did then. I groaned, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner." I became unconscious of action or thought, and when I became conscious I was exhausted and was standing there feasting upon the power, holiness and wisdom of God. I left that place thrilled to the highest, still feasting upon sev-

eral of the attributes of God. I was driving home in my car that night myself, still feasting, when the train of thought was turned. I saw myself the blackest of black sinners, and then glimpsed God as the holiest of holies. I saw myself as most foolish and God as all-wise. I saw myself unable to perform anything, and God as having all power. What a great gulf there was to be spanned between my condition and the requirements of the law.

I went along groping in this predicament for quite some time. Finally the sweetest of my experience came. I was teaching school in the community where I had witnessed that glimpse of God, when one day a neighbor came to the place where my wife and I resided. He suggested that we go to a home that night to preaching. He said Elder A.D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas, would preach. I asked if they were "Hard Shells," and told him if they were I did not care to hear them, because they believed that a man was justified in killing another because God predestinated it. He answered thus: "I just supposed you would be interested, for if I ever heard a Primitive Baptist sermon you preached it here last year." I answered, for curiosity's sake, "I will go." I have never been able to recall anything that I said that night, as I seemed to be in a subconscious state, and have often wondered what I did say. Therefore, I consented to go for the first time, to hear a "Hard Shell" preach, and I was glad I did go.

I accused Elder Wall of being a mind reader that night. He was blessed to

take up each question that came to my mind and to thresh it out to my satisfaction. That night I was blessed to see another attribute of God: that of mercy. I saw the character who was able to span the gulf between my sinfulness and God's holiness; my inability and God's power, my foolishness and God's wisdom, I saw Jesus, who was verily God and man, with one foot on God's side of the gulf and the other on puny man's side. I saw Him, as it were, pick up sinful men, whom God had chosen, and cleanse them with His blood and place them safely on the other side, without spot or blemish, to bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love and power forever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. Jesus died in my low room and stead, tread the winepress alone. In my stead (as I hope) He kept the law to a jot and tittle. The keeping of this law by Jesus was accredited to my account, my sins were laid on His shoulders and He bore the penalty. His life's blood was shed while hanging on the cross of Calvary for the remission of my sins, as I hope.

This experience was so consoling to me that I thought my troubles were over. But my lot seems to be akin to Job's. The last of my experience told was at the dawn of the year 1930. I will tell briefly some of the things that took place with me that year. Three cars were wrecked for me, a son was born to us and in about a month my wife died with pneumonia. I lost my position and health. I had to give up teaching because I was not able to meet the requirements for license. Of course,

with all this, and doctor bills, funeral expenses and other things, I suffered a nervous breakdown. In that year I was received in Cedar Hill Church. In September I was visiting the South Ouachita Association, among strangers in the flesh. I was so nervous and burdened down with something that I could not face any one. One night, at the home of Elder J.R. Evers, a sister (who was a total stranger to me) requested I be called in, and God blessed me with the light and liberty of unloading that burden. In the course of time I was licensed to preach. Then, against my protests of not being qualified, called for my ordination, which was carried out while South Arkansas Association was in session, in September, 1934. I met and married my second wife in that year, and God blessed me with the privilege of baptizing her last year.

Brother Griffin, I have tried to give you some marks of the road I was forced to travel. I am glad that God blessed you to come to Arkansas, and hope that we may meet again. If you receive any comfort from this give God all the praise. Pray for me at the throne of grace.

Hoping in Christ for my soul sufficiency, I am your brother,
E.J. Lambert

1 CORINTHIANS 15:10.

But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

“Man’s goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?”-Proverbs xx. 24.

Does not your heart sometimes quake with fear lest you have nothing but a nominal profession, lest the god of this world be blinding you, and lest your conscience be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin? It is good to have such fears. He who feareth not, who has no solemn apprehensions, no anxious inquiries, who is never exercised with some internal trepidation of soul, it is much to be feared has never known what it is to have “the candle of the Lord searching the inward parts of the belly.” But if God has quickened your soul into spiritual life, and you have ears to hear, I would just put two questions to you: Have you obtained righteousness by a manifestation of Christ’s righteousness; pardon by the application of Christ’s blood; love by a shedding abroad of love; deliverance by a discovery of God’s outstretched hand? My other question is this - If you have not, and let conscience bear its honest testimony - if you have never experienced righteousness, pardon, love, and deliverance, is there a cry in your soul after them? Is there anything like fervent supplication that God would bestow them? Is there anything of a groan in the depth of your spirit that the Lord would reveal them? These are marks of life; and he that has these

marks will have the blessing, because God has quickened him into spiritual life. It may be long delayed, but it will come at last; “it will surely come, it will not tarry.” It may be withheld for wise purposes, and you may have to travel through many a dark season and many an anxious hour, but deliverance is sure; it is reserved for you in Christ, and you are reserved for it, kept by God himself unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

J.C. Philpot

DEUTERONOMY, 11: 18 - 21.

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

**THE FEARS
OF
GOD'S PEOPLE**



Weak believers are sometimes apt to be afraid that they are not in the number of God's elect. They can indeed say with David, "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach unto Thee": but they are not clearly satisfied that this blessedness is theirs.

For my own part, I look upon it as one of the best symptoms of a regenerate state, when a person is ardently desirous to know his election of God. It is an inquiry which the generality of mankind never trouble themselves about, and which none but a true believer is concerned for in earnest. We read of some, in the Acts of the Apostles, who had never heard of such a Person as the Holy Ghost; and, I fear there are too many who have hardly ever heard whether there be such a thing as eternal gratuitous, personal and immutable election. Of those who have, too many set themselves to oppose it, and labour (though blessed be God, they labour in vain) to stop up the very fountain of salvation, and to cut down that tree of life, whose leaves and fruits are for the healing of the nations. A fierce free-will sister in Cornwall was lately heard to say that she dreaded to open the Bible, for fear of meeting with predestination and election. And it has been affirmed of a very noted Arminian clergyman that he should, one day, address his audi-

ence as follows: Brethren, many people talk about an electing God. I, on the contrary, assert, that there is no such Being. If there is an electing God, why does He not strike me dead before you all? But you see, my brethren, I am not struck dead. Therefore, there is no electing God.

Very different are the ideas of Christ's humbled, awakened servants. When a ray of God's everlasting love shines in upon their hearts, they cry out, with the royal and devout predestinarian of ancient Israel, "How dear are Thy counsels, "i.e. Thy purposes and decrees," to me, O, God! O, how great is the sum," i.e. how inestimable is the value "of them! If I should declare them, or speak of them, they are more than I am able to express." The Lord has some, yea, many names, even in our Sardis, who not only profess to believe the Scriptures of truth, but also make good their profession by believing and by practically adorning the truths of the Scriptures. Such enlightened persons will ever be desirous, not barely to admit those truths in a mere doctrinal way alone, but to experience the efficacy of them, and to be feelingly interested in the blessings themselves.

Granting, however, that thousands of converted people have not attained to those heights of exalted consolation as to be able to say, with an unflinching tongue, "Thou hast chosen me, and not cast me away"; yet is there some secret comfort even in waiting upon God for the joy of His salvation, in seeking the light of His countenance, and in crediting the

truths and promises of the gospel at large. To those who are by grace led thus far, I would beg leave to propose the following questions, without presuming to wade more deeply into the sacred profound of those decrees which lie hid in God than His written Word permits. By way, then, of combating your fears, let me ask:

Art thou desirous of choosing God in Christ to be thy Father, thy portion and thy covenant God, here and ever? If you are, it is one happy proof that God has chosen thee to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. You could not choose Him, if He had not first chosen you.

Is love to God, in any measure, kindled in thy Heart? Or, if you are in any doubt as to this, do you wish to love Him? Would you be glad to receive Him, to embrace Him and to hold Him fast, as your chief and only good? Take courage. Wishing is a degree of love. No man ever wished for the thing which he altogether hated. A wisher for Christ is a lover of Christ. And you could not love Him if He had not first loved you. Wishing is a fruit of the Father's drawings.

Is the law of God written on thy mind? That is, can you say with the apostle that "to will is present with you," and that you "delight in the law of God, after the inner man"? Would it make you easy and happy, and would you have the supreme desire of your heart, were you to be holy as God is holy, and pure as Christ is pure? Then you may add, as the apostle does, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ."

The Lord would not thus have written His law (however imperfectly at present) upon thy heart, if the pen of His own free grace had not first written thy name in the book of life.

This is a blessed consideration, and as sure as it is blessed. Yet, stop not here; but pray for the witness of the Holy Spirit, to bear unclouded testimony to thy spirit that thou art a child of God. Say, as the psalmist did, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest to Thy own people! O visit me with Thy salvation, that I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice with the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with

Thine inheritance." Wait the appointed time, and God will set that promise, as a seal, upon thy heart: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name thou art Mine."

Saints are subject to another fear: viz, that they are not truly converted, and that their spot is not the spot of God's children. Nor do I wonder that, when grace is not in lively exercise, they are liable to apprehensions of this kind, when I consider man's absolute unworthiness, even in his best estate, and that astonishing mixture of good and evil which is more or less visible in saints below.

Though I am by no means an advocate for doubting, I am yet of opinion that, though the alchemy of divine, even doubts and fears, though not desirable in themselves, are ultimately subservient to the advantage of God's chosen: just as in the material world,

not a thorn is without its use, and every bramble has its value.

Spiritual distresses and misgivings have a tendency, through grace, to keep us sensible of our sinfulness and helplessness (as Paul's temptations clip the wings of his pride, and restrained him from being exalted above measure). They conduce to make us watchful and circumspect; to make us feel the pulse of our souls, by frequent and severe self-examination; to kindle longing aspirations after God and communion with Him; to lay us low at the footstool of Jehovah's sovereignty; to endear Christ's blood, righteousness and intercession; and put us upon looking up to the Holy Spirit in prayer for the support of His presence, and for the unction of His comforts, which alone are able to enlighten and to chase away the darkness of our minds.

There is likewise another particular which ought to encourage the mourners in Zion: namely, that it is impossible for any, who have not been spiritually quickened from above, to pant for God as a thirsty land; to grieve, evangelically, for a heart-felt sense of sin; and to be pained, after a godly sort. A good man, of the last century, somewhere observes that "he who cries out, I am dead, proves himself by that very cry to be alive." Can a dead person feel? Can a dead man complain? A believer may lament his deadness; but he cannot lament his death, without his lips refuting themselves. There must be spiritual life, or there could be no spiritual sensibility, no spiritual motion, no spiritual

breathings. The pregnant woman that longs must be alive. If the Lord had not drawn you, you would not follow hard after Him. Nor could you say, "The desire of my soul is to Thy name, and to the remembrance of Thee," unless God's Spirit had awakened that desire in your heart. If you were not truly converted, you would not be so anxious about the truth of your conversion. It is not the untamed bird of prey that pours the plaintive strain. No, it is the dove that mourns; it is the nightingale that sings with her breast against a thorn.

However, though a weeping state is a safe one and not without its advantages, yet there is a still more excellent way. The diffident should be encouraged; but diffidence itself should not. Covet earnestly the best gifts. Aspire to the choicest attainments. Pray for unclouded manifestations. Cultivate spiritual fellowship with God, in all the means of grace, both private and public. Endeavor to drink deep into holiness, and to be fruitful in every good word and work. Conversation with experienced Christians operates frequently as a step to gracious improvements. God's people are sometimes blessed to the rubbing off the rust of unbelief, and to the mutual elision (emission) of light and heat from each other. Lay hold on Christ, as well as you can, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, committing yourself, for better for worse, to His grace which worketh all in all. Thus it would be evident that you are indeed planted in the Lord's house, and belong to that

invisible church which He planted in the Lord's house, and belong to that invisible church which He purchased with His own blood. Nay, you will gradually flourish in the courts of God, grow as the lily, and cast forth the root as Lebanon. Your conversion will be made clear to you. You will see your tokens. You will no longer have reason to doubt whether the good work of grace is begun in you; but your path, like a burning light, will shine more and more (in general) to the perfect day.

Believers are sometimes prone to fear that they have no real covenant interest in Christ, or that they are not in a state of pardon and justification, "O", says the doubting Christian, "if I could but know that I have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins, that Christ undertook for me in the eternal covenant of grace, and that He is the Lord my righteousness, I should be happy indeed; but, alas! such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it." Be it so that you cannot attain to it; God is not the less able to give it. He can, as the apostle expressed it, not only grant you, but even fill you with "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."

Therefore, if you want assurance of salvation, ask it at the throne. But ask it with submission, and with a reserve to the will of God. Do not let your desires terminate in anything short of God Himself, nor so hang upon comforts as to overlook the Comforter. Assurance are the brightest bridal jew-

els of a soul that is married to Christ; but the Bridegroom Himself is better than the jewels He gives, nor does He in general allow His bride to shine in them every day. He keeps them under His own key, and lets her wear them when He pleases. At worst, remember that He is your Husband still, and the God who changes not. Venture yourself, therefore, on board His blood and righteousness, as a mariner trusts himself to the vessel in which he embarks. Do this, and you shall be carried safe to the haven where you would be. You may be shaken on your passage, but not forsaken; tossed, but not lost. The mediation of Christ, the faithfulness of your covenant Father and the never-failing love of the Holy Ghost will bear you up, and bear you home. No man ever suffered final shipwreck, who ventured his soul, his salvation, his all, on that bottom. If you cannot wrap yourself up in the mantle of Christ's righteousness with an assured faith, yet, if you touch but the hem of His garment with a weak faith, with a faith of longing and desire, or even (if I may so speak) with the very tip of faith's little finger, you have a capital evidence of interest in Him. "As an infirm hand," say an excellent person, "can tie the marriage-knot, so a weak faith can lay hold on a strong Christ."

The Lord's people are frequently harrassed with a fear that the work of sanctification in their souls is either not begun, or at a dead stand; that they do not increase with the increase of God, nor resemble Him in holiness more and more.

If any fear may be called a good fear, this may, supposing it does not flow from a principle of legality, and be not carried too far. It is a blessed sign when we mourn under a sense of our shortcomings, and burn with intense desire to rise higher into the likeness of God. For this also, seek unto Him. He is also to accomplish in you all the good pleasure of His will, and the work of faith with power. If He give you grace to put yourself as a blank into His hand, His Spirit will delineate His sacred image upon your soul and, in the article of death, heighten the outlines and finish the sketch into His own perfect likeness.

Be diligent to use all the appointed means of sanctification, which providence favors you with. Be careful to shun all evil and the very appearance of it. Walk in the path of duty marked out by the written word. Nor need you fear God's making good His covenant of promise, by making you such as He would have you to be. Be not discouraged, but rather excited to hope, to pray and to believe, by the sense of your remaining corruptions. "The field," as one says, "that has millions of weeds in it, may be a cornfield. One rose upon a bush, though but a little one, and though not yet blown, proves that which bears it to be a true rose tree." Despise not, then, the day of small things, but pray God to enlarge them. Bless Him even for the grain of mustard-seed; but, at the same time, beg His Spirit to water and increase it.

The fear of temptation keeps many of God's people in bondage. And happy are we, if we so fly from it as to

shut our eyes and ears and hearts against it. We know not what we are, nor what we are capable of, if left to ourselves. Yet do not let the fear of what may be cast a damp upon your present comforts, nor abate your confidence in the Lord. Prudent fear is wisdom; but much fear is unbelief. A believer cannot trust in himself too little and, bless be God, he cannot trust too much in the all efficiency of divine grace. If therefore, you are cast down, by a sense of your liability to temptations, and of your proneness to fall by them, bring your temptations and your weakness together to God the Holy Spirit, and beseech Him to get Himself the victory in you, over you and for you. Let watchfulness and prayer thus set a guard upon the outworks, and Jesus will throw in the succors of grace, and preserve the citadel from being taken by the enemy. He is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear. He will either hide you in His pavilion and keep from the fiery trial, or, if He bring you into the field, He will save you from being overpowered. The archers may sorely grieve you and shoot at you, yet shall your bow abide in strength, and the arms of your hands be made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. But, should the enemy of souls be even permitted to gain some advantage over you for a season, yet, cast not away your confidence, but look to the hills of covenant love, from whence cometh your help. Christ will deliver you, as at the first, and restore you, as at the beginning. What was prophesied concern-

ing Gad (Gen. 49. 19) shall be spiritually fulfilled in you: a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last.

A sixth fear occasions no small uneasiness to weak believers: namely, a fear lest they should not be faithful unto death, nor hold on in grace to the end. But if God has given thee good evidences of thy being truly regenerated, and of thy being His child through faith in Christ Jesus, thou mayest, upon the strength of thy adoption, be as certain of thy final perseverance as if thy warfare was actually accomplished, and the crown of glory set upon thy head.

The invisible, or elect, church consists of only one and the same innumerable family; part of which is in heaven and part on earth (Eph. 3:15) Every individual member of this family, whether militant below or triumphant above, is equally safe in the hands of Christ. Saints in glory are, indeed, happier than saints on earth; but saints on earth are no less eventually secure of salvation than saints in glory. The spirits of just men made perfect might as soon fall from their state of heavenly blessedness as a sanctified person here fall from a state of grace. The names of both are in the book of life. They are alike interested in God's everlasting and unalterable covenant. What the Father's love has given to the glorified will be also given to them that are yet behind; for to this end Christ died and rose again, that He might gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad (John 11:52), and, by the single

offering of Himself, He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Saints are not their own keepers, and it is well for them that they are not; they would be sorrily kept, if they were. Adam was his own keeper; and what did he get by it? The fallen angels were their own keepers. Peter kept himself; but how long? God's chosen are not thus finally left in the hand of their own counsel, nor trusted to their own management. All His saints are in Thy hand, i.e. in the hand of Christ, Deut. 33:3; from whence none can pluck them, John 10. Which general promise of the perseverance of God's elect, taken as a collective body, ascertains and ensures the perseverance of each believer in particular. For the whole necessarily includes every part; and, where any individual part is absent, it destroys the entireness of the whole; just as the human body is not complete, if only one limb, or even a single finger, or so much as a piece of a finger, be wanting. For what is affirmed concerning the aggregate is equally affirmed concerning the constituent members respectively, of which that aggregate consists; otherwise the affirmation would be essentially untrue, which to charge Christ with were blasphemy.

Let the follower of Christ, therefore, dismiss all slavish fear as to his continuance in grace, and in well-doing leave the care of that to God. They who belong to Him are kept, and will be kept, by His power through faith unto salvation itself, and may sing with him that was caught up into the third heavens, Who shall separate us

from the love of Christ? Neither life nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to do it. There is no being disinherited of the blessings entailed by God's covenant, and bequeathed in Christ's last will and testament, signed with His own blood, and sealed by His own Spirit. Saving grace is the good part which shall not be taken away. Whatever you lose, it is impossible for you to lose that. It is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God, and hid with Christ in Him. And when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also, who have believed, appear with Him in glory.

I shall mention one other fear common to many of God's redeemed, viz. the fear of death. Some true believers are apt to cry out (as the human nature of Christ Himself did). Father, save Me from this hour.

But why are you so dismayed at the prospect of getting home? Are you afraid of dying, or of what you may suffer in your last conflict? Turn again to your rest; for the Lord will deal bountifully with you, and be better to you than your fears.

"Who can take

Death's portrait true?

*Fear shakes the pencil: Fancy
love excess:*

*Dark ignorance is lavish of her
shades;*

*And these the formidable pic-
ture draw.*

*Man forms a death that nature
never made,*

*Then on the point of his own
fancy falls,*

*And feels a thousand deaths in
fearing one."*

None return from the grave to tell us what it is to die. Some happy believers have indeed sung in their last moments, "O death, where is thy once-imagined sting? Can this be termed dying?" And, very probably, the passage is both sweeter and smoother than living imagination is apt to suppose.

I lost an excellent parishioner in the year 1765. Though he had not the least doubt of his salvation but, as far as spiritual and eternal things were concerned, lay for many weeks triumphing in the full assurance of faith, yet he still dreaded the separation of soul and body, from an apprehension of what nature must endure in the parting stroke. Some little time before the knot was actually untied, God was pleased to indulge him with a foretaste of death. He was, for near an hour, quite gone in appearance; and his family began to conclude that the final struggle was over. By degrees, however, he came to himself, and on my asking him how he did, he answered, that God had give him a specimen of death, and found it not so terrible as he apprehended. From that period, all his dread of dying vanished away, and he continued without any shadow of fear, filled with the peace which passeth all understanding, until his disimprisoned spirit flew to the bosom of God.

O then, whosoever thou art that art troubled in like manner, cast thy burden on the Lord. You have found Him faithful in other things, and you may safely trust Him for this. He has delivered you in six troubles, and in the seventh He will be nigh unto you. The water-floods shall not overflow thee, neither shall the deep swallow thee up. The rock of ages lies at the bottom of the brook, and God will give you firm footing all the way through.

Or, are you afraid of the consequences of death, and what will come after? Throw yourself upon God in Christ, and you are safe. "Christ's righteousness is law-proof, death-proof and judgment-proof."

Are you fearful what may become of your family when God calls you away? Make your family over to Him. Nominate Jehovah for their guardian and trustee. Cast anchor upon that comfortable promise: Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in Me.

Do you dread the buffetings of Satan? God will not let him take advantage of your weakness. You shall overcome, yea, you shall be more than conquerors, through the blood of the Lamb and the word of His testimony.

Are you apprehensive lest your faith be small, and your sanctification imperfect? Christ will be praying for you that your faith fail not; and the Holy Ghost will take care not to leave His work of grace upon thy soul unfinished.

You tremble, perhaps, at the thought of laying aside your weak, sinful, mortal body. But you will receive it again:

not such as it now is, frail, defiled and perishable, but bright with the glory, and perfect in the image of God. The body is that to the soul which a garment is to the body. When you betake yourself to repose at night, you lay aside your clothes until morning, and resume them when you rise. What is the grave but the believer's wardrobe, of which God is the doorkeeper? In the resurrection morning, the door will be thrown open, and the glorified soul shall descend from heaven to put on a glorified robe, which was indeed folded up and laid away in dishonour, but shall be taken out from the repository, enriched and beautified with all the ornaments of nature and of grace.

Should I be asked, What is the grand remedy against undue fear of every possible kind? I answer in one word: Communion with God. "He," says good Dr. Owen, "who would be little in temptation must be much in prayer." Ply the mercy seat. Eye the blood of Christ. Cry mightily to the Spirit of God. To which I add: Wait at the footstool in holy stillness of soul. Sink into nothing before the uncreated Majesty. If He shine within, you will fear nothing from without. What made the martyrs fearless? Their souls were filled with Christ. Jesus lifted up the beams of His love upon their minds, and they smiled at all the fires which man could kindle.

To enjoy communion with God, you must be found in the way of duty. (The author does not mean this legally.) If you play the truant, no wonder you are afraid of being whipped. "Those trees," says the excellent Mr. Gurnall,

“bear the sweetest fruit, which stand most in the sun.” Take heed to the thing which is right, for that shall bring peace at the last. The meaning of which text is that by virtue of wise connection which infinite wisdom hath established between antecedents, holy walking is the high road to holy comforts.

Your walk, perhaps, is strict and conscientious; and yet it may be you complain of doubts and darkness notwithstanding. Here, examine yourself:

1. Whether you do not work from legal principles, and to legal ends? If so, no wonder that, like a slave with the lash at his shoulders, you toil all day and take nothing. Christ alone is the righteousness of them that believe. God will never set the seal of His gracious presence to the broken Sinai covenant. Whoever enjoys, or thinks he enjoys, comfort and peace from the works of his own hands, and from the duties he performs, is blind and deluded into a fools paradise by the god of this world. The Lord meets His people in the way of duty, but not for it, as a father, who meets his son on a journey, at some appointed house, meets him in that house, but not for the sake of the house. Live upon what Christ is made to you of God, and you will find comfort. But if you seek happiness and establishment from yourself, or from any thing wrought by yourself, you will receive no solid nourishment from the breast of that sham consolation.

Or, 2. Christ may be all your hope, and yet your fears may continue to run

high. Look narrowly into your heart. See that there be no Achan in the camp, no beloved lust in the tent. I dare not say that the sense of God’s love is always connected with the actings of faith, and with the concomitant exercise of holiness. But I suppose that faith and sanctification are the usual correlatives of joy in the Holy Ghost. Art thou melted by grace into a final fear of God? Go on to fear, to love, and to obey, whether the Lord guide thy path with sunshine, or darken it with gloom. He is the sovereign dispenser of His own comforts, and may withhold or confer them as seemeth good in His sight. But it is thy indispensable duty to follow the Lamb, and to do His will, whether He cheers you with His consolations or not. Certain it is, from the infallible Word of His grace, that to you who look unto Jesus, all the sweet privileges of the gospel belong; and joy is one of them. Though it tarry, wait for it, for it will not deceive thy expectation; it will surely arrive at the appointed season, and will not linger a moment beyond. O ye of fearful hearts, be strong: your God will come with a recompence, He will come and save you. Your prayers may not be answered immediately, but they are all strung on the file of His remembrance, and shall be answered after many days. Your fears are in His phial. Your groans are noted in His book. Delight thou in the Lord, and He will give thee thy heart’s desire; hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently for Him. Commit thy way to the Lord; put thy trust in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

I knew a most valuable Christian, who died in the year 1760, and in her last illness was greatly exercised with darkness of soul; which, however, did not finally continue. While God was leading her through the wilderness of mental distress, she still anchored on the promises, though she had lost sight of the Promiser; and, as a proof of her absolute dependence on the faithfulness of a withdrawing God, she directed, that (instead of the usual inscription of name and age) the following text should be engraven (and engraven it was) on her coffin: Deal with me, O God, according to Thy name, for sweet is Thy mercy. Thus, as the great Dr. Manton long ago expressed it, "Faith accepts God's bond, and patience waits for payment."

Augustus Toplady
From Gospel Standard
October & December 1990

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1993

- Elder Robert Miles, FL \$5.00
- Mrs. Phyllis Snyder, NC 2.00
- Mrs. Hettie J. Wade, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Herman Alders, TX 5.00

- Mrs. Dobald W. Scott, VA 2.00
- J. Cline Chandler, NC 2.00
- Walter Hill, NC 5.00
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- Mrs. Hetty S. Sutherland, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Gayle Phillips, AL 10.00
- Levie D. Goad, VA 5.00
- Marvin Curnutt, TX 2.00

OBITUARIES



It is with a sad heart I try to write the obituary of our dear friend and neighbor, a dear loved one of Strawberry Church, Lillye Claire Hundley.

She never had the pleasure of her name on the Church Record, but we feel she was one of God's Children.

She was always there to fill her seat at Strawberry Church, as long as she was well, and supported the Church in many ways.

Lillye was born February 29, 1904, to James Henry Hundley and Sister Minta Oakes Hundley in the Swansonville Community of Pittsylvania County, VA, where she spent her entire life.

She graduated from James Madison University and taught school for a while. Her Mother's health was failing, so she stayed at home and helped take care of her as long as she lived. Then she helped her Brother Guy work on the farm as long as she was able.

She was stricken with a stroke in May, 1990, so she spent two and a half years in Roman Eagle Memorial Home, never able to speak again.

The Lord called her home to Glory December 17, 1992. Lillye left to mourn her loss a brother, Brother Guy Hundley and a sister, Sister Mary H. Stratton.

Her funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Home Chapel, Danville, VA by Elder Thomas Solomon and was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, Danville, VA, beneath a mound of beautiful flowers to await the coming of her Blessed Saviour to gather his jewels home.

Lillye believed in Salvation by Grace. She was a lovable person, to know her was to love her. We miss her so very much, but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

May we bow in humble submission to his Holy Will, Who never makes a mistake, The Lord giveth and the Lord takes away, Blessed be His name.

May The Good Lord Bless, comfort and give reconciling Grace to her dear family.

Written by a Sister in Hope who loved her,
Sister Gertie C. Holley

Eunice Lewis Martin



In memory of Sister Eunice Lewis Martin who departed this life on October 5, 1992. She was born on March 29, 1908, having lived for 84 years.

The writer grew up with Sister Eunice and from a child until she was grown she was a kind and loving person. Always afraid she would hurt someone's feelings.

She did not get to visit her Church much, but the last time I saw her she said, "Liberty Church was a sacred place to her. That she felt on each First Saturday and Sunday that she could hear them singing and praising the Lord." We feel that our loss is her gain.

She leaves the following children: Mrs. Christine Hensley, Mrs. Alice Boyd, Mrs. Thelma Griffith, Mrs. Shirley Griffith, and Mrs. Helen Griffith all of Mt. Airy, N.C., Henry Martin of Ararat, Va. and Leon Martin of Stuart, Va. Also three brothers: Eural Lewis Meadows of Dan, Va., Virgil Lewis Roanoke, Va., and Robert V. Lewis of Martinsville, Va.

Her funeral was held at Moody Funeral Home Chapel on Wednesday October 7, 1992. Internment was at the Martin Family Cemetery near Stuart, Va.

Written by a Sister In Hope, Clara Harbour Freeman, by request of Liberty Church while in conference on November 7, 1992.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk

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THE PATH OF GOD'S CHILDREN

By E. J. Lambert

**There is a God who rules
All things by His own hand;
He knows how to use His tools
In all nations of every land.**

**Everything redounds to His
praise;
Or else 'twould never have been,
His people - He knows how to
raise
From the terrible pitfalls of sin.**

**He teaches them, it is by grace
That they're redeemed from the
fall.**

**If justice were meted to the
Adamic race,
Hell would be the place for all.**

**They are taught by the Spirit of
God
That they are at best but vain;
In the paths of sin they trod,
Thus have that crimson stain.**

**Nothing can cleanse so white
As Jesus' precious blood,
Nothing else can make them
right
Nor cause their hope to bud.
Ephraim is His firstborn.**

*He brings him through the fire.
As with the unicorn's horn,
He pushes him into the mire.*

*Drives him to the end of the earth;
Then we hear Ephraim weep,
He is undergoing the new birth
That manifests him as a sheep.*

*Yes, we hear Ephraim bemoan
Saying, "Thou hast chastised me,
I am but vanity when alone;
I solely depend upon Thee.*

*"Turn me and I shall be turned -
Lead me and I shall be led;
Thy Holy law I have spurned;
I am as powerless as one dead.*

*"In ashes I am made to repent,
And even my thoughts I hate.
If justice upon me was sent,
I would be in a terrible state."*

*Sometimes, I hope, 'twas the law
Written in my inward parts
Which revealed to me the flaw
Of possessing this sinful heart.*

*Thus, a hope to me is revealed
That it takes that godly light,
To show me I need to be healed
Before I could be made right.*

*Then according to my convictions
We must be ruled with a rod;
Chosen in the furnace of afflic-
tion,
To be the tried children of God.*

-Composed November 9, 1934

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EDITORIAL

THE VALLEY OF FIRE



ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

*"Yea, though I
walk through the
valley of the
shadow of death, I
will fear no evil"
Psa. 23:4.*



begin this article with a sense of fear and wonder. The expressions I use in many instances are assumptions and yet I feel there is reasoning for my thoughts. May God direct my thoughts and bless me to state what I feel I saw

and felt. The interpretations herein mentioned were made by men who deciphered the language of a people of ten thousand years ago according to modern aging process.

In May of 1992 thirty-eight of us began another trip through the western states that we did not visit on the trip in 1990. We beheld many beauties of God's creations and wonders of nature. We also experienced love and fellowship that cannot be fully expressed. I write this article and leave it for a memorial to all the lovely people who traveled with us.

In the state of Nevada approximately half way between Las Vegas and the southwest border of Arizona there is an amazing spectacle. There is a canyon which has on the left side as you enter; a perpendicular wall possibly one hundred feet tall. This canyon is in an area that is red as red can be as far as the color of the earth is concerned. There are many caves all around in the area which once was home to the people previously mentioned. This wall contains many sets of drawings made by the people that lived here. This wall is covered by a black substance called desert varnish and these people with some tool or stone carved into this wall many emblems that I feel are symbols of their belief of an unseen power and hope of a better place to dwell. These drawings held me spellbound and I stood in awe at what I feel was seen and felt.

There are several sets of drawings along the wall (and some farther down I did not see) but the same drawings are in each set and put in the same

order. There are some places where the drawings have faded but still you can determine the order. This order places the drawings in all instances in relation to each other. I feel they saw this order was necessary to adhere to as we also have order in our beliefs. We do know that scripture tells us there is order in all things.

The drawing at the very top is of what appears to be a scepter. I thought of the scripture mentioned in the book of Esther. The golden scepter there mentioned is a rod of power and authority. The law proclaimed that no one could approach the king unless he reached out to that one the scepter (Grace). Read if you will Esther Chap. 4 and verse eleven to see how this scepter was extended to Esther although she had not been told to enter the throne room. It is the scepter of Grace that reaches out to man and bids him come (an experience of Grace).

The next drawings in order are three bodies that are round circles that symbolize the earth, sun and moon. It has been accepted that these people worshipped the spirit of light and the sun symbol was largest and in the center. I thought what is so strange about worshipping the spirit of light. If we truly worship it is done in spirit for God is spirit and we cannot worship Him otherwise. We then must say we worship the spirit of light also. Christ is our light of salvation and except we abide in Him we dwell in darkness. Read John Chap. 8: verse 12 and Chap. 9: verse 5.

There are two circles under the ones just mentioned and one is three circles within each other and one seems to be a wheel. The one of three circles meant all things contained and controlled as a body by one power. This fits our belief for we know God controls all things. The one like a wheel reminded me of the vision of Ezekiel that said as it were a wheel within a wheel. This drawing has a center (hub) with spokes seemingly reaching from a circle around the hub out to the rim in all directions. Read Ezekiel Chap. 1 and especially verse 16. God who is the center of our belief reaches out to us with the attributes of Christ (spokes) for we are as a rim (on the outside). We exist in the outer reaches of nature and carnality and if He never reaches out to us we remain in that condition.

Next on the left of these drawings is a ladder reaching up to a level of the first bodies drawn. These people saw it as a means of reaching a better life and higher plane of existence. There is no way we can be lifted above our sin and have hope of a perfect life except we view the ladder of grace. We are lifted in the spirit again and again as Jacob saw in his vision. There is the ascending when He is manifest and a descending when we are left to ourselves. On the right side at the level of the ladder is a rectangle approximately two feet long and six inches wide. This symbolized a land of plenty and exists in the same realm as the ladder (that is in close proximity to the heavenly bodies).

We see next what to me is an expression of the understanding of creation. The left side of the group has a tree as does the right side but the tree on the right is much smaller. Read Chap. 2 of Genesis concerning creation and the garden of Eden. I then pondered how these people knew of the larger tree (Christ) and the smaller one (tree of the knowledge of good and evil). Now below the land of the trees is a serpent (how amazing) and I could hardly believe what I saw. Who showed these people this if not God himself for we are looking at drawings thought to be 10,000 yrs. old. There was no bible that we know of and no evangelists out to save souls there the answer is always revealed religion.

There are on the left about the level of the trees ten perfectly straight lines approximately two feet long. They were accepted as lines of perfect life and we believe the ten commandments are perfect lines of life but find we have broken all of them. The right hand side has five wider and shorter lines evenly spaced apart and these meant wisdom lines to these people. The five books of law are none else than Godly wisdom expressed in prophecy.

There is next a curving wandering line coming down that seems a stream ending in a body of water. Gen. Chap. 2 verse 10 tells of a river that divides into or is parted into four heads that to me denotes the four Gospels. There is also a stream seen by John in Revelation that flows out from the throne of God. These people saw it as for cleans-

ing and we ponder then was it to be a place of baptism and given as a symbol of being cleansed.

There is in the center next a strange drawing that resembles the Biblical candlesticks although it is inverted or upside down. It has seven points that caused me to think of the seven churches and seven seals and seven angels. There was no mention of this drawing in any interpretation but it had its place among their other beliefs.

Now to the left of this drawing is a group of sheep and a group of goats (the goats are distinguished by their horns). The sheep are in the top group and the goats at the bottom. They are completely separated and this arrangement fits our feeling exactly. The right hand side has the drawing of a foot and in all drawings it is the right every time. This meant to them travel and I thought of David, Psa. 40: verse 2 for only after He lifts us from the horrible pit and clay can we feel we are traveling the road to eternal life. I also thought of Israel traveling through the wilderness. I also thought of how we have all been to Egypt (slaves of sin) and have been led out and that Moses told Pharaoh that not a hoof should be left there. God has removed our tracks of bondage and we are set free indeed.

The next drawing on the left appears to be a white dove with its head pointed down. There appears to be something in its beak. I never saw an interpretation of this but dear ones as you know of the dove of Noah's Ark, it must come down as it came in unto

him for the wisdom was in the top. Read Gen. Chap. 6: verse 11 and 16.

We now see in the center a cross and the cross is in every set of drawings although some of the others are not. This was interpreted to be where two paths came together. The cross is the center of our hope of salvation and I thought of Psa. 85 verse 10 - "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." My thoughts also took me to the cross of death for our Savior for there the pathway of Holiness met the pathway of sin and carnality.

There is on the right of the cross a drawing of twelve bodies holding hands. These could be the twelve sons of Jacob (tribes of Israel) or since they are near the cross I rather think of the disciples. The two realms of Godliness both embody Christ. The old dispensation expressing the love of God, the perfection of His laws and the coming of Christ. The new dispensation is a fulfilling of the old and our salvation being manifest in God's own son.

There are on the left side three bodies holding hands and I see these as God the father, God the son, and God the Holy and eternal spirit. I believe that all three hovered there near the cross when our Savior died.

Now we come to the foundation of all the drawings in another drawing. This one is of an open hand and it appears in every group at the same location, that is at the bottom. The regular interpretation was an open hand of giving and power. I see it as yes, giving support to our hope and

faith and also being an abundance of all our needs and embodying the graciousness of God. If our faith, hope, order and discipline is not supported by His hand it most surely will fail.

There now is a question - who were these people? I have no way of knowing but wonder if they are of the lost tribe of Israel. The tribe of Levi (Jacob's son) who were called Levites did not have a portion of land set apart for them, Joshua Chap. 14: verses 3 and 4 (read entire chapter). This separation was because of disobedience and the tribe was divided so they could never become a people of power. They were divided as best I remember into forty-eight different places.

There is speculation with geologists (and its accepted) that the earth at one time was one continent. Were these people sent to a portion of land that eventually separated from other land and they found themselves on a separate continent?

There are two strange objects in the western states beside the drawings we saw. I feel they are a part of the puzzle and I know God had the answer and it probably will never be known by man.

In a cave in that area (I forget where) there is a great amount of writing in the Hebrew language. It has been dated at thousands of years before Christ. This was translated but it did not reveal who the people were so there is yet no answer. There is also a strange plant that grows in southeastern California and along the border of Nevada and Arizona. It is called the Joshua tree because it grows no

where else in the world except the area where Joshua crossed and settled at the river Jordan. Why these trees just in two locations on earth and how?

This article has become longer than I intended and so I will close with these thoughts. I stood alone for quite a period of time looking at the drawings on the wall. The others of the group had gone further down the canyon to see other things. I was alone yet suddenly felt surrounded by a multitude of beings. I believe I could feel their closeness, love and fellowship. I felt that I should remove my shoes for this I am sure was Holy ground. My dear ones in hope I sensed that I walked, stood, wept and rejoiced in the very same spot that our brothers and sisters in Christ did the same things 10,000 years ago.

I trust I am not deceived in what I felt and what I saw. If it be that I am then put all blame on the weakness of my mind and my flesh for God is blameless in all things. I am sure that whoever these people were and wherever they came from they had in their bosom an abiding faith and hope that reaches beyond this world. They had trust in a power that though unseen yet was felt in the heart, may it be there with us.

If these thoughts seem worthy give God all praise and honor for the revelation and give thanks that He is the same God today as He was 10,000 years now past.

In bonds of love for Christ sake,
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

CORRESPONDENCE

EXPERIENCE

1992

Dear Brethren and Sisters,



I feel so unworthy of the love and sweet fellowship the dear brethren have shown me, before and since I was received in the Church.

I'm not very good with words, but will try, if it be the Lord's will, to write some of the feelings I have in my heart.

I have had a love for the church for many years. Although I feel unworthy and unfit to sit on the same bench with the lovely Children of God, I could see the love that flowed from heart to heart. I felt to be so alone and left out, just an unworthy sinner hoping for a little crumb of His goodness and mercy.

I don't have a great experience to tell as some are blessed to write. But I feel I have many blessings that are a gift of God. I think my sweetest experience was the two beautiful baptisms in August and September 1991.

It was a beautiful morning as we gathered at the river on the second Sunday in August. There were three to be baptized, and seven more came forward at the water. It was so beautiful, and I was overwhelmed with desire to be with them, but I couldn't. Three had asked to be baptized at our September meeting. I had thoughts

and hopes that maybe the Lord would bless me to ask for a home then. I went to church on Saturday thinking I could ask for a home and be baptized with the others, but I couldn't. We sang the song "I am a stranger here below." I thought, that song sure does fit me.

Sister Mary said she loved me, and the others did too. I thought how could they love someone like me.

When I left the church I felt so burdened I cried all the way home, and off and on all evening. I was made to feel by the Grace of God I hope, that the brethren had shown me they loved me. It wasn't them I doubted - it was me.

The next morning, I felt so burdened. My thoughts were, I couldn't go yesterday and I don't guess I can today. I took some other sisters with me. When we got there a large crowd had already gathered at the river. Sister Annie said let's go up this way (to the far end); she thought we could see better. I walked with her a little way, then something turned me around; I found myself standing as close as I could to the ones to be baptized. Then they began to sing "Amazing Grace" I had never heard it sung more beautiful. I had no doubts that God had turned my feet around - I had to go.

I was received and baptized with the others. It was the sweetest most peaceful feeling I will ever have here on earth. As we came out of the water I looked at the crowd. There was so much joy and love, I wished I could gather them all in my arms and tell them how much I love them.

My burden was lifted and I was happy for a few days. Then one morning I woke up crying "Oh! Lord what have I done? These precious people welcomed me with open arms. Have I made a mistake and deceived them."

It is so precious to feel that peace in your heart and know that only God could have put it there. We are carried up on the mountain top to sing His praise, then cast in the valley once again to beg for mercy. I hope He will always keep me humble.

I still have doubts and fears and I know there is nothing good in me. The Lord is my help and strength. That little hope He has put in my breast is worth it all. In our darkest hour when it seems like everything is gone, how sweet it is to see that little ray of sunshine and feel that all is well for a little while.

It is such a sweet privilege to gather with the brethren and enjoy the love and fellowship.

An unworthy sister,
Mary Janney

P.O. Box 403
Poca, W.V. 25159
March 19, 1993

Dear Elder Key,

Thank you very much for sending me copies of articles that were written by my uncle, Elder J.W. McClanahan, and above all the ones he wrote on his experience, and call to the ministry, it was sad at the beginning but the outcome was beautiful.

Elder Key, the short note you sent me along with the articles meant a lot to me, just writing that you knew I would be glad to receive a copy of my uncles experience, and call to the ministry let me know that we share the same hope, and belief in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

I am enclosing a letter I received from Elder H.J. Bird when I was in Vietnam, and hope you will consider it for print in the Signs of the Times.

Thank you again for the articles I requested.

In hope of a Hope,
J.F. McClanahan

ARTICLES

Jo. 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again.

Jesus is speaking here of something that must be very important, something that must be done. He doesn't say you should do it, or you might do it, but ye must be born again. When Jesus, the Son of the living God, says ye must be born again we know there is a necessity for its being done. Let us look for a minute or two and see if we can see the importance of this new birth.

Jo. 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. This is the key to the thing, all who are still in the flesh, all who haven't been born of the Spirit are still flesh. So we see from this scripture, you have either been born of the Spirit or you are still in the flesh.

It is written, God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. There is one reason why it is so important to be born again, for you must be born again, born of the Spirit, or else you cannot worship God, for God says you must worship him in Spirit.

Among all the many professing believers or so called Christians there are in the world today, one hardly ever hears the new or spiritual birth mentioned. It seems many believe in the works system and through their own works, and their own self-righteousness, they believe they have worked their way into the good graces of God, and have reached such a level they feel God owes them for all these things they have done, therefore they can accept the salvation which they feel is theirs for the taking. But I find when I read the bible, the same God who says you must be born again has also said, a mans work availeth him nothing.

It is written 1 Cor. 2:14 - But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned.

The natural man receiveth not the things of God, we have a perfect illustration of this where Jesus spoke to and Nicodemus answered and said, can a man enter again into his mother's womb, and be born. Nicodemus was a man who I believe had better than average education and worldly wisdom. However these things of the Spirit was foolishness to him, as it is written, these things are foolish to a

fleshly man, they believe them not and they can't understand them. As the time Jesus asked his Apostles who do ye say that I am and Peter answered and said unto him, ye are the Christ the son of the living God. Jesus answered and said blessed art thou Simon Barjona for flesh and blood did not reveal this unto you but my Father which is in heaven. These things show us that a person must be born again of the Spirit to receive these spiritual things. Not only do we see this from things in the scripture but we see and experience them in our daily walk and among the brethren. As our pastors are blessed to have some spiritual truth revealed unto them, then given the ability and knowledge to pass them on to the brethren at meetings. How many times have you been reading some scripture that perhaps you have read many times before, when all of a sudden you are blessed to see something in it you never saw before. Try to tell someone about the joy of attending meetings, explain to an unbeliever what you mean when you speak of spiritual food. Why? Like the scripture says, it is foolishness to them, there is no way they can understand or believe any thing spiritual.

Speaking or I should say, thinking of the new birth, I believe that is the first of any or all spiritual blessings a man may receive, it has to be first. To begin with a man must believe, without faith it is impossible to please God. So faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. I have already written a fleshly man receiveth

not these things, so where does faith, hearing and believing come in. Remember, the Spirit must the work perform, so the Spirit gives one a hearing ear, else how could he hear? Next how could he believe except he had a heart, or understanding to be able to hear and believe the gospel. There again the Spirit must the work perform. When these things have happened, a person hears the gospel, understands and believes what he hears, that man has experienced the new birth. That is the only way he could have heard and believed, because a natural man receives them not.

I believe when this has happened to a man, through the new birth he is born into the family of God, he became a child, once a person is in that family he is there to stay, as it is written, I in you and you in me. I believe many more spiritual blessings will follow, there will be times of rejoicing also times of despair, all of these will come in such a way and manner that is pleasing to our heavenly Father, we need the valleys as much as we need the mountain top, when we are in the valley or on our knees we have to look up at our brethren. I surely believe a man is much more blessed looking up at our brethren than looking down on them.

I believe the very first dealings a believer has with God is the work of the Holy Spirit, such as a hearing ear, heart of understanding, blessing a man with faith, belief, etc. We know and believe by the scripture that the Spirit, like the wind, goes and comes

as it is pleasing to God, no man can stop it, direct it or change its course as I have stated, and as it is written, the Spirit must the work perform. This teaches me very clearly that the doctrine of free will believed by so many has to be false. As it is written, all those he foreknew, he also did predestinate, also all that he did predestinate, them he also called, and the promise is to all that the Lord our God should call. So may we be strengthened in the faith, blessed to believe in our Father's love tender care and mercy, to the extent that we will have love for the brethren, giving all thanks to our heavenly Father.

Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again.

A brother - I hope
Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

Jan. 2, 1967

S.S.G. Joseph McClanahan,



My Precious Friend, and Brother In Hope In Christ: your very gracious letter of Oct. 9, 1966 is open before Me. First I very sincerely beg your forgiveness for my long delay in my feeble endeavor to answer your excellent letter. I have not been so well, and I am just weak enough in my sinful depraved flesh, to let the trials of the way, hinder me in so many ways. I freely confess, that of myself; I can do nothing praiseworthy in the sight of

God. Your letter came as a cup of cold water to my thirsty soul, it is richly laden with the doctrine of truth. I suppose you know that just recently I lost my last earthly brother Benjamin B. Bird. I miss him so very much. My Father died July 17, 1913. I miss him unto this day. You do have my sympathy in your grief. I know what the grief is. We mourn because we suffer loss, but we do have the sweet solace in the full conviction of belief that they are far better off than we who are alive and remain here in this sin cursed world. I believe, and I think you believe, that your Father, and my Father, and my brother, and who die, of like precious faith as they are at rest, and at peace with God. They have been called to lay their armour by to be at home with God.

*No more to suffer pain or loss.
No more to bear the painful cross.
But God and Christ, and Heaven to see;
In perfect bliss and true felicity.*

Yes the little hope within our breast; that when our weary race is ended here, and we have received our discharge from this mortal state of life, that by reason alone of what Jesus our Friend and Elder Brother, has done in behalf of the election of grace, saving, redeeming them, from all their sins, clothing them, with His own righteousness, freely imputed to them, and thus arrayed in the royal wedding dress, that they, without the loss of one, in that blessed day, they shall be ushered in to the fullness of the pres-

ence of God; where they shall see Him as He is, and be like Him, and be forever satisfied. (We do not see God as He is, while we are in the flesh.) Now do we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Then shall we see him face to face, then shall we know, even as we are known, a perfect knowledge. See 1 Corinthians 13 Chapter, 9 to 12 verses. Our hope embraces that through grace we may be of that blest number. We rejoice in the belief that the children of God will know each other in Heaven, after a perfect order of knowledge, yes after an heavenly order of knowledge.

I hope I have made my convictions clear. I believe that when the children of God put on the likeness of Christ in His resurrection, that they will be like Him in Holiness, in perfection, in mind, in glory.

Oh glorious hope! Oh blessed thought.

My soul leaps forward at the thought.

When in that happy land;

We'll no more take the parting hand.

I do not know just why I have wrote as I have. Only this I do know, these weak phrases bear out a little of what I most surely do believe. I carry you in the bond of love. I esteem you highly for the truth sake.

May the protecting care of God be over you always.

Grace, mercy, and truth be unto you, the comforting influence and overshadowing of His spirit adorn your soul, for Jesus sake, amen:

Your little brother in hope in Christ
H.J. Bird

Stantonsburg, N.C. 27883

Greetings to the Household of Faith,
Old School Predestinarian Baptists:



This year is fast coming to a close, and none of us knows what the future holds. All that we know is past, or present. In my fifty-three years as a member of the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists, I have enjoyed the happiest, and the saddest days of my life. I am sure that you who have tasted the goodness and mercy of our God, can witness with the testimony of the prophets and the apostles, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we are pilgrims and strangers in a strange land. This world is not our home; we have no abiding city here, but we seek a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

I am made to realize, my dear brethren, that my race is almost at an end. Of course, I do not know when the end will be with me, but according to the average life of men, I cannot expect to remain on earth more than a few more years. God has been good to me; and He still is. Oh! if I could but praise his name forever. But I have fallen so short of living to the Christian standard. I have to go weeping and mourn-

ing. When I am blessed to think upon the name of the Lord and his wonderful love and mercy which he has bestowed upon me, a hell-deserving sinner, it makes me hang my head in shame: to think that the Lord of glory had to suffer on the cross in my room and stead; that is, if I am a vessel of mercy which God afore prepared unto glory.

He took my sins and yours, if we are the children of God. Though I have a precious hope, sometimes I doubt and fear, and often ask myself the question, "Do I love the Lord, or no? am I his or am I not?"; that is a point I long know, with the poet, "Oft it causes anxious thought." I am so imperfect that almost all I do, or think, or say is wrong. "Oh! is there any one like me?"

Dear brethren, I confess I am a poor, unlearned man, but I believe there is a God in heaven, who has by the word of his power created this world, or universe; and inhabited it with people, animals, fowls, insects, and every living thing for his own glory. There was not a man to help in any way whatsoever, for man was the last thing that God made. I believe that God in the annals of eternity, before the creation, foresaw everything in his infinite wisdom that he would bring to pass in the process of time, from the beginning of the creation to the final consummation of all things. I believe that God chose his people (his church) in Christ before the creation; that He saw the fall of man (Adam); and that he made provision for the redemption of all saints in Christ Jesus long before the first sin was committed. And, inas-

much as the church spiritually was in Christ before the world was, Adam, being a type of Christ, and Eve his bride being in him, was a type of the Church in Christ before the world was.

Some have asked me if God did not have a purpose in sin entering into the world, and my answer is and has been, Yes. Then they ask if God did not make sin. My answer to that is, No. Sin is something that was not made, but was and is the act of the creature. Some say that God made them to sin. But I find that one of the writers in the New Testament said that God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man. But somebody wants to know is God's purpose in sin. Elder Griffin mentioned in an Editorial some time ago that the wicked are the sword of the Lord. Now the first cause of wickedness is sin. Dear brethren, as I see it God's purpose in sin entering into the world was that He would make his power known unto the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. (Read Romans ninth chapter.) Had sin not entered the world there would have been no sinners to be saved from sin. So this was God's way of manifesting his power in his love and mercy upon the vessels of mercy. God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God."

Man in nature has never been satisfied to do God's will, for in the dead state of nature he has never known the Lord God of heaven, nor his Son Jesus Christ, Only those know him to whom Christ is revealed; and revela-

tion comes to man by spiritual birth. Jesus in the third chapter of John told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of heaven. And on the occasion when Jesus asked his disciples whom men said that He was, some said one thing and some another. So it is today. But Jesus asked, "Whom do ye say that I am," and Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven." So we see that the spiritual birth is through and by the revealed power of God in man.

Elder W.B. Barnes

"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word." - Psalm cxix. 81.



ow difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realize for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generally speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to

our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

“O come, thou much-expected guest;

Lord Jesus, quickly come!”

And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might hold sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet, under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!

But whence spring all these longing looks and waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and vehement longings shew that those in whom they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not

the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after, waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.

J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

AM I A GOD-CALLED MINISTER?



Elder E.J. Lambert



You will note from my autobiography that I came under the hands of two presbyteries-being ordained twice by man in each of two organizations to the work of the ministry. One of these acts must have been a mistake, maybe, both of them. The great question: am I a God-called gospel minister? Let us try these two calls by analysis and contrast to determine whether or not either be of God.

I was in my “teens” when hands were laid on me by the first presbytery. I was of the opinion that the plan of salvation was offered to everybody.

Each and every one of the family who came to the "age of accountability" possessed equal and sufficient ability to "accept the plan" by complying with certain conditions and thereby earn Heaven as their home by their own merits. I consented to that ordination or "call" upon the following basis of reasoning:

1. I had accepted the "Plan."
2. I had complied with the requirements.
3. I was prepared to teach others these conditions.
4. I was able to speak fluently and interest the hearers.
5. My walk and conversion was more becoming than others.
6. This demanded their high esteem and great respect for me.
7. It gave me opportunity to build a greater reputation by influencing others.

As the reader will note in my other writings relative to my experience, the time came when this was all proved to be vanity. I had greatly deceived myself and others. The thought that I had so vehemently spoken untruths completely banished from my mind any thought of ever again speaking publicly in the name of the One whom I had so greatly blasphemed!

The day I was received into the fellowship of Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ near Amity, Arkansas was one of the greatest surprises of my life because I realized myself to be the chief of sinners. I was worse than any other because I had used God's name in vain while wearing the cloak of religion from the pulpit! I had

pretended to be something when I was worse than nothing! I thought this would forever bar me from such a sacred place as the pulpit. The high privilege of sitting silently with the brethren was too sacred for so great a sinner as I felt myself to be.

Soon after I was received into the fellowship of the Church I was attacked with such despondent and depressed condition of mind that I felt to have but few more hours to live at most. This continued without a moment of relaxation for days and weeks that seemed to be ages. I was so burdened with an unbearable weight that I felt my life was being crushed. Many nights I went to my room convinced that I would never see the sun rise again. Such loneliness and heartache is indescribable. All my dreams were as vexing as my daily thoughts. Groanings and yearnings for God's mercy availed nothing. I was convinced one night that all this was upon me because I had deceived the people of God. I must have fallen asleep, for either in a vision or dream I was standing before a congregation of people preaching upon the text: "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." I received such joy in my confessions that I awoke rejoicing in mind for the first time in weeks and months. I immediately reached for the bible and searched for some text of Scripture that would harmonize with that expression. I was somewhat surprised when I found it verbatim in Job 42:6. This was the first time the thought occurred to me concerning preaching with the Old Baptists. The thought

caused me to shudder and I began to argue my disqualifications. "I am ignorant and my brethren are wise. Their walk is godly and my walk ungodly. They are content and I am disturbed." These arguments became so numerous that the idea of preaching was dispelled from my mind and I was again possessed with the same melancholy state of mind.

I recall one night that I tossed in my bed for hours and tried to pray that the burden be removed. When I became exhausted I was suddenly impressed with the thought, "There is something you must do." I asked, "What is it, Lord?" There was no reply, thus no relief. I began to reason. "I am unfit to be a member of the church. I have deceived these good people. I must frankly confess to them and ask them to exclude me from their fellowship." "Lord, if this be what I must do give me relief." Yet no relief came! I asked the same question concerning many acts that came to mind. Still no relief. Frustrated to the extent of insanity, I felt I must die. The reality of dying in this condition so horrified me that I cried in exasperation, "Lord, anything!" The command came like a thunderbolt, "Preach Christ the Way." I answered aloud, "I will preach." Suddenly my body ceased its trembling. My aching heart soothed. My surging and throbbing breast was calmed. The terrible weight was lifted and the burden removed. I went to sleep praising God for the relief of a troubled mind that had tortured me for many days. I had the first hours of peaceful sleep that I had enjoyed in weeks.

I awoke the next morning as convinced that I would preach as any one has ever been impressed of something they must do. The relief did not last long. My disqualifications came to mind again. Finally I thought of one possible qualification: "You have experience in public speaking." This one sunk into oblivion when I considered:

1. Heretofore you have been sure of yourself concerning the subject matter and preparation; now, you are uncertain and unprepared.

2. Before, you felt to have more knowledge on the subject than your hearers; now you are more ignorant than any one of them.

3. Before, you felt they would listen because they esteemed you as their superior; now, you feel to be less than the least.

4. Before, you were without fear and boldly appeared before any congregation; now, you are even fearful of yourself.

By this time I was strolling down a country road and must have gone into unconsciousness, because when I became conscious, words were flowing with ease from my mouth and a peculiarly constructed pulpit was before me. Tears of joy were flowing from my eyes. I looked out before me for the congregation and could see nothing but a winding road in front and trees on both sides. I reasoned: "This pulpit is an imagination of the mind caused from the tears that beclouded my eyes. I dried my eyes, blinked them, looked again and the pulpit was still there. I was walking, but this last sight so excited me that I

stood still, closed my eyes for awhile, opened them again, but the pulpit was still in front of me. Something said, "I will put thoughts in your mind and words in your mouth when you are behind the pulpit." Then, the pulpit vanished and I was trembling from head to feet. I was so weak I could hardly stand and was about four miles from home. While walking home I feasted upon this new experience and conclusion that God speaks through His ministers. I thought I would tell this experience to my brethren but soon it seemed so unreasonable that doubts began to haunt me and I have kept it until this day with this exception: once, while speaking for the first time in a meetinghouse, I looked down and saw this peculiarly constructed pulpit in reality and paused in the discourse to say, "I have seen this pulpit before." Even though I have not told this, it has been a great encouragement to me many times when going behind the sacred stand, feeling so unprepared.

A few days later, (September 1930), I attended an adjoining association near Eldorado, Arkansas. It was the first time I had been outside my home vicinity while among this people. They were strangers in the flesh but yet I felt drawn toward them. While there I visited in the home of Elder T.J. Evers where some visiting elders were scheduled to preach. My feeling of unworthiness would not permit me to be in the room during preaching but I listened from the outside. When they had finished preaching, someone called my name, came after me, ush-

ered me inside, and informed me that I was requested to preach. I was never so shocked in my life as I thought no one had any idea that I would ever attempt to preach, especially to make my first attempt away from home among strangers. I had not hinted to anyone of such impression. I do not know anything I said that night. However, I experienced some relief of mind in the exercise. When I finished I walked from that room into an adjoining room to be alone. I was shocked with the sight of gray-headed elders sitting in that room with their heads bowed. I thought, "What a fool I must be to attempt to speak in the name of the Lord in the presence of these great men of God." I was so ashamed of myself.

The next meeting at my home church I was called upon to introduce services with hymn and prayer. Since that time I have attempted many times to speak, accompanied with great fear and much trembling. My deep-felt sense of unworthiness and inability has been so uppermost in my mind that I have wondered much of the time, "Do I have the right to occupy such a sacred position and attempt to speak in the presence of God's people?"

I bored the listeners for months by using much of the time in trying to express my unworthiness and inability. My estimation of myself as being so sinful was so impressed on my mind that many expressions relative to this conviction were made each and every time I appeared before a congregation. It gave me relief but I

was not aware of being so boresome to the hearers. God saw fit to use a sister to bring this to my attention. She told me of a conversation she overheard between a daughter and her father. Her daughter announced, "Dad, I am going over to Oakland Schoolhouse today to church." Her father answered, "What? Do you want to hear that mean man tell of his meanness?" This caused much meditation. I have felt as unworthy, sinful, and unfit since then but have been cautious to brief my expressions concerning it. This conversation proved to be a great blessing to me and (I am persuaded) to those who have to sit under the hearing of my voice.

Many times in the exercises of speaking in the presence of this people I lamented much in the closing remarks upon how God had withheld His Spirit from me and that I had been given "no light" upon the subject under discussion. One day I heard an elder preach. His discourse melted my heart and I experienced exultant joy from the beginning of his sermon throughout. His words were heavenly and the thoughts expressed were rapturous to me. He paused at the end of this glorious sermon and said, "I have had no unction of the Spirit while speaking. What I have said has been wholly formal and strictly mechanical." This was like pouring ice water on me. It made me shudder. Since that time I have not expressed these lamentations in closing - though I have felt it. It may be mechanical and formal as far as the speaker is concerned, but God is blessing the hearer with the unction

of the Spirit. Since then I have been more content with the thought that God blesses me to the extent that it pleases Him and consecrates it to the hearers to the degree of His pleasure. Who am I to lament if He holds all joy from me and blesses the hearers with exceeding joy? Sometimes when feeling the coldest in delivery of a discourse I have seen the Spirit manifested in the faces of the hearers. Could such a sermon be classed hypocritical, formal, and/or mechanical?

Praying in public was such a task for me. I felt it to be the greatest sin to utter words intended to be directed to God without feeling to be in the spirit of prayer. I refused to engage in public prayer many times when called upon because of this conviction. I recall once being in the predicament when I could not refuse even though I was convinced it would be formal and hypocritical! Words flowed fluently from my mouth but I was so cold that they seemed to mock me with the cry, "Hypocritical, hypocritical." When I arose from the form of prayer I felt to be the greatest blaspheming hypocrite in the world! I was greatly surprised and astonished when something very unusual took place. One man immediately arose, came toward me with tears streaming down his face, took me by the hand, and exclaimed, "What a wonderful prayer. You worded the yearning of my heart." I was then convinced that God was pleased sometimes to put the yearnings in one's heart and the words to express these yearnings in another's mouth. May I ask the reader, "Could this prayer

be classed as an hypocritical prayer?" Since that time I have not refused to engage in public prayer when called upon.

My wife was the first one that I baptized. Officiating in the ordinances of the church seemed too high for me. I felt so unworthy to officiate that I felt so weak I could hardly stand and was trembling when I led her into the beautiful Caddo stream near Amity, Arkansas to baptize her. I felt that I could not go through this ordeal. I shall never forget the calmness and strength I suddenly experienced when I began the baptismal ceremony. Some of the most glorious experiences I have had was in the act of putting beneath the water candidates for church membership. God has always come to my rescue and converted the fear into sublime calmness in my attempt to engage in this sacred ordinance.

It seemed to be impossible for me to be used to comfort those who were bereaved because of a death in the immediate family. I shuddered at the thought of ever being called upon. If not deceived, the Lord has taken care of that also. I have been surprised and astonished at the words that have come from my mouth that were appropriate on such occasions.

I have had like experiences in visiting, praying for the sick, encouraging those who were so low in spirit, giving solutions to baffling problems, averting brethren from detrimental procedure, and striving for peace among troubled brethren. In every case that my efforts have been successfully used, it has been beyond any ques-

tion with me concerning the source of strength. In every case all false ideas of authority being vested in me have been burned out through fiery trials and God has revealed Himself as the Author of all good acts which are godly. When it pleases God to work the will in you there is no shifting from His will to yours. His will has been so convincing to me that there has been no halting between opinions when it is placed in my mind. I have learned by sad experience that it is best to do nothing regarding a matter until you are made certain concerning what ought to be done. God has so thoroughly worked the do in me in many cases that I was unaware of what I was doing until it was already done. Could I give myself a pat on the shoulder and congratulate myself for doing something that had been done through me and I was unaware of it while it was going on?

I felt many times in years past that I ought to lay aside my encumbrances and dis-engage myself from the vocations of this world and devote what little strength and mind that God had blessed me with to the service of the churches who were looking to me as their pastor. Circumstances over which I had no control brought me into this position. I was forced to give up my worldly career. I receive no salary nor wage from any one or ones. It has been so for years, but God has taken care to impress the hearts of friends and brethren to freely give of their means to us that we have not suffered in want of the necessary things of this natural life. Funds have

come when needed without any solicitation to such an extent that I am fully persuaded that God controls the minds of the contributors even to the amount of contributions.

When I am given to review my life as a minister of God and pastor of churches, I feel that I have been very unprofitable. I have failed in many duties. I have fallen so far short of performing the duties incumbent upon a pastor that I am made to say, "I surely have been mistaken in it all." My brethren have been very tolerant toward me in bearing with my infirmities. Should they have been exacting I would have been severed from their fellowship long ago. I beg an interest in the prayers of each and every one of you who reads this. After writing this imperfect treatise upon this question it remains an unanswered question to me: "Am I a God-called gospel minister?"

MEETINGS

DAN RIVER CHURCH

Meetings at Dan River Church located on Highway #700 between Highway 29 North and Eden, N.C.

4th Sunday in May our semi-annual communion service.

5th Sunday in May the West Country Line will hold its Union Meeting.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Both of above meetings will meet at 10:00 a.m.

Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

HOPEWELL

The eighteenth annual 5th Sunday meeting, the good Lord willing, will be held at Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, May 28th, 29th, and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro. Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow the signs.

We welcome you to join us in endeavoring to render glory and praise to Whom it is so richly due. In an age when it is becoming increasingly popular to take the Lord's name in vain, how appropriate for those who love the Lord to gather together and by grace fulfill Psalm 148:13 - "Let them praise the name of the Lord: for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven." As increasing pressure is brought upon God's people to conform to the ever deteriorating standards of this world, may it be our happy lot to have the Spirit which was given unto Joshua to enable us to boldly, yet humbly declare, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

When at the throne of grace, please remember us in prayer.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union Meeting will be held the Lord willing, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May at Strawberry Church located on road 750 turn off Rt. 41 at Woods Store on 750 about 1/2 mile to Church.

All lovers of the truth come and worship with us, special welcome to all Elders of our faith and order.

Gertie Holley Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1993

- Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC \$2.00
- Charles M. Coates, VA 7.00
- Ms. Joyce Farley, TX..... 15.00
- D.H. Richardson, FL 2.00
- Mrs. Bonnie R. Moyers, TN 2.00
- Mrs. Cathreine W. Combs, NC 5.00
- Edwin F. Dyer, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN 2.00
- Mrs. Dorothy M. Cassell, VA 2.00
- Ted & Linda McDaniel, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Aline C. Jacks, AL 2.00
- Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA 7.00
- Ms. Mary W. Janney, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Mildred W. Hanks, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

KENNETH LEON JACKS

Brother Kenneth Leon Jacks was born on May 13, 1943, in Sabine County, Texas. He was called home to his eternal rest on October 24, 1992, at the age of 49 years. He was the grandson of Elder Noah King.

Brother Jacks was united with Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church by letter from West Fork Primitive Baptist Church of Akron, Ohio, on October 14, 1979. Fellowship Church elected him as clerk on December 12, 1981. On November 13, 1983, Brother Jacks was ordained as deacon of Fellowship Church. In 1988, he was elected clerk of the Sulphur Fork Association. He was a faithful and fearless defender of the gospel of his Lord and Savior. He served faithfully as deacon, church clerk, and association clerk until the day of his departure.

His tireless devotion to his church and his brethren was beautifully described by the following poem, written by his mother:

*A Tribute To My Son,
Kenneth Leon Jacks
(A Faithful Servant)*

*As a deacon of your church,
You served it to the end,
Second weekend of each month,
Your labor of love begin.*

*You took care of your church's
needs,
It was a priority for you;
You didn't falter by the wayside
When there were things to do.*

*You mowed the lawn, you lit the
fire,
You opened and closed the doors,
As a deacon of your church
You took care of all your chores.*

*You transported elderly sisters
So to church they could come,
And from the Master's table
Pick up a little crumb.*

*God blessed you with three
beautiful children,
And a sweet grandchild too,
And the best wife and mother
Whom anyone ever knew.*

*God granted me the blessing
To go with you to see,
Your faith and trust in an all
powerful God,
Was very plain to me.*

*While working on the church
grounds,
A tree on you did fall;
You thought you'd met your death
then,
But God had another tree growing
tall.*

*In relating your experience to me,
You got a glimpse of another
realm,
In which you hope to go some day,
So you could be with Him.*

*You left this world before,
Caught up in the spirit of your
God;
He gave you a glimpse of a better
place,
While on this earth you trod.*

*There are no accidents with God,
You knew that very well;
If you could talk to us today,
A greater story you could tell.*

*My son, it would be selfish in me,
To wish you back to stay,
But I hope it's the Lord's will
We meet again some day!*

Love, Mother

The above sentiments are the heart-felt thoughts, not only of his mother, but also of his brethren among whom he traveled extensively for many years.

Brother Jacks was survived by his wife, Sherrie Sharpton Jacks, whom he married on June 5, 1965; one son, Russell Jacks of Gladewater, Texas; two daughters, Kendra Jacks and Kristi Davis; his father and step-mother, Elvin and Ann Jacks of Woodville, Texas; his mother, Mrs. Abilene McBride, of Woodville; one brother, Lamar Jacks, of Jasper, Texas; one sister, Mrs. Sandra Murphy, of Mt. Shasta, California; and one grandchild, Loren Davis.

Brother Jack's funeral was conducted by Elder C. C. Morris, assistant pastor of Fellowship Church, assisted by Elder Lynwood Jacobs. Brother Jacks was laid to rest in Pleasant Hope Cemetery, near Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church, south of Atlanta, Texas, there to await the resurrection morning.

Written by direction of Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church in conference, with the direction that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times*, a copy be sent to brother Jacks' family, and a copy be retained in the church's records.

Lovingly submitted,
C. C. Morris

ELDER LOYD WALL



Elder Loyd Wall of Bivins, Texas, was born on January 27, 1919, in Cass County, Texas. After an extended illness, he was called home to eternal glory on January 30, 1993. His pilgrimage here below was seventy-four years and three days.

Elder Wall married Ruby Lee Driskell Wall on January 14, 1939. He united with Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church in 1942, where his membership remained for over fifty years. He was baptized by his father, Elder T. A. Wall, on the fourth Sunday in June, 1942.

Elder Wall was ordained to the ministry on October 30, 1955, over his protests of his own unworthiness. From then until he could no longer go due to his final illness, he traveled extensively among the brethren in Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

Elder Wall was called to pastor five churches and served them faithfully until his death: Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church, south of Atlanta, Texas, where his membership was for over 50 years; Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, near Simms, Texas; Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church near East Mountain, Texas; Providence Primitive Baptist Church, south of Mt. Vernon, Texas; and Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church of Cash, Texas.

During his ministry of over forty years, he traveled untold hundreds of thousands of miles serving the

churches, attending associations and special meetings, visiting the sick and elderly, visiting among the brethren, and conducting over four hundred funerals. He served the Sulphur Fork Association in east Texas as its Assistant Moderator from 1961 through 1972, as Moderator from 1973 through 1981, and again as Moderator from 1989 until the time of his death.

He had a good report of them which are without. He was an industrious and hard-working man, laboring all his life in the fields and woods near where he was born and raised. He was a good neighbor, loved and respected by his neighbors and his community, and for a time he served on the local school board.

What Paul said to Timothy, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine," certainly applied to Elder Wall. He was solid, sound, and primitive in order, belief, doctrine, and practice. Elder Wall mourned his own depravity, often shedding tears over his feelings of his own sinfulness and unworthiness. His only hope, constantly expressed both from the stand and in conversation, was his hope in the eternal, electing love, grace, and mercy of his God, and the all-sufficient blood and merits of the One whom he preached, the only Savior, Jesus Christ. Without compromise, and without consideration of either the fear or the favor of man, Elder Wall believed and preached the absolute predestination of all things, down to the smallest details in creation and in our lives.

No man around him was ever more willing than he to discuss the scriptures at any time, nor did any seem to have a better God-given understanding of the Bible. Elder Wall always made it a point to say that, if he did not prove what he said by the scriptures, it was not to be received. Whenever he was called upon to speak, his clear voice was lifted up like a trumpet, and he spoke as the oracles of God. When he ministered, it was as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Now, in the wisdom and providence of our God, Elder Wall's clarion voice has been silenced until the end of time. Those left behind, grieving, nevertheless feel that our temporal loss is his eternal gain, for his sufferings have now ended. Words cannot tell the sadness which the loss of Elder Wall has brought to the brethren at home and across this land. Yet, if he were here today, we have no doubt he would say that he attended every appointment, took every step, preached every sermon, and breathed every breath which God from all eternity had predestinated for him.

Elder Wall is survived by his wife, Ruby Wall, of Bivins, Texas; one son and daughter-in-law, Joseph and Connie Wall of Bivins, Texas; two daughters and sons-in-law, Dorothy and Kenneth Cook of Gonzales, Louisiana, and Glenda and Wayne Dayton of Austin, Texas; three sisters, Ellen Bradshaw of Linden, Texas, Ettie Hutchen of Mesquite, Texas, and Evelyn Rhoades of Mt. Vernon, Texas;

six grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Elder Wall's funeral, attended by many hundreds of his friends and mourners, was conducted by Elder C. C. Morris, assisted by Elder Graydon Smith and Elder Shannon Vaughn. As Elder Wall so highly valued and appreciated the deacon brethren, it was beautifully appropriate that the final grave-side prayer was worded by his long-time friend and brother in the church, deacon Frank Pilgreen of Union Primitive Baptist Church of the South Ouachita Association.

Elder Wall's mortal remains were laid to rest in Pleasant Hope Cemetery near the Huffines community, south of Atlanta, Texas, to await the resurrection at the second coming of our Lord.

Written by direction of Pleasant Hope Primitive Baptist Church in conference, specifying that a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, a copy be furnished to Elder Wall's family, and a copy be retained in the church records.

Unworthily submitted in love,
C. C. Morris

ISAIAH 33: 5-6.

The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.

And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.

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LORD I DESIRE

*Lord I desire, with thee to live
To live and never die,
To praise thy name, with every
strain
with thee amid the skies.*

*Lord thou art good, and very
good
and holy just and true,
So let us watch and pray and
sing
In all our life way through.*

*Lord we do hope that we are
dead
to sin and death made free,
Now we do wait, and walk by
faith
of our dear Lord to see*

*Lord bless us now, this one more
time
that we be strong and bold,
And when the storm'y clouds
arise
Thou would onto us hold.*

*Thanks be to thee dear blessed
Lord
That thou has made us see,
Our Jesus as the end of law
To set poor sinners free.*

By L.J. Brammer

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EDITORIAL

“For 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.” (Deut. 32: 9-10).



Elder C.C. Wilbanks



It is indeed a time of rejoicing for the saints of the God when they are blessed, from time to time, to view with some understanding what the old Scriptures are pointing to

in the new testament. I do not claim any special understanding of the things I propose to set forth for your consideration, but these are only my views of things that may be touched upon in this article. My views may be very imperfect, but the Scriptures of truth are always perfect. Compare the two, and if they be in harmony all is well, but if not, then reject my views.

It is my desire to set forth, in small part, the way God led the children of Israel in days of old, and compare them with the travels of the children of today. God chose his children in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and He said of them, “This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.” (Isa. 43:21).

Let us begin with Abraham. Unto him God promised a son when he was about an hundred years old, and Sarah his wife being ninety was past the normal time of life for child bearing; but Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness; and if we believe him it shall be accounted unto us for righteousness also. But this belief must be given unto us from above. (Phil. 1:29) In the set time Sarah did conceive and bare a son, and Abraham called his name Isaac: and of him God said, “And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.” That covenant is in full force today. However, before that Isaac was born, Sarah had become concerned that Abram, (as she and he were first called,) had no children, therefore she gave him Hagar her

Egyptian handmaid to wife, that she might obtain children by her. Hagar conceived by Abram, and when she had conceived she despised Sarah her mistress. Sarah told this to Abram, and he said unto her, "Do unto her as it pleaseth thee." And when Sarah dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. But an angel of the Lord found Hagar and told her to return and submit herself to her mistress. And the angel said unto her, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." Also, "Behold, thou art with child, and shall bear a son; and shall call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; and his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he will dwell in the presence of his brethren." Hagar therefore returned and Ishmael was born, and grew up as the son of Abram; but he was not the son that God promised Abraham afterward that would be born of his wife Sarah. And God said of Sarah, "And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her." Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" And Abraham said unto God, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" And God said, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him

for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget and I will make of him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac." Can we not see here a line drawn between the elect people of God, typified by Isaac, and the non-elect by Ishmael? for Ishmael was born according to the will of the flesh, but Isaac according to the promise of God. Almost as soon as Isaac was born Ishmael began to mock him; and does not this mocking continue unto this day by his seed against the seed of Isaac? When Sarah saw the son of Hagar mocking she said unto Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." This grieved Abraham, but God said unto him, "Let not this be grievous in thy sight - for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

Let us now move forward to the days of Abraham's old age. He called his eldest servant and made him swear by the God of heaven and earth, that he should not take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom he dwelt: but that he would go into the country from which God had called him out, and to his kindred to take a wife unto Isaac. The servant questioned what he should do if the woman would not be willing to return with him. Abraham told him that the Lord God would send his angel before him and that he should

take a wife unto his son from among his people, and, if the woman should not be willing, he would be clear of his oath: and he was not to take a wife unto Isaac from among the Canaanites under any circumstances.

It is our understanding that Isaac was a type of Jesus Christ, and the wife that should be taken for him was a figure of the church. The servant was not to do the choosing, but God; and he prayed unto God to shew him in a particular way who this woman should be. Even before he was done praying to God Rebekah came out to him, for she was the chosen one. She was of Abraham's kindred, for she was the daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, Abraham's brother. "She was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her." As a type of the church these were qualifications that were absolutely necessary, for she must be holy, and without blame before him in love; and in the Song of Solomon she is described as "the fairest among women," and "as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Rebekah quickly took him to her kindred, and after he had informed them of his mission, he asked if she would go with him, and they said unto him, "This thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." And they called Rebekah and said unto her, "Wilt thou go with this man?" And she said, "I will go." She could in no wise refuse, for God hath called his people with a

holy calling, and it would not be a holy calling if it could be rejected. And God had said, "Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power." Therefore she willingly went with him to be the wife of Isaac. And when she had come to Isaac he took her to his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her.

After Sarah died Abraham again took a wife and she bare him sons. And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, into the east country. Here again we see a separation of the elect of God and the non-elect.

Isaac's wife Rebekah was barren, and he entreated the Lord for her. And the Lord was entreated and Rebekah conceived, and the children struggled in her womb and she wondered, Why? She inquired of the Lord, and he said unto her, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger," Paul said of this in Romans 9, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." And, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." God's hatred is just as holy as his love, and not the hatred of the flesh, for there is no

unrighteousness with God. God forbid! "For he said unto Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Also, "And whom he will he hardeneth." Does he not have the right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight? God has a purpose in all things, and he brings them to pass, for "he doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand." In this we again see the line between the elect and the non-elect. God hath mercy upon his elect children, and by his grace he gave them eternal life in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; but the non-elect he hath left to perish in their sins. He is just and holy in all of this, and could not be less so had he left all people to perish in their sins, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Esau and Jacob were the sons of Isaac and Rebekah. Esau was a hunter, and Isaac loved him because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. Esau sold his birthright (he being the firstborn,) to Jacob for a mess of red pottage. Would we not do the same if God did not restrain us? But God has bestowed his grace upon us that we should eat only of that food that cometh down from above, which is the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. If we eat his flesh and drink his blood we have eternal life, and he will raise us up at the last day. If we do not eat and drink his flesh and blood we have no life in us. (John 6: 53-54.)

Jacob was a deceiver or supplanter as his name implies, and when Isaac

was old and could not see, with the urging and help of his mother he deceived his father that he might receive the blessing that should have been bestowed upon Esau. Being deceived into believing that Esau was before him, Isaac bestowed his blessing upon Jacob; and when he knew that he had been deceived he yet said, "I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed." He also blessed Esau, but with a lesser blessing. (Read for yourself in the 27th chapter of Genesis the blessings of each.) And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father had blessed him, and he purposed in his heart to slay his brother, but Rebekah was told of this and she hurriedly sent Jacob away to her brother Laban from whom she had been brought to be the wife of Isaac. She also had another reason for sending him away, for she did not desire to live any longer if Jacob should take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as those which were of the daughters of the land. Isaac also called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him not to take a wife from among the Canaanites, but from among the daughters of Laban, Rebekah's brother. When Esau saw that which was done, that the daughters of Canaan pleased not his father or mother, then he went and took a wife from among them. Is not this the way of all flesh? We seek to avenge ourselves instead of waiting upon the Lord: but it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Sorrow shall surely overtake us if we undertake to avenge ourselves.

As Jacob fled from Esau he came to a certain place, and there he lay down to sleep. And he dreamed that he saw angels ascending and descending a ladder that reached unto the heaven, and the Lord stood above it. In his dream the Lord told him that he was God, saying, I AM the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac," And God gave unto him great promises, and he said, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." All of the people of God are represented in Jacob, or Israel as he was later called of God, and these precious promises apply to them also. And, as we quoted at the beginning, "For the LORD'S portion is his people - and he kept him as the apple of his eye." As with Jacob, the Lord finds all of his people in a desert land and waste howling wilderness. Does this not describe perfectly the world in which we live, and also our sinful flesh? We were polluted in our own blood, and cast out in the day that we were born: but God looked upon us and said, "Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." (Ezek. 16:6). As surely as he speaks this unto each of us in his own time, we live. Jesus said, "The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Only the ones that hear his voice shall ever live, and that life is eternal. I have not found in the Holy Scriptures nor in my

experience (if I have had an experience of grace) that he has taken any out of this desert land and waste howling wilderness while he yet lives in the flesh. He leads us about, and instructs, and keeps us as the apple of his eye; yet, in seasons, he hides his face from us, leaving us in darkness, and we know not how to find our way. We become very barren, thirsty and hungry. We become poor and needy and seek water and there is none, and our tongue fails us for thirst. It is then that we cry unto the Lord and he hears us; for he said, "I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them, I will open rivers in high places, and foundations in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and dry land springs of water." These are soul refreshing waters, and we are made once again to rejoice in his love and mercy. Jesus said, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." What beautiful promises these be!

When Jacob's dream was ended and he awoke, he said, "Surely the Lord was in this place and I knew it not." Jacob saw and heard God, but not as his God, for he had not yet been given faith to believe; and he vowed saying, "If he will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God." Jacob was attempting to put God under his conditions, not knowing that he was in the way the Lord was directing, and that the Lord would

provide all his needs. Is this not what all of us have done when we knew him not? Paul thought he was in the right way and doing service unto the Lord until he was stopped in his way. But, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps." Then Paul was made to say, "Who art thou, Lord? And after Jesus had revealed himself unto him, his question was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Our question is the same, and the answer is the same: it will be told us what we MUST do. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps," "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his way." "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." If we could devise and carry out our own purpose we would be filled with pride: and pride cometh before the fall. Praise God that he directs our way!

Jacob traveled on until he came into the land of Abraham's nativity, and to his uncle's house. There he found Rachel, the daughter of Laban his uncle, and he immediately kissed her and wept, for she was the one he would love and labor for. Laban had two daughters, and the elder was Leah. Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. Here we see Rachel as a type or figure of the church, which is beautiful and well favoured, the bride of our Lord Jesus Christ. Laban said unto Jacob, "Surely thou art my bone and my flesh." And

Paul tells us of Christ that, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Can we not see how beautifully the old and new Scriptures are in harmony?

Jacob loved Rachel, and when Laban asked what his wages should be, he said, "I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter." To this Laban agreed, and when Jacob had served his seven years for Rachel, (and they seemed but as a few days to him because of his love for her,) he said unto Laban, "Give me my wife, that I may go in unto her," But Laban beguiled Jacob and gave him Leah instead. When Jacob demanded why this was done Laban said, "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn." Laban was only carrying out the custom of the land. It was customary at that time for a man to have more than one wife, therefore Laban said, "Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve me yet seven other years." Jacob therefore fulfilled her week, and Rachel was then given him to wife, and he went in unto her. And he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served Laban seven other years for her. The Scriptures do not tell us that he served anytime for Leah, but the fourteen years he served were for Rachel. And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. When Leah bare her first three sons she thought these might turn Jacob's love to her, but they did not. When she bare her fourth son she then said, "Now will I praise the Lord: therefore

she called his name Judah; and left bearing." It was from the tribe of Juda, (or Judah,) that our Lord sprang forth as our High Priest. Do we not also fail to praise the Lord for all things, and not just the good? even if we praise him then.

Both Rachel and Leah did as Abraham's wife Sarah: each gave her maid to Jacob to wife; and both bare him sons. After this Leah bare two more sons and a daughter. Then God opened Rachel's womb and she bare a son whom she called Joseph, and she said, "The Lord shall add to me another son." And it came to pass as her soul was departing, (for she died) and she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.

Jacob was the father of twelve sons by his wives Rachel and Leah, and these became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel and Judah.

Dear brethren, I have barely touched upon a few of the things that I had purposed to write about, but already this had become lengthy and I must stop. If God be willing, I will continue it in the near future. Again I say, search the Scriptures to see if these things be in accord with the truth.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

HEBREWS 10:23.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother and Sister Williams:

I wonder what makes it so hard to send what you have written. Every word is the truth and I love when folks share their thoughts and spiritual experiences with me - yet there always seems to be a hesitance in me to send a letter to the Signs. If we knew it would mean anything spiritually to anyone I could freely send it without a worry. I believe I sent in my experience a long time back. I could tell it every day and relish it, it is my meat and drink. I love telling it for all glory is God's - I would never have known Him but for His drawing Love.



I hope the joy in my heart this morning is because of the appearing of Jesus. Paul said "There is a Crown of Righteousness laid up for me, and not for me only, but for all those who love His appearing." And I believe if not totally mistaken, I know and love His appearing. I was raking leaves this morning and my mind was so full of the meeting at Friendship Church near white House and the song 276 was going over and over in my mind and the line that says "My glittering crown appears in view gave me much thought I had never thought of the crown Paul spoke of, it seemed that if I was one so blessed to be taken to heaven, that was enough, but I love the song. We've just recently learned the tune, it gives

such sweetness of soul and my heart seemed full of that sweetness as I raked leaves. I wore myself out talking, and wished for someone to talk to. I looked over at my neighbors house and wished I could share my beautiful thoughts. I notice more writers speak of their unworthiness and their down sittings than their joys. It is when (I hope) the Holy Spirit comes in with its good tidings that my heart swells, and almost bursts to talk and shout it from the housetop one is just as much praise to God as the other. While I was thus filled with thoughts of Praise. I thought of the time I was wandering along in a worldly wilderness lost, and did not know it. When God turned my thoughts and mind toward Him it was then I thought about Salvation, and wanted it, but was so far away how could I find it.

I wanted what my parents had I guess I've always believed the Primitive Baptist was the true church. I tried to read the Bible, may be that was the way to find salvation. Well you (talk about a sealed book) I could not read it. It didn't seem to be what I needed, yet I knew it was the true word of God.

I spent a lot of time thinking about these things and wanted something - I thought (after much trying to understand) of an old saying "There's a black sheep in every family, and perhaps that is why I can't know what to do. I felt burdened, I was morally clean, for I had been brought up in a good way. I would go to baptisings and other demonstrations and so wished I could be like them (as I thought them to be) but there was a block. I was sure as I could be that nothing could make

me feel I was saved and express it in words and join any church. I now believe it was God making me ready for His appearing.

One morning I was doing the regular chores and noticed I was filled with a joy I could not understand. It would take too long to tell all the thoughts and questions that went through my mind concerning this joy. It was different and it went on two or three days. I often think about the third day it became so strong I stopped washing dishes and went and sat down to try to understand the reason for this joy. I sat a long time as tho in a spell cast upon me and I thought of God. The moment I did it seemed as though He were in the room and if I reached out my hand I would touch Him. It was such a wonderful feeling, I was almost afraid to move lest I would lose it. I wanted to go look out the back door - felt sure there was a sign in the sky that it was from God. Finally I (tho feeling a little foolish) went to the door and looked out. Nothing was there, no sign, my heart fell in sadness and while standing there pondering these things, it was as tho a voice said "The change is not out there - it is within you. You've been baptised with the Holy Spirit and your hearts been washed in the blood of the Lamb. (I could hardly believe it) so this was why all the joyous feelings I had been feeling. I will never be able to tell how my mind soared upward and as I write this now. I believe I became a new creature, I feel every line of the song 215 in the Goble book - it says better than I can. Like the song

147 in Lloyds book, I think of it each time we sing it. Is not my case amazing, what a saviour I have found (or found me).

This stayed with me I really don't know how long and I was so happy I thought I would never be sad or disturbed about salvation again. But it would fill a large book to tell how sadly I discovered the barren places, the dry desert without water. I think satan really works in those places and would (if possible) keep us there. But thanks be to God, who cares for us that satan can only go so far.

This is the way God was pleased to bring me into the knowledge and love of Him. He has been so gracious and merciful to me in His dealings about the way I should go. He led me to many green pastures and through many dark valleys and the shadow of death. But somehow I felt that He was always there and with me. It is such a mystery.

I now and then after this experience read the Bible and with enough understanding that it seems to me. Whereas before I couldn't read it with any sense at all. I am jumping from one thing to another in thinking of how I was brought to hope in God.

I heard a brother tell this, he was loading firewood on to a wheelbarrow and had it loaded and heard a bird chirping somewhere in the wood. He tried to find it, finally unloaded the wood, no bird anywhere. He loaded it again and the same thing happened. He told me how many times he loaded and unloaded it and it suddenly was made known to him it was God. I believe God uses many ways and

means to cause his children's minds to turn to Him. He draws their minds in the way best suited to the person.

I believe His doctrine falls into their hearts and distills, as the dew - then at the right time and purpose of God they are quickened by His spirit and made to know Him. No matter how small, or insignificant it might seem to be, there is power enough with it to cause them to know it was not from man, and they are caused to walk in a way that pleases Him.

Oh how I often wish it was possible to retain that spirit and never let it go, but as brother Wayman said in his article "How would we ever grow in grace. My experience teaches me that we must go through many trials and feel forsaken, feel many long periods of fasting to make us realize it is not in man to direct his steps.

We would (in nature) many times go around these things. If so how would we know or long for His appearance? Many time, I've gone so long suffering this barrenness to the point, I actually fear and wonder "Is it possible that I may have imagined this beautiful (born again feeling?) that is a fearful feeling indeed.

We go to the scriptures for comfort and find much written about the "fear of God." I think, if He has taught us to love Him and honor Him, who is spotless and pure. We also fear Him who has all power in heaven and earth. I think I know to fear Him but words won't comfort us. The Spirit alone can give us peace and free from fear. So having all these things as witnesses may we with patience run the race set before us - laying aside all the weight,

worries and sin, according to the measure of faith He has given us. By nature I am not a patient person, tho lately, a few times, (tho far from God) I am given a little patience and wait in hope of His appearing again. I feel now I could write a book, I hope this will mean something to somebody, tho satan has already whispered "tear it up".

Lucile Young,
Memphis Church,
Memphis, Tenn.

Roanoke Virginia
April 25, 1993

Dear Elder and Sister Williams,

In sending in my renewal to the Signs, my mind began to remember you both, because of seeing and hearing you at County Line the few times you have been there. Also I thought back to April (3rd Sun) 1933 when I was baptized with three others. Only two of us still living.

I was born in Will County, Illinois Oct. 21, 1910, as you can see I am now 82 years old. As a member for 60 years, I was 22 years old when baptized. I subscribed to the Signs in Aug. or Sept. in 1933 nearly 60 years ago and have been taking it ever since. We learn "of" many things as to events, in trials and sorrows, but ever, and always having to ask for the Lord's gracious mercy.

When I read the 11th Ch., 29th verse of St. Matthew, I ponder in my mind of these words in particular, "And learn of me" rested in my heart. Not learn

just about me but "Of me". Do I know Him? Do I see and feel Him as my Redeemer. I believe I was shown I was lost. There is a seeking, there is a need of rest, and only god can show the lost condition of a sinner. And can give rest. Learn "Of" Him!

In the year of 1932 Elder H.V. Cole preached God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost these "3" are One, and preceeded upon that "Oneness". I have not forgotten how Eld. Cole looked, but in his declaring that "Oneness" it so spoke the teaching that is needed, the learning "Of" Him that grants Peace and the needed mercy. It seemed to flow all around and in my heart. All from and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Becoming flesh so as to lay it down in the redeeming price, for poor one's that had not a way. Jesus has said "I am the Way, Truth, and the Life, and He gave it. I hope I am one, though so unworthy. Why am I called an Old Baptist? I have heard many beliefs expressed. Not from parents, grandparents or even great grandparents, even though many were called Old School Primitive Baptists. I love what I was told all of those believed, but I did not know until after several years being a member. There may be loud thunderings, earthquakes, etc., yet it comes in, or came in a still small voice, to and in the heart. When I was about 12 1/2 years old, as I stood one cold day, ice covering all the trees and land. We were not allowed to go to school because of the danger of falling trees across the roads. As I looked at a beautifully formed tree sparkling in the sun shin-

ing up on the ice on it. It seemed to come alive and moved toward me with something that demanded perfection. I had none, and I seemed to dissolve into a mess of ugly corruption. Then a light soft, and full of Life came in, lifted me up and away from corruption into a feeling of being accepted. Only in that wondrous gracious mercy that seemed to be given me! Was it a delusion of mind? Even so, I have not yet forgotten the utter corruption and the being lifted up and away from it, as mercy and love seem to flow. When I went in doors my mother looked at me strangely and said, You knew it was cold outside. I was shaking, but I did not feel the cold. A fear, and a Hope that I was lifted away from utter corruption. Imagination! Maybe, but I yet remember it.

County Line Church was organized in 1869, not as old as some places of worship is. There has not been but 3 clerks since then, the first one a charter member, when County Line came into existence, and served until 1916 or 1917.

My grandfather Elder Ash D. Shortt was pastor (after Elder Amos Dickerson the first to serve) for 35 years. I was only 6 1/2 years old when grandpa died, so I do not remember much about him, and only through reading some of his writings in Zions Landmark, Messenger Of Truth papers.

The last time Grandpa went into the stand, he had to be carried in, and as he sat and listened to two others he motioned for the testament, and read Eph. 2:1-3 and Eph. 2:4-9. This re-

corded by the 1st. clerk, What is interesting to me, may not be of interest to you or others, but to me may mean much, as it gives me some idea of his mind.

If you do not read through this, I will understand, I hope you may visit us again at County Line. "In Rock Of Ages" hymn, a line in 3rd verse "Simply to thy cross I cling" is expressing my feelings as well as an 98 year old member in a nursing home, said to us as she stretched forth both hands, I Cling to that Cross.

Humbly,
Catherine A. Houchins

ARTICLES

MARK 16:15 REVISITED



he instruction, or authority given by Christ, to carry out any action should be seriously considered and followed in this day if the circumstances, under which they were given, apply. If there is some question, or seemed vagueness about the application, the incidence that follows in the scripture and what the disciples did will often give further light on the lessons that are taught. This would seem to be the case in Mark 16:15. "And he said to them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Similar verses are also in Matt. 28:19, and Luke 24:47.

In discussing this subject among brethren some feel strongly that the scripture just cited should be taken literally and applied today. Others

seem to feel that since the "commission" of Christ was after the resurrection that it applies to all them that are spiritual and thus to be carried out by ministers today, although the preaching will only be spiritually heard by believers.

There is no intent here to cause confusion or controversy, but would ask that the scriptures be examined in the light of the circumstances then and also in light of things that followed, according to the scriptures. Consider the following:

1. The Jews did not consider the Gentiles to have any part in any of the promises or heritage of God. Jews were the "chosen" people. Jesus himself said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," when the Gentile woman from Tyre and Sidon came asking for mercy on her daughter who was vexed with a devil. Matt. 15:24. Jesus, in effect, called her a dog when saying, "It is not meet to take the Children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Matt. 15:26. With this background, and more, it seems only reasonable that the disciples, when they heard him say, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature", would have questioned him sharply if they had thought that the gentiles were included. But, they had no questions. It was agreeable with their understanding that this was the religious world of his chosen people, the Jews. Religion and the religious world was what was under consideration - not geography.

2. It follows naturally then, that they which were scattered following the

persecution that arose about Stephen "traveled as far as Phenice and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but the Jews only." Acts 11:19. This would have been in contradiction to Jesus's instructions if the "world" that Jesus spoke of had included the Gentiles.

3. On the day of Pentecost there were Jews dwelling at Jerusalem," ...devout men, out of every nation under heaven." Acts 2:5. They were there for the feast day. When they heard about what had happened they came together, the Jews, and marveled that they heard the apostles speak in the native tongue of the nation from which they came, Acts 2:6-11. There is no evidence that any Gentile experienced this great event. The fact that the Gentiles also had a part in the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ had not then been manifest.

4. When Peter was called to go down to the house of Cornelius, Acts Chap. 10, he told Cornelius it was unlawful for him, a Jew, to keep company, or to come into one of another nation, meaning the Gentiles. But, the reason that Peter gave for coming was that God had showed him, in the vision on the housetop, of a vessel like a great sheet, "...that I should not call any man common or unclean." It is important to note that Peter did not refer back to the "commission" of Christ as his authority for coming down to Cornelius. In fact no scripture writer appears to ever again refer to the "commission" as their authority for doing anything. Nor is it ever referred to except in places like Acts 10:42,

where an overview of the gospel of Christ and a sequence of events is being given.

5. Those of the circumcision, or Jews, that were with Peter at the house of Cornelius "...were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 10:44. Why should they have been amazed if Christ, in Mark 16:15 had truly meant that they were to go into all the natural world, including the Gentiles, or if there had been Gentiles present at the day of Pentecost? Christ spoke plainly. Did they not understand? No. They understood correctly, they were to go to the Jew only - the Hebrews. The good news of the gospel was first to be preached to the Jew. It was not shown until Peter's vision on the house top and the following experience at the house of Cornelius that salvation was to the Jew and Gentile alike. This further revelation, that the Gentiles were also to receive the gospel, was given through Peter, who was given the keys of the kingdom. This shows the great importance of apostolic authority, through the Spirit. The scripture states that Jesus taught until the day he was taken up,"after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen." Acts 1:1,2. This then was one of the commandments given to Peter, and is a further step in the progress of the gospel revelation.

6. If there is yet any doubt that the disciples understood, and understood correctly, that the gospel was to the

Jew only, as of the time of the commission of Mark 16:15, then read Acts 11:1-17. "And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, "Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, didst eat with them." It should be noticed that they did not compliment him, or in any way condone his action, which they should have done if indeed the instructions of Christ truly was to go into all the literal world and preach the gospel to the whole Adamic race. Peter had to defend himself.

7. Until it was revealed that the gospel and salvation was to the Gentile as well as the Jew, which was by Peter's revelation and his experience at the house of Cornelius, there was no need for an apostle to the Gentiles. But now, the time was right, the need existed and the purpose of God was further revealed when one Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus was shined about by a light from heaven and instructed by Jesus. Acts 9:1-9 The disciple Ananias was instructed by Jesus to go to Saul (apostle Paul). "... the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles" Acts 9:15.

8. When Paul and Barnabas came to Antioch in Pisidia they went into the synagogue and were ask to speak, Acts 13: 14-15. But, on the second day the Jews were filled with envy and spake against them. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but

seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:46.

Paul, it should be noted, had not yet been called, and was not present when Jesus gave the "commission" as recorded in Mark 16:15. He received his "commission" at a later time, or about the time that Peter had the revelation on the housetop showing that Gentiles were also cleansed and were to receive the gospel, which was manifest by the Holy Spirit.

Considering the points just presented, it would seem that there was a progressive order to the revelation of the gospel, in the early apostolic age, and also an order concerning when and to whom it was to be preached. The order would seem to be as follows:

A. Jesus himself began his ministry after being baptised by John and tempted of the devil. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 4:17.

B. The twelve apostles were given unusual powers and sent, apparently to the Jews in the southern portion of the divided kingdom, Judah, and not to the Gentiles nor to the northern portion of the divided kingdom which was Samaria. Matt. 10:1-5.

C. Seventy disciples were sent into every city and place which Jesus would come Luke 10:1. The territory to which they were to go appears to be expanded to the northern kingdom of Samaria, because we see in John 4:4, that Jesus "...must needs go through

Samaria." So the expanded territory of the gospel now included all of the native land of the Hebrews - both Judah and Samaria. But the Jews (Hebrews) were scattered to other parts of the world as well.

D. Mark 16:15. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This sends the disciples to other lands beyond Judah and Samaria where the Jews had been scattered. This includes the Jews everywhere. Some of these are the Jews that were gathered together on the day of Pentecost. Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven. Acts 2:5. See also Col. 1:23.

E. Peter was shown, in the house-top revelation, Acts 10:9-16, that the Gentiles, which had been considered unclean, were also cleansed by the blood of Christ. Although the salvation, that was to the Gentiles also, had been spoken of in prophecy and also by Jesus, see John 10:16, and other places, this house-top revelation and the following experience at the house of Cornelius was the first revelation, to the disciples, that the gospel of salvation was to be preached to the Gentiles.

F. Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles and was called for this purpose. Since the authority for the preaching of the gospel was through the hands of the apostles it is understandable that the calling of the apostle, that was to the Gentiles, was not until the revelation was made that the gospel was also to the Gentiles. Thus the step by step, or progressive revelation of the gospel and the purpose of

how it was to be carried forward was established and completed - precept upon precept.

Although the evidence of the scriptures would seem to deny that the "commission" in Mark 16:15 was universal, nor any more applicable to the church today than is the "commission" where Jesus sent out the 70. Luke 10:1, it should in no way be inferred that the gospel should not be preached, both then and now. It simply means that the "commission" of Jesus was carried out then and that Mark 16:15 is not the authority for the gospel message today, any more than it was at the house of Cornelius.

The scriptural accounting of the events are rather for our learning in viewing some of the marvelous ways that Christ has provided for his bride, and to show again that "...there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven." There was a time for the gospel to be revealed and preached to the Jews and a different time for the Gentiles. Both were by the authority of God and in the instructions given to the apostles.

There are many examples in scripture that demonstrate that the gospel is to be proclaimed today. But they are directed to none other than "...the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" ("What if" omitted) Rom. 9:23, 24. Considering that the scriptures are only to and for the benefit of the church and the chil-

dren of God, and do themselves testify to this fact, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:20, one does not have to look far for a "commission", or authority that fits these latter days. Such authority that fits these latter days. Such authority seems to be primarily in two areas: First, feeding the flock of God is clearly stated in 1 Pet. 5:2. "Feed the flock of God which is among you..." The second would seem to apply to those without, but does not exclude those within the church, and is expressed in Jude 3 "...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." See also Phil. 1:27, 28 and others. In Matt. 24:14 we see that the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. This, unlike Mark 16:15, does proclaim the universal nature of God's workings, and it will be done through the manifold ways of the calling of God's ministers.

Perhaps an additional consideration should be given to the two areas that are expressed above. In a more personal way the individual saints are to put on the gospel, as is expressed in the 6th Chapter of Ephesians. In putting on the whole armor of God we are to have our "...feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Eph. 6:15. "...and having done all, to stand." Eph. 6:13. This armor of God is defensive, thus the people stand - not attack. But in this defense the brilliant flashing of the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, pro-

claims the gospel in a magnificence
that will be seen with rejoicing by his
people in every kindred, nation and
tongue.

Elder Wayman G. Chapell

If Jehovah is infinite in all His ways,
Giving life to man and numbering
his days,

Did He not have a right in His sinless
decree

To mark out the way both for you
and for me?

If He did decree just what we should
do

I can't arraign Him: brethren, can
you?

If all things were in the decree of His
will

And all things are working the same
to fulfill,

Who but a vile sinner too wicked to
bow

Would call Him to question, or say,
What doest thou?

If He did decree the sad death of His
holy Son,

The sinless, the righteous, the most
holy One,

And this did not make Him the au-
thor of sin,

To make Him the author where will
you begin?

Will you begin with Judas whose
acts were foretold

And as was determined his Master
sold?

Did not the dear Saviour say, Woe to
that man?

I go as determined in God's holy
plan.

If Pharaoh be one you think would
no doubt

Prove that God's purpose was not
carried out,

Did not God command him by Moses
you know,

"Thus saith Jehovah, Let my people
go."

Yet I will harden, yea, harden his
heart

That he will refuse, and not let them
depart

Till I bring my just plagues on all
your foes

And thus get me honour on him and
his hosts.

But sinners most wicked will off Him
arraign

And against His just counsel they
often complain

And say if He decreed all things to
the end

Then He is unjust and the author of
sin.

The heathen may rage and imagine
vain things

The lowest, the highest, yea, even
their kings

And shout till the world hear the
sound of their din

The author, the author, the author of
sin.

But his saints will still praise Him
and shout as they go,

Jehovah, most holy, all things doth
foreknow.

His counsel did settle just how they
should be,

So shout on you heathen, you don't disturb me.

We learn from an angel that time shall soon end

And saints shall be welcomed by Jesus their friend.

This established by holy decree

For thus it is written and thus it shall be.

If all things are certain, how came they so?

If they were not certain, how would God foreknow?

Were all things to which foreknowledge relate

Made certain by the old heathen goddess of fate?

We surely all know at thought and a glance

Things were not left to haphazard chance.

Will someone tell me, that I may see, How things can be certain yet uncertain be?

Now while you are thinking I'll come to a halt.

If you don't get the point, it isn't my fault.

But brother, please tell me how this thing could be

That all things were made certain without a decree.

Author Unknown

PSALM 61:2.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

VOICES OF THE PAST

"Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him." Psalm lxii. 8.



Have we not sometimes been enabled to pour out our hearts at a throne of grace, and tell the Lord what we really wanted, what we really asked for, and tell him that nothing but that which he alone could give would satisfy our souls? There have been such times of access to the God of grace. And afterwards perhaps we have forgotten the things we told him of; we have been heedless of the prayers we laid at his feet; and though very earnest at the time in seeking after certain blessings, we left them at the Lord's feet and forgot them all. But the Lord does not forget them; they are treasured up in his heart and memory; and in his own time he brings them to light, and gives the fulfillment of them. But before he does it, he will bring us into the spot where we want them again; and then we have to tell him, and supplicate and ask him again, ashamed of ourselves perhaps that we should have asked the Lord for these blessings and been as heedless of them as though we did not care to receive them at his hand; but still, under trouble, under soul necessity, under grief, we go and tell him again. And then the Lord, in his own time and

way, brings about the very things we desired of him; opens up ways, lifts out of trials, removes burdens, makes a way in the deep, which no eye but his could see, and no hand but his could open, - leads the soul into it, brings the soul through it, and then hides all glory from the creature, by making us fall down before his feet, and ascribe glory and honour and power and thanksgiving and salvation unto God and the Lamb.

J.C. Philpot

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION ?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

**From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".**

**THE TRANSFIGURATION
ON THE MOUNTAIN**

Signs of the Times, June 1938



Elder E.J. Lambert

In my mind the transfiguration on the mountain was the most beautiful scene to be witnessed by man on this earth. If it pleases God to enable

me, I desire to write of some of the beauties I see in meditation upon the grand story. Jesus took Peter and John and James and went up into a

mountain to pray. He chose the ones to go with him. He did not give a broad opportunity to the multitudes, disciples or apostles, with the invitation "whosoever will," but "took" a special three of his special twelve of the disciples. These three that He took with Him up into the mountain were the same three that He took with Him down into the garden of Gethsemane. Peter, John and James not only witnessed the most agonizing scene, when Jesus was agonizing in prayer and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, but also witnessed the most beautiful scene of His transfiguration. The thought we get from this fact is that those who are destined to suffer the greatest afflictions and tribulations in the valley of distress are also blessed to experience the greatest joys and brilliancy in the mountain of gladness. Peter, John and James must have not been of the progressive type of Christians we have today, who seem to think Jesus needs help. Instead of helping Jesus pray they were "heavy with sleep" both in the garden of Gethsemane and also on the mountain of transfiguration. "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias."

The questions that come to mind are, Who was Moses? and who was Elias? We find that the law was given to Moses by Jehovah. The law is referred to in the Bible as "the law of

Moses? (Ezra 7:6; Neh. 8:1; Ezra 6:18). The ten commandments on tables of stone, together with ordinances, were given to Moses, who taught the law to the people. We find Moses connected with the law all along, therefore we conclude that Moses represented the law in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

Who was Elias? Elias was that great prophet who predicted the drouth to king Ahab (1 Kings 17:1). Elias hid at the brook Cherith and was miraculously fed by the ravens. He raised a widow's son and contested with Baal's prophets, by whom God manifested Himself as God. He later slew these prophets at Kishon (1 Kings 18). God so blessed him and honored him that Elias ascended into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). He was the most honored of the prophets, therefore we conclude that Elias represented prophecy in that trio of talkers on the mountain.

The third in that trio was Jesus Christ. They spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). In meditation, we hear Moses, representative of the law, giving the requirements of the law, that the law must be kept, and punishment for disobedience of the law must be meted out and justice satisfied. We hear Elias, representing prophecy, saying that these requirements of the law, and penalty for disobedience, will be completed and justice satisfied. Then we hear Jesus saying, Think not that I am come to destroy the law (Moses), or the proph-

ets (Elias); I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. Then Moses and Elias departed and Jesus was left alone. Peter said, Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elias, not knowing what he said. In my experiences I have wanted to make three tabernacles. I have desired to live up to the law requirements of duty as we read in Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Thus erect a tabernacle to Moses. I have desired to fulfill prophecy, in accomplishing the warfare and obtaining pardon for my iniquities (Isaiah 40:2). Thus erect a tabernacle to Elias. And at the same time I have desired to pay homage to that Scripture which reads, "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" (Eph. 2:8-10). Thus erect a tabernacle to Jesus. In my experience there was a time when I verily thought the law, prophecy and grace were contrary. As Peter, I could not see how the three tabernacles could be constructed in one. While Peter was in a confused state of mind the God of heaven spoke thus from the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." It was needless to build three tabernacles. The law of Moses and the prophecy of Elias were being

fulfilled by Jesus Christ. This command from the clouds (I verily believe) removes the seeming contradiction of the Scriptures. The requirements of the law must be met, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Prophecy must be fulfilled, and Jesus was the only One who did it. Therefore, pay no more heed to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled by Jesus.

“Jesus was left alone.” Yes, He was sufficient to tread the winepress alone. He did not need Moses and Elias any longer. His services pleased the God of heaven. It so pleased the Father that this command from the clouds means (to me), pay no more attention to the law and the prophets, for they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, therefore, “Hear ye Him.” What do we hear Him saying? We hear Him saying, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” “I am the door, by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture” (John 10:9). “No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day: (John 6:44). we are made to realize we are not saved according to our power or works, but according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). Therefore, the law system has disappeared as Moses disappeared. This law system was not destroyed, but fulfilled by Jesus

Christ. If I am one who was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law for me, and my account is so accredited. All the sins that I have committed, or will commit, were laid upon Jesus’ shoulders and He bore them on the cross and paid the penalty by shedding His precious blood for me.

Brethren, my mind has traveled faster than I could write, and I know this is very imperfect and scattering, but may God be pleased to enable us by His grace to feast upon some of the beauties contained in the record of the transfiguration on the mountain.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1993

- Mrs. Ella Simpkins, VA
- In memory Frank Simpkins ... \$100.00
- Tim Barron, TX 2.00
- Russell Erbaugh, IL 20.00
- O.P. Murphy, TX 100.00
- Mrs. Ruby Barron, LA 2.00
- Maurice Webb, IL 2.00
- L.D. Conner, VA 7.00
- H.L. Knight, Jr., NC 5.00
- Mrs. Betty Nutter, MD 2.00
- James Brown, TN 2.00
- Tommy Wall, VA 7.00
- S.R. Fanning, TN 2.00
- Bill G. Clinton, CA 2.00
- Mrs. Grace Berry, TX 20.00
- Eld. W.G. Chapell, TN 20.00
- Mrs. Lester Haning, WV 10.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER DELPHIS BLACK

Sister Black was born on June 6, 1907 in Carter County, Kentucky. She was the daughter of Elder H.L. and Martha Mullins Rogers. Her husband, Chester Black preceded her in death. Her survivors include: two brothers, Harmie Rogers, and Grover Rogers; four sisters, Madgel Rogers, Lorene Bellew, Irene Watson and Mayve Cooksey; and a host of other relatives and friends.

Sister Black was a faithful member of the Lost Creek Primitive Baptist Church at Denton, Kentucky. We have many pleasant memories of our dear sister and her faithfulness in attending the meetings at home and with the sister churches until she was no longer able to go. She was also gracious in receiving the brethren and sisters into her home.

After a long illness, Sister Black passed from this life on February 18, 1993 at the age of eighty-five.

The funeral services were conducted by Elders W.P. O'Neal and J.B. Farmer and she was buried in East Carter Memory Gardens.

Her labors, sorrows and sufferings are over and she is now asleep, we hope, in Christ where she will be kept until His coming, at which He will receive His own unto Himself.

This was written by one who loved her, I hope in Truth, at the request of the Lost Creek Church in conference.

Approved in conference on April 4, 1993.

Elder J.B. Farmer, Moderator
Sister Sherry Farmer, Clerk

MEREDITH H. DENT

In February 14, 1993, GOD saw fit to call from our midst Meredith H. Dent whom I called brother, although he was not a member of the CHURCH he had a hope that CHRIST was his Savior. He believed in the finished work of GOD and not what man could do for his eternal salvation. He believed that GOD chose a people in his SON before the foundation of the world and all that he died for would be saved, and at his appearing that all that remained would be changed with those that are asleep in JESUS and be caught up together to meet him in the air to ever be with him. For we are sown in weakness and raised in power sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body, sown in corruption and raised incorruptible. Our loss is his eternal gain. Let us bow in humble submission to the will of GOD who does all things after the counsel of his will. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife Ima Hodges Dent, two sons, one daughter, three grandchildren, three great grandchildren, two brothers, and one sister.

Services were conducted by Elder Ronald Crouch and Elder Harold Johnson. He was laid to rest at Mount Vernon Cemetery.

Written by request of the CHURCH.

Resolved:

One copy for the CHURCH records

One copy for the family

One copy to be sent to the Signs Of The Times.

Elder Ronald K. Crouch,
Moderator

Elder Harold R. Johnson,
Asst. Moderator

Brother William A. Johnson,
Clerk

SISTER MILDRED VIRGINIA DYKES

It is with sadness that one begins to write the obituary of Sister Mildred Dykes who died in the Salisbury Nursing Home on October 15, 1992. Her true friendship and fellowship in the church will be sorely missed. Yet our loss is her gain, for Sister Mildred's walk in life gave evidence that she was truly one of God's little children.

She was born on a farm on the Snow Hill Road near Salisbury, Maryland on September 23, 1900. Her parents were the late Alonzo Dykes, Sr. and Annie Belle Reddish Dykes. Her grandmother (Sally Ann Staton Reddish), whom she dearly loved, was a devout believer and member of the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church. Sister Mildred often reminisced about that grandmother's unwavering steadfast-

ness and staunch belief in her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

After graduating from the Wicomico High School in 1918 (when she presented the class history), Sister Mildred became a teacher for several years. Later she went to live with her brother Ralph and his family in Omaha, Nebraska. She returned to Salisbury in 1932 to give years of loving care to her aged parents. After their death she purchased a home in Salisbury, worked for various lawyers, and retired from the Maryland State Department of Unemployment in 1965. During this time she was given a hope in Christ Jesus and asked for a home in the church. She was baptized by the late Elder David V. Spangler and served the church faithfully as its clerk for many years. Her home was a haven for believers who came from afar.

Around 1987, after experiencing a devastating fall in her home, she sold it and entered the John B. Parsons Retirement Home in Salisbury. She continued to attend church services. Her health remained remarkably good except for the growing dimness in her only eye. In early adulthood she had suffered the loss of an eye due to the unsuccessful surgery of a doctor who was operating on her face for the painful malady of tic douleureux. Over the years she bore her loss with patience, never blaming her doctor.

In the fall of 1990, Sister Mildred fell in her room at the Parsons Home and broke her hip. Then began serious circulatory problems which resulted in the loss of one leg and confinement in three different nursing homes. But

through it all she remained cheerful and uncomplaining. Her nurses loved her. When she discovered that her leg had been severed at the knee she was glad for she had feared in her mind that she had no leg at all. Though her eyesight dimmed, her faith in her Lord did not. It was a joy to visit her and read (and sing) with her favorite hymns and nuggets of scripture most of which were still stored in her memory.

For over sixty years my sister and I knew, admired, and came to love Sister Mildred Dykes. For the last twenty years we were intimately associated with her in the church. We see her life as one of courage, hard work and personal sacrifice - many of life's natural joys were denied her but fellowship with her Lord was not. From a young girl she had been a student of the Bible and she loved it all her days. She was kind and compassionate and often helped others in need. But, like each of us, she was not perfect, and she knew this too. We feel blessed that God touched our lives with hers.

Sister Mildred is survived by several nieces and nephews. Her only surviving brother, Alonzo Dykes, Jr., died January 11, 1993.

Her funeral services were conducted by Elder C.B. Davis, Jr. at the Bounds Funeral Home in Salisbury. Elder Davis also knew the true Mildred Dykes. Interment was in the Wicomico Memorial Park Cemetery.

Submitted in Love,
Frances Parish
and
Alice Majors

SADIE WARD WALKER

It is with sad heart that I attempt to write this obituary of our dear Sister Sadie Ward Walker. It pleased our Lord to call her home on September 16, 1992 at the age of 84.

She was born in Rockingham County, N.C. on March 6, 1908, the daughter of Robert Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Pruitt Ward. She was married to George Walker who preceded her in death in 1959. There were no children born to this union. She is survived by one brother, Harry Ward of Danville, Va. and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Walker united with Dan River Church on August 28, 1960 and was baptized by her pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler. She was a faithful member, strong in the faith and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. As she did not drive and had no car, she had to depend on her brothers and sisters of the church to carry her to its meetings.

Her funeral was held at Dan River Church on September 19, 1992 by her pastor, Elder Kenneth R. Key. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

Respectfully,
Connie M. Page

1 TIMOTHY 3:16.

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

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GOD'S GRACE

*God will teach his child of grace,
Though hard afflictions he will taste.
He'll learn about his love.*

*God's grace is sweet and so amazed,
The child of God has been abased,
But filled with things from above.*

*Tears of sadness will annoy,
But then there'll be the tears of joy'
He'll share with gifts of Zion.*

*Grace is the sweetest thing they'll know,
When God has entered in he'll show.
In love there is no time.*

*Their hearts will swell and almost burst!
When they witness the new birth,
This earth will not be seen.*

*For in the elected child of grace,
They only want the perfect way,
That leads them to their Lord and King.*

*To sing sweet songs and praise God's
name,
To be healed from all earthly shame,
To live forever more.*

*To know that God has foreordained,
And in his care they will remain.
And new white robes they'll wear.*

*With this we hope to be a saint,
And worldly things won't make us faint,
Or lead us to despair.*

*For if God saved a wretch like me,
Mine ears to hear and eyes to see,
Then none can deny,*

*That his elect was foreordained,
To have his love and will remain,
Will live, shall never die.*

Kate Mathews

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EDITORIAL



ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL



I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

There are many scriptures in both the old and new testaments which refer to the relationship of Christ and his church as that of a shepherd and his flock. Certainly, in natural terms, this is a very good analogy of the bond that exists between Jesus and his chosen people. They are his sheep because he bought and paid for them with his own precious

blood and he knows everyone that is included in that flock. His sheep know him because at a certain time in their life he came to them and revealed himself to them and called them unto himself: and they will always remember and respond, to that voice that called them from nature's darkness. They acknowledge that but for that call they would have forever remained at home in the world, an alien from God and would have never known of the things that are so sweet and precious to them since that time. They will ever trust and depend upon him for all of their need because he is their only source of help.

David was a shepherd in the flesh, and as such knew the total commitment and devotion required on the part of the shepherd to provide the necessary care for the sheep and the extent to which that care must go. Sheep are the most defenseless of all animals, incapable of defending themselves and are totally dependent upon the shepherd for food, water, protection from the elements and enemies and for keeping them in the sheepfold at night and in the flock during the day. Knowing all of this, from experience and realizing that this very closely parallels the relationship between God and man David wrote the most beautiful psalm on this subject which is very dear to every child of grace. And comforts them on their journey in this wilderness of sin. They see and experience the truth and beauty of this psalm and realize it is an allegory of their travels here in this time world under the leadership of their shep-

herd. They are totally dependent upon him for all of their needs both natural and spiritual.

Isaiah writes, by the inspiration of God, "Comfort ye Comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hands double for all her sins." This was written by one living under the law, which says, do and live, sin and die and yet he writes of comforting the Lord's people. This must have been strange to the people living in that day because the law demanded complete obedience and yet gave nothing in return, that was but what your duty was to do. Surely Isaiah is prophesying of a time that is to come; a time when there will be no striving under the law: a time when the law will be taken away. He speaks of the coming of the voice crying in the wilderness (John the Baptist) and Christ the glory of the Lord being revealed: the mountains being made low, the crooked places straight and the rough places plain. I don't believe even Isaiah understood fully what he was speaking of: Peter speaks of the prophets, inquiring and searching diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come; wondering what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. They did not understand fully where of they spake, but the one who inspired them knew and it is he that has fulfilled it here in our day. Isaiah also told how this comfort would come when he said, "Behold the Lord

God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." This then is the way in which Jerusalem would be comforted, her warfare accomplished and her iniquity pardoned. The shepherd will come, whose sheep they are, will take the law of commandments out of the way, nailing it to his cross and secure their eternal salvation: he will also secure for them a rest from all their strife. Surely this is receiving more than double for all their sin.

We are living in that rest which the shepherd secured for his flock and we are comforted by his presence in our life. We face trials similar to those faced in Isaiah's day but we can look to and depend on the shepherd for help in time of need and believe the promise that no weapon that is formed against us, by the enemy, shall prosper.

Jesus said, speaking of himself as the shepherd, "the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out." A sheepfold is a place, in sheep country, where all flocks gather at night for protection from the beasts of the field: it is an enclosed area safe from danger where the flocks rest at night. In the morning when the shepherd comes to take them out to pasture he calls his sheep and they follow him. They are familiar with his voice, as distinct from all others, and each sheep responds

to the voice of their shepherd. As cowboys sing to herds of cattle to soothe them the shepherd sings and talks to his sheep to calm them and assure them that all is well. Jesus uses this illustration to show that only his sheep, his elect which he knows and calls by their name will respond to his voice: for they know and trust the voice that first called them from nature's darkness and has been with them since that time, manifestly. Jesus likewise told others, "But ye believe not, because you are not my sheep, as I said unto you, my sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me." He calls only those that are his, were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and none others. He came only to seek and to save those that were lost in the sheepfold of this world and to call them unto himself.

God's people are asked many times why they go hundreds of miles to attend church when there are churches all around home that would welcome them. The world cannot understand that church is not a social gathering unto the children of God but rather a place where the shepherd convenes his flock and they sit and hear his voice: none other will do regardless of how much scripture they may quote. The truth spoken by the shepherd is as those golden bells on the hem of the garments of the priest as he ministered in the holiest of holies offering the sacrifice for the sins of the people: as long as they heard the tinkling of the bells they knew that all was well and God was pleased with their offer-

ing. Hearing the voice of the shepherd gives the same comfort in this day because it encourages the children of God in their journey here in time: it strengthens their hope and faith that he is still at the right hand of God making intercession for their sins.

Surely this is the comfort that Isaiah is speaking of that will be in that day. The comfort in this day is because of the indwelling of the holy spirit in the hearts of the saints. As Paul wrote in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. "And these all, 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." They did not have the same intimate relationship with the shepherd in the same way and manner as the flock has in the gospel day. The shepherd has come into the world, made the sacrifice required by the law and returned unto the Father. Because he went unto the Father, he has sent the comforter which is the Holy Ghost to apply these truths to the heart of every heaven born soul: to comfort them in the midst of this world of sin and sorrow in which they live; even as Lot, whose righteous soul was vexed from day to day by the sin that surrounded him. The shepherd is able to deliver the godly out of temptation and reserve them unto himself for his own holy name's sake.

This is the better thing which we have in this day than those who died in faith under the law. The shepherd has come and is caring for the flock, supplying all of their need and leading

them in the paths of righteousness for his own name's sake.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Key,

I hope the Lord in heaven will bless me and enable me to write a few lines of the things on my mind in such a way that it may bring comfort to some of his little ones. It seems in my weak way and feeble attempts that what I write would accomplish nothing. But who knows the mind of the Lord, for through man's weakness his power and wisdom is made known, therefore if I do write this article, I am persuaded it will accomplish whatsoever purpose the Lord had for it to be written.

Heb. 10:16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.

I hope to write concerning the laws or covenants mankind has been under and are still under in their relationship with God.

The first law spoken to by God unto Adam, later to all Israel from fiery Mt. Sinai, was then delivered to them on tables of stone. This law which came from Mt. Sinai, was spoken of or called the letter that killeth, or the ministration of death. The people soon real-

ized they couldn't hear or live up to the law given to them from this fiery mountain, so they besought God that they wouldn't again hear his voice or see this great fire. The Lord then promised to raise them up a prophet from among their own people, and he would speak unto them everything that He would command Him. In due time it came to pass, far from the mount of transfiguration a voice from God, this is my beloved Son, Hear Ye Him. Therefore the believer now is under the gospel which comes from Christ. Hear Ye Him, Man was first under a direct commandment of God, of all the things in the garden, the fruit of the tree of life, thou shall not eat thereof, later under the leadership of Moses and the preaching of Noah this system was in effect for some time. This system was such that bound Adam (or mankind) under every obligation and every circumstance which could ever happen between God and man, this was called the law of sin and death, for it was judged and passed upon man when he transgressed. At Mt. Sinai, the ten commandments were given, they had the same principals of righteousness and agree or correspond with the statutes already given with the approval of the creator who is the judge of all his creation.

All this was given, and was laid in the wisdom of God for the many instances under the law which makes sin abound, that it (sin) might become exceedingly sinful, under the dispensation of grace, by the operation or work of the Holy Spirit which guides them to Christ, who is the truth.

In the coming to pass of all things, the law first, and the Gospel (Christ) was second. The Lord took away the first that he may establish the second. Now we have been delivered from the law, that we may worship in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Here is where Christ becomes the end of the law for every believer, he ceases to speak through the law and speaks to them through Christ. The first has now been taken away, and the second established. The law was not made void by Christ, but rather it was fulfilled by Christ, so therefore none of the demands of justice have been denied. All of the obedience of God's children are done by faith, a God given faith, where Christ is the author and finisher thereof. For there is therefore now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Heb. 10: This is the covenant I will make with them after those days, we have seen how the great Jehovah dealt with his people all down through the ages. Now it came to pass according to the good pleasure of his will, he puts into effect a new covenant. No longer will the people have to gather at fiery Mt. Sinai, no longer will they have to search or wait for a priest to intercede for them, because God says, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.

Now under this new covenant, through the work of the Holy Spirit, man is led into the great truths and

mysteries of Christ, through the leading and guiding of the Spirit, all of God's children are led into this marvelous light, being taught great truths and having revealed unto them great mysteries which have been hid from the beginning of time.

It is true that God has called out and ordained men for the work of the ministry, revealing unto them some wonderful truths concerning Jesus and his gospel. He then blesses these ministers with power and the ability to deliver these, and reveal these things to his children in such a way as to feed and comfort them exactly in the manner to meet their individual needs. The children are all blessed this way but it was pleasing in the mind and purpose of God to have it in such a way that none of his little children would have to depend on the ministers, or any other man to hear or learn of Christ. Because he said, "Every one shall know me from the least to the greatest, Jesus also said, I will send the comforter, and he will take the things of mine and show them unto you."

How sweet it is when sometimes we have a certain scripture on our mind which seems to be quite a puzzle and we are given to think and meditate on the true meaning when suddenly the revelation comes to your mind so clear and plain that you are made to rejoice.

From time to time when we are blessed to feel the great love of such a wonderful God and Saviour, then I believe for a short while we can thank and praise God in Spirit and in truth.

So as not to be too lengthy, I will try to close, may we all be blessed with

brotherly love, loving instead of finding fault with our brethren. May it please the God of mercy, grace and love that we all may grow in grace, to the honor and praise of his great and Holy Name.

A brother, I hope
Frank Hunt
102 Lake Ave.
Salem, Va. 24153

QUERIES & ANSWERS

(June, 1852)

QUESTION:



o some of the children of God about here, the, to them, new doctrine that God does not chastise his people for their sins has been preached. The main arguments for the doctrine seem to be, that, as all the sins of the elect were laid upon Christ, therefore God does not punish his people for their sins; beholding no iniquity in Jacob or perverseness in Israel. Also that when in the Psalms mention is made of "visiting their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes," it does not refer to the people of God, but refers to Christ. Also, that the chastening, rebuking, and scourging spoken of in Hebrews xii. refer to a law work.

ANSWER:

No error is worse, for none is more deluding, than that which consists in

perverted truth. This, indeed, is the chief feature of the errors that Satan sows in the visible church. Gross error would not serve his turn. It would at once be rejected. But error in the dress of truth, error gilt over by truth, error putting truth in the front and slightly bringing up the rear, may hope to pass muster and escape detection. Such is the error mentioned in the inquiry before us. There is in it a little truth and a great deal of error. Its preachers and promoters have gilt their error over with a small modicum of truth. But we will, with God's help and blessing, drive a nail through this bad sovereign and fasten it to the counter; for, however many hands it may have passed through, it was first coined in the devil's cellar, and he cast the mould, cut the die, and stamped the impression.

But first look at the gilding. A bit of sterling gold is spread over the base metal. That truth is, that "God has laid the sins of the elect all upon Christ, that they are all eternally blotted out; and that, therefore, God sees no iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel." This is sound, blessed truth, the joy and consolation of the family of God. But underneath lies the base metal: "Therefore," (O what a therefore!) "as God sees no sin in his elect, he cannot punish them for the sins that he cannot see." O lame and impotent conclusion! In one sense, God may see no sin in his people; but in another, he may see a great deal. Because God sees no sin to punish hereafter, does he see no sin to punish here? Because the blood of Jesus has

washed away sin in its penal and eternal consequences, has it removed sin out of the heart of the family of God? Is sin become a nonentity in the same way as a cloud is a nonentity when the sun has dispersed it from the sky? As a cloud of eternal wrath, sin is forever blotted out; but not as a cloud that gathers over the soul and hides the light of God's countenance.

But the experience of God's people in all ages is point-blank against such a doctrine. Does sin cease to be sin because Christ died for it? When David committed adultery, was that a sin! When Peter cursed and swore, was that a sin? When the Corinthian took his father's wife to his bed, was that a sin? To say, "No: these would have been sins in others, but not in the people of God," is an outrage upon common decency, and degrades religion below the morality of a brothel. Then it must be admitted that the sins of believers are sins; and if sins, then they have an existence; and if they have an existence, then sin is not a nonentity; that is, a thing which has no being nor existence. It is a real thing - a fearful, a dreadful reality - as thousands of groaning saints of God daily feel, in spite of all mere metaphysical arguments to the contrary.

But now comes the next question. If sin exists in the hearts of the family of God, does God ever chasten them for it? Here the testimony of God is conclusive: "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." (Ps. lxxxix. 30-35.) But it may be objected, "This is the old covenant, the ancient legal dispensation." Is it? O no; God has blocked out this argument most effectually by expressly declaring it is the new covenant of which he speaks: "Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people." (Ps. lxxxix. 19). Who is the Holy One to whom God spake in vision, the Mighty One upon whom he has laid help? Who but Jesus, who, as God-Man Mediator in the days of his flesh, cried, "Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation?" Of whom but Christ's spiritual seed is it promised, "His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven?" (Ps. lxxxix. 29). Now observe it is of this same seed that the declaration is made, "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." (30-32). "If his children!" Who are his children but Christ's spiritual seed and family - the elect of God? What, then, can be clearer than the declaration, "I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes?" A man

who can deny and outface this express testimony will deny and outface everything.

But how plain are Scripture examples as well as Scripture declarations! God put away David's sin; but look at the chastisement: "Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house." "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." (2 Sam. xii. 10, 14). The cases also of Eli, Solomon, and Hezekiah, are all to the same point. The Corinthians were guilty of disorderly conduct at the Lord's Supper. "For this cause," says Paul, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." (1 Cor. xi. 30-32). How expressly is it declared here that the Lord chastened them for their conduct by weakness and sickness!

But nothing can be more decisive than the declaration, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Heb. xii. 6-8). Chastening and scourging are here given as express marks of sonship. Those, therefore, that deny chastening proclaim loudly

they are bastards. But, to evade this testimony, they say that this chastening refers to a law-work. Two strokes of Paul's broad sword cut that ground from under their feet: "For they verily for a few days chastened as after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. xii. 10, 11.) Do we become partakers of God's holiness by the law or the gospel? By the gospel surely: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." (Rom. vi. 22). There is no holiness but by the Holy Spirit who is the alone Author of it, and he produces it not by the law but by the gospel. It is "the new creature" (which the law knows nothing about) "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Again, does the law produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness? No. All that the law produces is bondage, guilt and death. The peaceable fruits of righteousness grow on the gospel graft and not on the legal crab.

In fact, men who hold such views are clearly out of the secret. The rod of God is not upon them; and when such doctrine is proclaimed from the pulpit, the best answer from the pew is, "Mr. Preacher, there is every reason to fear that you are a bastard, and are now only proclaiming you own base

pedigree, and foaming out your own shame.”

J.C. Philpot

ARTICLES

Whenever I begin to feel a desire to write down what my feelings are, concerning what I believe, as having to do with the three-in-one God and His government, and His operation of it; my deepest desire is, that I might (above all else), not write anything that could even hint at an untruth, contrary to that Holy truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Feeling an awareness of that weakness of my flesh in its nature, my deep desire is that - if it could be His will, He would lead, guide and direct my mind and pen, in that strait and narrow path, wherein lieth His truth. The great and merciful God and Lord in heaven “only” knoweth for sure, if ever I did utter or groan a true prayer unto Him, were ever truly thankful to Him, or were ever enabled by Him, to in Holy truth praise His great and Holy name. I only can say for sure - I have from time to time surely desired to do so, and from time to time have felt hopeful that I were enabled by Him to do so. But here is how it is with me “Dear Brethren”, though I feel more sure at times than at others, that maybe I had been truly thankful unto Him etc. But in the knowledge that I do not know the mind of God; I therefore must limit my certainty of those things, to my precious hope, that it were so. If in-

deed I do know my feelings, I do truly desire, all my trust be in the three-in-One God; for I can think of none other who could possibly be worthy of my trust, either in this world or for that world to come. Now Dear Brethren, this is not by any means meant to reflect upon any less feelings of my love for you; for it is my feelings and my hope, that this love I feel for you, is based and founded upon “only” that what you have been enabled to manifest of the Lord’s working within you; and after all, if that be so, all the good in and of, from it all - came directly from He who does all things well. Dear Brethren, whenever we are enabled to experience that feeling what brightens our hope in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is it not oh so extremely precious to us! I feel that it surely is; for as the Scripture sayeth - we live by hope. If in accord with His Holy will, may we ever be reminded that whatsoever of a Spiritual nature we may feel or experience, while we sojourn here in this low ground of sin and sorrow, that its entirety did come “only” from the three-in-one God; and assuredly not any portion from any man; and of that same equal importance - that it all came as a totally (and unearned and unmerited our part) free gift from God.

It is my understanding; in all the Holy Scripture, there is no provisions indicated, whereby boasting is permitted by His chosen children. For after all, (it is my understanding) to boast, is to add to that what did actually exist, or in fact commit a falsehood; which (to my mind) would surely

apply, where man should boast of himself.

From when "God" by the word of His power, brought this time world into being, there was and is a "process" by which every instant of time for this world to stand, shall be fulfilled to exactness, without variation or any such thing, be it birth, death, calm, storm, heat, cold, wet, dry, night, day, rain, sunshine, health, sickness, famine or riches, wars or peace, each and all has and shall come to exactness as its Creator God did (from before the foundation of the world) foresee, foreordain, fix, establish and predestinate that it all shall be, in exact like manner, time and place, as He did foresee, foreknow, purpose and determine that it all shall be. As having to do with His fixedness, and as to how all things do come about, or come to pass, in Holy reality, I believe that there is absolutely no such thing as what man calls an accident, a happen-so, a probability or any such thing; but is just as sure to come to exactness, as it is sure that "God" does sit upon His throne in heaven.

The Old School or Primitive Baptist believing and expressing those things like those above mentioned, of the unhindered certainty of God, His unchangeableness etc.; is what the arminians or work mongers, base their claim of us being do nothings etc. But that is just how it has been since Adam and Eve; the Spirit maketh alive, while the flesh profiteth nothing; the Holy Spirit does lead, guide and direct one, in the way of Holy truths, while satan or the fleshly way of man, lead,

guide and direct one in the way of death and lies and tells one he or she can please "God" with the work of their hands, and their fleshly plans and words in begging for to fulfill their love for ever more money; saying in effect, you can buy your ticket to heaven, by giving us all your worldly goods, and we will see to it, that the Lord receives it on your behalf. But the scriptures sayeth, the Love of Money, is the root of all evil. I still remember some of the words spoken in prayer, by an Old Baptist minister, many, many years ago; O "Lord" if in accord with Thy will, let me have just enough so I will not steal, but not enough so that I will forget Thee. And if I know my heart, that is my feelings from time to time. Oh my precious Brethren; it is a deep desire with me, that I could live out the remainder of this life with you, die and be buried with you, and be called forth with you and be placed on the right hand of the Lord God with you, on the morning of the resurrection; and be carried along with you to heaven and immortal glory, and forever sing ceaseless and undivided praise unto our heavenly Father. It is, it seems, most of the time with me, I feel that surely this world is not my home; that most of the time, I am surrounded by people who could not care less, about the things I feel and hope, I love with an everlasting love. Sometimes I find myself oh so much desiring, that those whom I feel a natural love for, could be made to see what they are by nature, and what they must be by the grace of God; But then my mind is arrested, and brought

to remembrance that it is all in God's hands; and that His promises to His children, was not to supply all their wants, but just their needs; and I feel so ashamed for even desiring to live here in this world continually on a flowery bed of ease, when He never did promise any such thing; but instead did promise that we shall surely experience many trials and tribulations, while we live upon this sin cursed earth; but praise His Holy name, He also promised to provide a way of escape. When enabled to look upon it with a Spiritual eye, is it not a most beautiful sight, whenever one of His little children's mortal life ceases to be; just think of it this way; they are then gone from that evil to come, they never again have to suffer in any way, shape or form, but instead, with them it will be like unto just a restful night's peaceful sleep, until the morning of the resurrection, when they are called forth with an immortal body, to meet their precious Lord and Savior in the air, and what wonder of wonders, they (and I hope I) will be like Him and be satisfied, Now dear child of His grace, what more wondrous hope, could we possibly desire for? None I feel, for then that hope, will be replaced with an absolute certainty. If I were enabled to relate to you, some of what is my feelings and belief, concerning the almighty Creator "God", you might say, that I do believe that "God" did absolutely predestinate that all things that be and take place, in all time for this world stand; are exactly as they have come and shall come in the remainder of time left; I would have to

agree with you one hundred percent, on that point; for I do not, to any degree, believe that the God of whom I refer, has ever, or will ever, be surprised, or ever gain any knowledge that He has not always known to its fullest extreme; and that does also include from everlasting and eternally (both) before this time world were created and on after this time world has burned with fervent heat.

For them (and I hope I) who are the afore chosen children of God; that morning of the resurrection of their changed bodies, will in Holy truth be, that everlasting morning, where never again will there come night or darkness, but just one continuous never ending day of perfect happiness, far beyond what mankind could ever find sufficient words to explain. With this next statement, I will try and close out this writing, which has been rather lengthy. Though the flesh in its nature, will surely disagree; yet I must confess; the merciful Lord and God has fully supplied my every need, now for more than 80 years, and I trust will continue to do so. I just have none other whom I desire to place my trust in.

In precious hope, I could be numbered with you; I say to all you children of God's grace and mercy; let us not be ashamed to show and express our love for each other, while we live here in this low ground of sin and sorrow; for let us ever be reminded of this one thing, to be ashamed of our love for each other, is to also be ashamed of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; for in Holy Truth have that love

wherewith He first loved us with, then we shall surely and absolutely love both He and His; for it is entirely impossible to separate one from the other.

In hope, Troy G. Shepard

MATTHEW 6:33



he exhortations of the scriptures are many and diverse, appearing in every book of the new testament. They come from both the mouth of our Lord and from the writers of the testament and are, by no means, to be taken lightly, or of less authority than the scriptures that declare attributes of God and His actions.

In the teaching of Christ to his disciples, in the mountain, he teaches primarily the fullness and the perfection of the law. This is the law that he came to fulfill. Part of the fulfilling the law was in teaching it. He was a teaching priest, teaching it and fulfilling it in every jot and tittle. But in teaching the law there were many gracious things taught and exhortations given.

One of the exhortations given, that seems to have particular significance, in contrasting natural things from spiritual things, is first found in Matt: 6:33, "...seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The things under consideration, that shall be added unto you are the needs of this natural life, but the other is to be sought first.

Of course, the immediate question is, "who is to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and how can it be done?" First, it seems clear that the exhortation was directed to his disciples, his followers, his people, and to no wider audience. "...his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them...." Matt. 5: 1,2. There are many scriptures that could be used as strong evidence, yes even proof that the scriptures are written to the Lord's people and to them only. Of course, there are statements made, that are made by the prophets, the Lord the apostles, etc., to wicked men. But the making of those statements and the recording of them was for the benefit of the Lord's people then and now. They are for our learning. Not the learning and benefit of those evil individuals. "All scripture is given.... That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. II Tim. 3: 16, 17.

If it is then understood that the scripture under consideration is to God's people only, then it is to a people that have been given a mind that can understand beyond the natural desires of the flesh of food, clothing and drink. It is to a people that have been spiritually taught the things of Christ.

The scripture under consideration does not say "Seek ye only the kingdom of God," but seek it first. It should be the most important thing sought by God's children. But, if it were the only thing, and to the exclusion of natural things, then I Tim. 5:8 would be hard to explain. "...if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his

own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." There are needs of this life, and not to be ignored. But, in their proper place they rate much lower than second place to the things of God. The strength of the scripture says to take no thought of them. Or, don't be burdened down by them, having your thoughts consumed by them, as the world does.

The affairs of this life may take up more mental and fiscal labor and more time, than the things of God, but they should never even be compared in importance, desire and commitment. And, if I understand the scriptures, his disciples, including his children today, are exhorted to seek to keep the things of the kingdom of God as upmost, or as the peak of importance in this life.

Of course, it should always be understood that none of the exhortations, or anything else spiritual, can be carried out by the old man, the carnal man. Without the Spirit working within there is nothing profitable. It is the new man, the new spiritual man, to whom the exhortation is intended. None of the exhortations can be carried out without the Spirit working within - they are done of the Spirit. It is only the indwelled subject that is given the understanding of this exhortation, or any other exhortation. Not only this but the indwelled subject is given the desire and the ability, by the Spirit, to carry out the exhortation, and this is the "ye" that is under consideration.

What, then dear disciple do "ye" seek? What is this kingdom of God

and his righteousness that "ye" are to seek. It is certainly not a place, as a natural kingdom. Is it not the kingdom that is from generation to generation, that is within his people? Are not the manifestations of it comparable to the food, drink and clothing, that are the needs of the natural man, that it is compared to? His children do desire to drink freely from the fountain of life and with joy to draw water from the wells of salvation. His children do desire to eat of that spiritual manna that comes down from heaven, even to partake of the flesh of our Lord in communion with our brothers and sisters. And of course, "ye" do desire to be clothed upon by His righteousness.

But how are these things to be sought? How are the wells of salvation to be found or made manifest in your life? How do you locate the spiritual manna? Is there any other way it can be done than by seeking the will of God? Aren't you seeking this kingdom and the sustenance from it when you seek to know His will and what he would have you do or think when confronted by the many temptations of the day?

Yes, of course his children should seek His will, and in doing so seek the kingdom and the things of the kingdom of God. But the apparent problem is that the will of God, except in a general way, can be known only in hindsight.

Of course it is his will that the elect be gathered together in Christ. It is his will "...that all things work together for good to them that love God, to

them who are the called according to his purpose." But, in the race that is set before us in this life we cannot know, beforehand, what his Will is. For example, could Abraham have known the will of God about Isaac when God instructed him to offer him for a burnt offering on the mountain? Could the Hebrew children have known or found out the will of God when they were about to be cast into the fiery furnace? Even Moses desired to see the glory of God, but he could only see His backparts as He took away his hand (the revealing Spirit) from the cleft of the rock (Christ) where he had been placed. Ex. 33.

Do these things not show that God's people are given to understand that the things that have happened to them, and all other things that have taken place, are the will of God? God is sovereign and he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence and He has not changed from the time when King Nebuchadnezar was given to proclaim that God reigns in the armies of heaven and the inhabitation of the earth and none can stay his hand. If the will of God could truly be known in your life beforehand, what would be the need for faith? You would walk by the knowledge of his will. Faith would not be needed.

Even though it is understood that the will of God cannot be found out for your life it no way takes away the need for searching, and to the best of your understanding and God given ability, to follow the teachings, warnings and exhortations of the scriptures.

When the problems and temptations of this life overtake you the approach

needed or answer is usually scripturally clear. Even so, the old nature often clouds the picture to the point that the answer seems hard to find. The struggle can often be severe. But when you have exhausted every effort to find and follow the directions laid down in the scriptures, labored in prayer and sought council from spiritual brothers and truly desiring to find His direction, then it seems clear that the exhortation has been followed, "...seek ye first the kingdom of God..." We should act accordingly. If God intercedes with something different and better, as He did with Abraham and with the lame man at the gate called Beautiful, Act. 3, then you can praise him for his teaching.

The last portion of the scripture under consideration has to do with the things that will be added unto you. David says, Psm. 37:25., "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

Yes, the natural blessings of this life are many. But the meaning of this scripture must surely go beyond the natural blessing of this lifetime. Has He not blessed his children with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ? Eph. 1:3. Aren't the adopted children kings and priests unto God? Rev. 1:6. Will the children not reign eternally with Christ? Rev. 3:21 and 22:5.

"... all these things shall be added unto you", according to the scripture under consideration. With such blessings the natural food, clothing and drink are as nothing, and when in your

right mind, they will be of little concern compared to the spiritual blessings. Yet, they have their place and are supplied.

Elder Wayman G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

DEAR BROTHER GRIFFIN:

May the grace, mercy and peace of God the Father and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you.

I feel thankful for being given to meet you, especially since I have desired this for many years. I also hope to be thankful for your kind and gracious letter.

The Lord willing, I will try to answer your letter. I am hoping to be given grace to be brief and to write words which are acceptable unto God.

Dear brother, there was a time years ago that I walked with those who taught that the works of men were the way to salvation. Being in darkness, I tried to follow their teaching. Looking back, I now understand that I was seeking some relief for the continual sorrow and grief for my wretched sinful state.

They taught if one would only do certain things such as believe in Lord Jesus Christ and be baptised and attend and pray and give and study and witness and obey, one would be happy and blessed and finally would be saved.

I found that I could not believe of myself and that the submitting to baptism or trying to do any of the works

they required brought no relief to my misery.

Next, I thought that by studying the scriptures I would finally learn the truth and that this truth would bring some comfort. I found that the Scriptures greatly condemned me and brought me into confusion especially concerning grace and works and so called "free will" and predestination.

I then reasoned that if I could only learn the original language of the New Testament Greek, I could then understand these deep mysteries. At this same time those who taught works began to encourage me to learn to minister as a preacher. They pointed to a college of their persuasion which taught Greek and their religion.

My dear wife and family consented to sell our home and to leave our family and friends and to leave my job and to begin on a journey. We did not know where the way would lead but I believe we were given a deep desire to please the God of heaven.

I entered this college which those who taught works recommended. As I studied there, I believe I was taught that the truth cannot be taught of the carnal mind and in fact that the carnal mind is enmity against God. I found that I could not preach by their methods (sermon outlines etc.) as they only caused me confusion. I found I could not accept the teaching of their professors since it seemed to be so contradictory to the things I was being given to believe. I found that I could not promote their system of teaching (Sunday schools etc.) or their financial programs etc.

About this time I met Fred Neikirk's son Michael who brought me to meet his father. From them I first heard of Primitive Baptists. They explained their understanding of grace and predestination of all things. I had never heard men speak such things before. At first I kicked against these things. Then I was made to search the scripture anew. It was as if heaven was opened up and the light of truth shone round about. The scriptures were full of the grace of God and of mercy and of the knowledge and wisdom and power of God who works all things after the council of His own will.

I was made to believe that if any man was ever saved it must have been by the grace of God and not by any of the works of men.

I continued to preach among those who taught works. I could not help from bringing forth the things I was being taught (out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh). Opposition mounted and after a season we were thrust out from among them.

About this time the Neikirks were also thrust out from among those they were walking with. The Neikirks were made to affirm the grace of God and true order and many of the people could not receive it.

We found that there were then several families of us who seemed to believe the same things and who had no place to go. We began to meet together in the homes and had prayer and preaching and singing for our mutual comfort.

We had no order as far as constituted and set in order by faithful

churches. Greatly desiring to be set in order, we consented to have others we believed to be faithful brethren and churches to help us. They attempted to set us in order, but when trouble came to us it was manifest that those who attempted to help us were in confusion themselves.

We then withdrew from those who made the attempt to set us in order and continued to meet together without being orderly constituted. We continued this way for a season. Then each family went its own way.

My family and myself visit several churches in the Little Vine Association in Kentucky and West Virginia which are within one hundred and fifty miles from our home. We also visit churches in the Soldier Creek Association which are about three hundred and fifty miles away.

Dear brother, we have had so much sorrow and disappointment in the past, we are made to desire to be careful and not hasty in any thing.

If I am not deceived, I am made to love the gospel of the grace of God and rejoice to hear the doctrine of election and the people who desire to walk in the light by the grace of God are very dear to me.

I do hope that it has been ordained that we will be given a home with these precious ones even though I feel and know myself to be unworthy according to the flesh. We feel that this world is not our home but is rather vanity and vexation of spirit.

We do feel to be drawn toward you all but the closest church (in correspondence with you all) we know of is

about three hundred and fifty miles away.

My dear wife has been with me through all these things and has been taught the same truths.

I did not intend to write this much but I do not know how to answer more briefly.

May God be with you all your days.

Jerry Farmer
(Sent in for publication
by Elder G.D. Shipman)

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John v.4.



If we are to be saved our faith must gain the day; we must have a faith that shall triumph over death and hell and gain a glorious conquest over every external and internal foe. This is just the state, then, in which the matter stands: we must either conquer or be conquered; we must either gain the day and be crowned with an immortal crown of glory, or else sink in the strife, defeated by sin and Satan. But none of God's people will be defeated in the fight; and yet they often seem, as it were, to escape defeat by the very skin of their teeth; yet faith will sooner or later gain the day, for Jesus is its finisher as well as its author. He will crown the faith of his own gift with eternal glory. He will never suffer his dear family to be overcome in the good fight of faith, for he will give strength to every weak arm and power

to every feeble knee, and has engaged to bring them off more than conquerors. Thus as the Lord the Spirit is pleased to work in the soul by his living energy, he strengthens faith more and more to believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God, to receive more continual supplies out of his fullness, to wrestle more earnestly with God for a spiritual blessing, to stand more firmly in the evil day against every assaulting foe, to fight more strenuously the good fight of faith, and never cry quarter until faith gains its glorious end, which is to see Jesus as he is in the realms of eternal day.

J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace"

THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF OUR SAVIOR WHILE ON THE CROSS

Signs of the Times, April, 1939



Elder E.J. Lambert



Brethren, it is my desire to write a few lines, using Paul's language as recorded in 1 Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I cannot find one thing in myself to boast of, therefore all the goodness I have any hope in is that which Jesus accom-

plished while here on this earth. I believe that He fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle, and suffered the penalty for the many sins of God's chosen by shedding His precious blood on the cross of Calvary.

Feasting upon the thoughts of the crucifixion of Jesus, brings to mind the seven statements that He made while hanging on the cross. Matthew and Mark record the fourth statement, Luke records the first, second and seventh, while John gives the third, fifth and sixth. Seven signifies fullness and completeness, and I verily believe the full and complete doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is given in these grand utterances Jesus made while suffering the intense pain and agony being nailed to the cross.

Let us first notice the first statement Jesus made, which was a prayer to His Father, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 13:34). I verily believe this was a true prayer, inspired by the God part of the character that was hanging on Calvary's cross. I further believe that all true prayers are answered, therefore conclude that all whom Jesus was praying for were forgiven. He was praying for those who had nailed him to the cross. We find that those who crucified Him consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. Those who naturally crucified Him were typical of those whose sins were laid upon His shoulder. Figuratively, God's chosen among both Jews and Gentiles nailed Jesus to the cross with their sins. "The wages of sin is death," and Jesus died in the

stead of God's chosen. In fact, He died that God's people might live. In the death of Jesus justice was satisfied and the sins of God's people were forgiven. We, therefore, finally conclude that Jesus' prayer while hanging on the cross was answered.

His second utterance was, "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise: (Luke 23:43). He was addressing these words to one of the malefactors crucified with Him. This one realized (as do all of God's children) that His crucifixion was just. He was also blessed to realize that Jesus was the Christ. Therefore he besought Christ to "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Each time the penitent child of God realizes his own hopeless condition unless he be "remembered" by that Christ who is the sufficiency of God's chosen. The other malefactor spoke as the ridiculing sarcastic world, who have never been brought to repentance and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus said to that penitent one who was crucified with him, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." I believe it is a paradise for God's chosen who feel justly condemned to die to realize that Jesus has remembered them.

The third statement of Jesus was to his mother and the disciples He loved: "Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciples, Behold thy mother!" (John 19: 26, 27). The natural mother of Jesus represented Mother Wisdom, or the Holy Spirit. John, whom Jesus loved, represented those for whom He died. God's wis-

dom had designed the way by which justice must be satisfied. You will notice that John took the mother of Jesus unto his own house. Jesus told His disciples (John 14:18) that He would not leave them comfortless, but would pray the Father and He would send another comforter (John 16) which would guide them into the way of all truth. The mother of Jesus (Wisdom, the Spirit of truth) has abode in the city of God, the house of God's chosen, or in the hearts of His elect, the people for whom Jesus died. This Comforter is a grand Comforter, crying to Jerusalem, the city of God, that her warfare is accomplished; that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

His fourth cry was, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34.) You will notice that the Son of God did not realize His relationship, by noting the difference in address. He formerly addressed god as "Father," but after being forsaken He addressed Him as "My God." Jesus was forsaken that those He died for might be owned. He could not have died had He not been forsaken. Jesus was bearing the penalty for the sins of God's elect, the mercy could be extended to them and the grace doctrine be the truth. Jesus was as destitute of the wisdom as to why He was forsaken as any of God's children are when it pleases God to withdraw His Holy Spirit.

The fifth saying of Christ on the cross was, "I thirst" (John 19:28). The result of being forsaken after enjoy-

ing the sweet relationship was this thirst. When Jesus thirsted He was given vinegar to drink. He was given something bitter to drink so that when God's children thirst they might be given something sweet. Jesus said in His sermon on the mountain, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Jesus drank the bitter cup that the people of God might be blessed to drink of that fountain of life. Yes, He wore a crown of thorns that God's elect might wear a crown of glory. He was forsaken that we might be owned.

The sixth saying that Jesus made while nailed to the cross was, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He had fulfilled His mission upon earth. He had completely fulfilled law and prophecy. He had kept the law in behalf of God's children. He had suffered the agonizing pains of death as the penalty for the sins of God's people. Therefore, justice was satisfied and every one of God's elect was blameless and without blemish. "It is finished." Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:38, 39). Again, in John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." There on the cross He said, "It is finished."

We notice in the seventh saying that He was in possession of this wonderful relationship again as he addressed Jehovah as "Father." This alone

shows that God was well pleased with His Son's accomplishment. In this seventh and last statement He said, "Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit" (Luke 13:46). Then He gave up the ghost. This was a crowning work, worthy of acception with the Father. The voice which spoke out of the clouds to those on the mount of transfiguration proclaimed concerning Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Jesus said, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. I believe He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the Author and Finisher of our faith, therefore my determination among God's people is not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

In conclusion, permit me to say the editors and contributors to the Signs have been blessed to stay closer to this determination than have the writers of any periodical I have been blessed to read. May God forbid that private opinions, personal differences and confessions ever be published in this good paper which would mar the harmony of its contents. God grant its continuance. This wonderful doctrine of grace and love is soothing and comforting to this poor, sinful, wretched mortal, who through sad tribulations and experience has lost all confidence in self and the arm of flesh. As Job, my earthly possessions and wealth have been taken away, to make me realize that even temporal and natural things are unmerited and blessings of God.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

For April 1993

Mrs. Grace Manly, FL	\$5.00
John F. Simpson, FL	7.00
Robert G. Thomas, TX	2.00
Edwin Vrell, CO	3.00
Ms. Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR	2.00
Raymond Oxley, WV	2.00
Mrs. Edith Sewell, FL	2.00
Mrs. Whitney Mobley, NC	5.00
Joseph Plaster, VA	2.00
Bert H. Knox, WA	10.00
Hartzel Nelson, WV	2.00
Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL	2.00
Mrs. Rachel A. SMith, NC	2.00
MRs. Iva L. Souter, TX	5.00
Eld. James C. Young, NC	7.00
Eld. J.C. Carroll, NC	2.00
Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC	2.00
Ms. Catherine A. Houchins, VA ..	3.00
Mrs. Annie Bell Malone, AL	7.00

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK



he annual Old Pine Creek meeting will be held this year on Monday the 5th of July.

The church is located off Hwy. #221, 5 miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682.

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

Elder Hale Terry

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION


he Staunton River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Springfield Church but the meeting location will be at Weatherford Church located at the intersection of highways 760 and 763 about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. The time will be Saturday July 10th and Sunday July 11th. We invite our Sunday July 11th. We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

PSALM 17: 1 - 3.

Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.

Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal.

Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.

OBITUARIES

ELDER CLYDE RAY DANIEL



feel the Lord called another one of His saints home on September 6, 1992, with the passing of Elder Clyde R. Daniel. He attended Flat Swamp Church,

where he was a member, on Saturday, September 5, and was blessed to speak very strongly and seemed to enjoy the service; as if it was a very special day for him. The next day, when Sister Daniel called to tell me he had passed away, it was certainly a shock and surprise.

Elder Daniel joined Rosemary Primitive Baptist Church the first Sunday in September, 1966. He was a very loving and faithful member and enjoyed visiting other churches far and near.

He was liberated by Rosemary Church to speak at churches in fellowship with his church on the first Sunday in June, 1973. He was very humble and understanding and spoke under this liberation until he was ordained an Elder on the fifth Sunday in October, 1982. He was blessed to fill in for many of his Elder brethren for them to visit distant churches.

The Rosemary Church discontinued its services in 1990, and Elder Daniel and the other two members moved their names to Flat Swamp Church on the first Saturday in May, 1990. He was in declining health, but he attended church as often as he could and was always very supportive of the church.

Elder Daniel is survived by his wife, Sister Lucy Daniel; one son, Clifton R. Daniel; one daughter, Clara D. Freeman of Roanoke Rapids, N.C.; three sisters, Mrs. Ethel Stone of Rocky Mount, N.C.; Mrs. Hettie Taylor of Enfield, N.C.; Mrs. Alma Smith of Glenview, N.C.; one brother, D.A.

Daniel of Roanoke Rapids, N.C. He was also blessed to enjoy his nine grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Elder Daniel was laid to rest in Crestview Memorial Cemetary on September 9, 1992 in the presence of many friends. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder Joe Sawyer, assisted by Rev. Clyde Alderman.

We miss him very much at Flat Swamp Church, but I feel he is at rest in that rest which Jesus promised all his believing children, where one day he will be called from that rest to inherit that home prepared for him in yonder world.

We express our deepest sympathy to his precious companion and all who were near and dear to him by the ties of nature.

Done by the order of conference the first Saturday in March, 1993. A copy to be spread on the church record, a copy sent to Signs of the Times, and a copy sent to the family.

Written by a Brother, I hope,
Hassel Allen
Elder Joe Sawyer, Moderator
Hassel Allen, Clerk

DEACON RUFUS JACKS



Rufus L. Jacks was born October 7, 1919, the son of Berton and Lillie Jefferies Jacks, and died March 4, 1993 at his home near New Market, Alabama,

making his pilgrimage here in time 73 years.

He was married September 18, 1940 to, Wilma Simmons, and to this union was born two sons, Tracy and Clay and two daughters, Carol and Brenda.

Rufus joined the Primitive Baptist Church July 15, 1956 and was baptized September 29, 1956 by the late Elder R.L. Biggs pastor of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church. He was ordained to the office of Deacon on November 15, 1958, in which he served faithfully until the time of his death. He was also Clerk of the Church for many years.

I have known and loved brother Jacks since first meeting him in 1955, before either of us joined the Church, and the love and fellowship that we have experienced over those thirty-eight years is something that I will never forget: And is one of the closest that I have experienced among the brethren. Rufus traveled extensively among the Churches in the United States and was loved and respected, by all who were priviledged to know him, because of his humble, friendly manner toward his brethren. I have been with him more often and at more different Churches and Associations than anyone else.

Rufus is survived by his lovely wife Wilma, four children, nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by his pastor Elder R.H. Campbell and Elder Hale Terry of Virginia, at the Spry Funeral Home in Huntsville, Ala. and the internment of the body was in the

State Line Cemetery in Madison County near his home.

This is written at the request of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church while in Conference with instructions to send a copy to The Signs of The Times for publication, for brethren in other areas, and a copy to be sent to the family that they all may know of the esteem in which brother Jacks was held in his Church, and among the Primitive Baptist in general.

Elder Richard H. Campbell,
Moderator
James Howard, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF OUR MOTHER
BETTIE BATTS SWAIM
Born - November 7, 1900
Died - August 1992
United with the church



We were so blessed to have had a Mother like ours. She taught us how to deal with life, and was always there to guide us. Among her many lessons, she instructed us on the virtues of courage, trust, faith, and honesty.

As the book of Ecclesiastes (3:1) describes, "To everything there is a season, and time to every purpose under the heavens." This verse, as well as the ones that follow, sums up a great deal of what Mama believed. Her life overflowed with purpose, meaning, love, friends, and she was guided by routine. No one ever loved their family, home, and church more than Mama.

In her life she overcame innumerable odds. She entered this world at the turn of the century, next to the oldest of twelve children. She was raised on a farm, and only finished the ninth grade. However, she spoke often of many happy memories: a Saturday afternoon drive into town with her Father in horse and buggy, the beauty of the country-side, and scents such as frying fish that characterized her life. She knew the adoration of our Father, James Henry Swaim, and together they survived the Great Depression. And yet she experienced many miracles, marveling of having lived to see Man walk on the moon.

Not only was she valuable to us, but she was always a dependable friend to all her many neighbors. She never failed those who relied on her, despite their sex or the color of their skin.

She lived such a meaningful life. She often spoke of how blessed she was to have loving brothers, sisters, four children, seventeen grand-children, and twenty-eight great grand-children.

However, it is we who are fortunate.

Her life was filled with happiness to the fullest. We children grew up knowing a good Father and Mother's tender love and devotion.

She will always remain with us. "A Mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living Presence."

We children,
Merle, Margaret, John and Barbara

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HYMN OF PROMISE

*In the bulb there is a flower; in the
seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise:
butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, some-
thing God alone can see.*

*There's a song in every silence,
seeking word and melody;
there's a dawn in every darkness,
bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the fu-
ture; what it hold, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, some-
thing God alone can see.*

*In our end is our beginning; in our
time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in
our life, eternity.
From the past will come the fu-
ture; what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, some-
thing God alone can see.*

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EDITORIAL



ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead. Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son upon the Altar. Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the

messengers, and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

There has been much written and much discussion on the book of James and the way that he handles the subject of the works of the child of God. Remember, the letter was written to the saints, those who were quickened and travelling the journey of faith here in this time world: he was not addressing the world and those who were walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that the children of disobedience followed. His epistle is to the twelve tribes scattered abroad.

There have been many major divisions in the Churches through the centuries over the issue of the works of the creature in the plan of salvation of the saints of God and the importance and position of those works in this matter. There are those who believe that the works of the creature are of paramount importance since they are the means of pleasing God, letting him know of their belief, faith and sincerity and that having done this they have obligated God to fulfil his part of the covenant and forgive them of their sins; save them from the torment of hell and write their names in the book of life. This may be an oversimplification of their belief, but, seemingly they believe that the first move must be made by the sinner, an alien from God, and that he can make it, accept Christ as their savior and be saved, or not make it and be damned

for their unbelief and rejection of the truth: then their standing in the kingdom of God is relative to their good works, giving to the cause winning souls to Christ and all of the many other works which further the cause of Christ in the world. They, with this doctrine, have in essence replaced the sacrifice of Christ with the work of man since they say he died for all and their decision and actions make the difference.

There are others who, possibly because of those divisions in the past, and the hurt and destruction that they caused in the churches, believe that the works of the creature have no part or place in the plan of salvation: they resent anyone admonishing the brethren or encouraging the faithful to do those things which Jesus and the Apostle taught and instructed the Christians of that day to do. If you take all of the scriptures out of the bible in which the writers were admonishing the believers to do those things which are needful for the peace and welfare of the Church and encouraging to the Church, you would have a much smaller book. There was reportedly an occasion in which a Church was asking for donations to build some steps for the Church and one member refused to give and his reason was that if God wanted new steps for the Church, he would build them. I don't know if this story is true or not, but I have seen this spirit exhibited when a church was trying to do something: I have seen this same negative attitude even when the subject of works is brought up for discussion.

We all know and believe that God could build the steps, if he wanted to, but this is not the way that he works his will and plan: he indeed sees that the project is completed but it is usually working through men. When God was instructing Moses in the building of the tabernacle, he said, "*See I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship.*" This is the way that the work in gold, silver, brass, cutting of stone and carving of timber was accomplished in the tabernacle: it was the plan of God working in the heart of his elect, but the physical work was accomplished, naturally speaking, by the efforts of the individual. The individual himself does not realize from whence this motivation came in fulfilling the plan of God. Bezaleel just had a talent for the artistic work required, loved doing it never realizing that the talent and desire was a gift from God to fulfil his plan in building the tabernacle. This is true in all of the, "good works" that are done in bringing about the things that are decreed of God, but, as far as the world is concerned they are the results of the works of the creature.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "*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." Now, if this statement is true, and I believe that it is, there are good works that the children of God will surely do because they were created unto that end: they are to be done to manifest the faith that they possess which was God's gift to them. They are to show forth praise to his holy name: to edify the body of Christ, the Church and to promote peace, love harmony and fellowship among the brethren. They come forth spontaneously from the heart in love and the one who does them is not aware that it is the spirit working in them: they do them because they want to, to let the brethren know how much they love the Church, not to receive a reward or blessing for doing them, in fact, it never enters their mind to receive anything from it but the joy of their serving the Church in any and every way that they can. Just as with Bezaleel, God has called them by name, filled them with the spirit and sent them forth to do those things which are good for the welfare, peace and harmony of the household of faith.

James said, *"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which, are needful to the body: What doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being*

alone." James, realized that faith and works are two sides of the same coin, one cannot exist without the other; they are both elements of the same gift and are given as a matched set: if one has faith they will perform the good works and if they do not have faith they cannot perform good works. Remember! *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*" if they are good works they are from God. We see them as the natural every day efforts of the creature but we never see the cause, (primary cause) behind them, so why would anyone be suspicious of anyone doing good works. As we say in nature, "give them the benefit of any doubts," rejoice and be glad, trusting that they are of God and will be a blessing to all of the Church of God: don't discourage anyone who would admonish the brethren to show forth their faith by their walk, works and ways. Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the Altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? The faith was given for the purpose of performance of the work, and without either of them, the perfect deed would not have been accomplished. In the economy of God there is a definite order in all things, in bringing events to pass as he has determined them: he could have done it in any manner pleasing unto him but this is the way he planned it and so it happened. James uses this example

and that of the harlot Rabab as illustrations of how faith and works are the way and manner in which God works his will among the inhabitants of the earth.

James Closes Chapter 2 with this scripture, *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”* Brethren, it cannot be stated any plainer or more candidly than this: even to the most extreme on either side of the issue, one that believes it all rests in the faith of an individual and the other believing it is determined solely by the work or efforts of the individual. This verse clearly declares that they are both wrong. The body without the spirit of life is just a lump of clay: it cannot move, think, pray, praise God or perform any action, respond to anything or thought directed to it, in other words, it is just as the other clay that has not been formed into a body; and James Compares this lifeless lump of clay to faith without works. The body with the spirit manifests the fact that it is not as the other clay, it moves, feels, thinks, worships and praises God, because, it has that necessary component the spirit of life. Works makes manifest the faith that dwells in the individuals heart: it is the only evidence that you have of the existence of the faith of the believer. They could tell you daily that they had faith but, you would not really believe it until you see it displayed in their walk and their conversation; then you believe it even if they deny having it.

It is distressing to hear a brother demean or ridicule good works in the

Church as though it was something to avoid or be ashamed of: when it is indeed the most beautiful of all of the manifestations of the spirit among God’s people. All of us know and have known of brothers and sisters who, just to think of them, brings a smile of sheer joy to our hearts as we remember their good works, their dedication, sacrifice and perseverance in the Church all of their lives until God called them from the shores of time to their eternal haven of rest. Surely, these are the works that accompany that faith that James is speaking of: it is not, necessarily, their benevolence or kindly deeds in the flesh which man in nature may possess, but those acts of love for the heavenly kingdom prompted by being filled of the Spirit of God, as Bezaleel was, for the purpose of the work that they were called to do.

If one speaks lightly of good works it is because they only understand what they can see, which is the actions of the man, and since they cannot see the faith which motivates it they assume that it doesn’t exist. If we take this attitude that, because we can’t see it, it doesn’t exist, then we cannot verify most of the things that we hold dear in our faith, we cannot prove our spiritual experience because we can’t display it, but, by our deeds, actions and walk and this is what the scriptures refer to as good works. These are the only things that manifest the indwelling of the spirit of God in the heart of an individual: these include loving and attending the church, visiting and praying for the

sick and afflicted in body and spirit, laying down their lives for the brethren and doing all things as unto God. These are the marks of a child of God as he humbly treads the path laid out for him in this life: these are the good works that he was created in Christ Jesus and ordained to walk in to manifest his faith which was given him by the grace of God. We should never treat these casually or look with disdain on the efforts of one who is striving to fulfil their heavenly calling.

The Apostle Paul wrote, (Gal. V vs. 16) "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." And this is what James is referring to in his epistle as the good works. These are the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance and surely no one would speak harshly against actions which are motivated from these sources which are the fruits of the spirit that dwells within. When one is occupied with this activity, he is walking in the spirit and is not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh: he is bearing witness to the household of faith that he is a doer and not a hearer only: for the hearer is as a man looking at himself in the mirror, and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. The hearer only is as the one who saw the brother and sister destitute of their daily food and said unto them, be ye warmed and filled but did nothing for them: even as the man who said, if God wants the steps built, he will build them. Can anyone, when faced with this situation, of the destitute brother and sis-

ter, fail to see the need and the purpose of the good works of the faithful, for the good of the Church. This seems to be the whole thrust of the message of the general epistle of James: to bring out the purpose and the necessity of the "good works" and to specify the position that they occupy in the plan of salvation of the saints of God. They occupy a very prominent and important place in the lives of the elect and the Church in general. They are a joy to the doer and they bring much comfort, hope and strength to those in need and who are blessed as the results of these handfuls of purpose that they find in the way; because they know from whence they came and they glorify their heavenly Father.

Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times:

In these latter days of the allotted time for this world to stand, and with the dark clouds of depravity and infidelity are already upon our nation, and ever increasing day by day in leaps and bounds; as I read an article by Elder Gilbert Beebe, dated October 1, 1861. I was made to wonder, if it would not be appropriate, to insert it in the Signs,

as a way by which its readers might be once again reminded of (among other Holy truths), the certainty that our Father and our God was and is the merciful Ruler and super Ruler over any and all events to ever take place, or come to pass, for all eternity. I leave to you Editors, whether or not to insert it in the Signs.

Elder Beebe's article - Psalm 97: 1,2.

"The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.

Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." Psalm 97: 1,2.

*"When overwhelmed with grief,
My heart within me dies,
Helpless, and far from all relief,
To heaven I lift mine eyes,"*

*"O! lead me to the Rock
That's high above my head;
And make the covert of thy wings,
My shelter and my shake."*

Despairing as we must of finding substantial joys or lasting happiness on earth, it is consoling to those who know and love the Lord, when they can turn aside from the perplexing cares and distracting turmoil of earth, and in peaceful seclusion from noise and strife, by faith look up to him who has entered for us within the veil, and contemplate the eternal perfections of our Savior God, who inhabiteth eternity; whose name is Holy, whose dwelling is also in the humble and contrite

hearts of those who fear his name. While strife and bitter hate marks and mars the character of men, the ruthless wars are drenching the earth with rivers of human gore, while brother in fratricidal strife seeks the life-blood of his brother, and while the general clammer of kindred and relatives tax all their energies to darken the dreadful scene around us; what would become of us, if there were no overruling hand to curb the deadly violence, and bid the maddening tempest cease to howl?

Often when sweet peace has smiled upon us, and all things have seemed to contribute to our comfort, have we looked forward to the grand and terrible scene, which will assuredly come, when the earth and skies shall pass away - when the sun in the heavens shall be put out and cease to shine, and when death and hell shall deliver up their dead - and in the contemplation, we have felt convinced that there is nothing short of the blessed assurance that the great and glorious God, at whose bidding the uprising nations of the dead shall come forth, who is our Father and our God, could possibly allay the terror of the contemplation.

Having hope in God, which is sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that which is within the veil; a hope so full of immortality that we can contemplate with joy the coming of the great day, when our God shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know him not, and to be admired in all who love his appearing, can we not, by the same

faith in God, meet the cheerless conflicts of this mortal state, and even amid the dread confusion of war, and the clash of arms, the booming of cannon, and the death-cry of the slaughtered victims of the battlefield, be still and know that Jehovah is God? There are times when the faith of God's people is severely tried, in regard to his supreme control of all events - when the turbulent passions of men seem unrestrained - when the wicked rise and spread themselves like the green bay tree; - when God's holy name is blasphemed, his law transgressed, his truth opposed and derided, his people persecuted, and when the ways of Zion mourn, and doubting, we enquire:

*"Is there a God who hears and sees
The things below the skies?"*

But with the Psalmist we are at length constrained to acknowledge, "This is my infirmity." Our infirmity and imperfections conceal from us his hand in turning and overturning, and causing the wrath of man to praise him, and in restraining their wrath to such limits as he has wisely appointed. Truly God is his own interpreter, and until he makes known to us his boundless wisdom and power, his ways are past finding out. But still, although our unbelief so often assaults our faith, there is a fixed conviction in our minds, that the Lord God omnipotent doth reign, and this conviction affords us consolation.

The Lord Reigneth. Having all wisdom to direct and all power to accom-

plish, his government is absolute and sovereign, he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. No higher law can possibly exist in heaven or earth than the will of God. It cannot be improved, for it is perfect and holy in all respects, and all the saints on earth and glorified spirits in heaven pray, "Thy will be done." Not because they doubt that it will be done, but because God's own spirit helpeth our infirmities, and knoweth what is the will of God, and therefore maketh intercession for us, according to his will, with groanings that we cannot utter. That will, though higher than the heavens, and broader than eternity, perfectly comprehends the smallest, as it does the greatest objects that exist. From the vaulted heavens to the deepest earth, and from the mightiest angels to the minutest insect, it directs the destiny of all. The sparrow in its flight - and the numbered hairs upon our heads are all secured in being and in destiny by the will of God. In the execution of his will, the Lord reigneth. Not as some impiously represent, that he attempts to reign, or wants to reign. But with irresistible power and might his purpose stands and he does all his pleasure. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. He is of one mind and none can turn him.

*"He looks and ten thousand of
angels rejoice,*

*And myriads wait for his word;
He speaks - and eternity filled
with his voice,*

Re-echoes the praise of her Lord."

When we contemplate the infinite and perfections of Jehovah, contrasted with the highest attributes or attainments of mortals, to bear the government; we have the greatest reason to reiterate the language of the inspired Psalmist, "Let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof." Let them rejoice that the absolute government of events are not left with finite beings. All their powers are limited, and under the providential government of God himself. His prescience can clearly foresee all the events that time can possibly develop, and his wisdom is sufficient to provide for all emergencies. He is capable of holding the end of all things with the beginning. No lapse of ages, or intervening contingencies can becloud his omniscient vision, or hide the smallest particle of creation, or the most trivial circumstance from his view. Possessing all knowledge, all wisdom, and all goodness, how important that he should govern and control all things.

*Chain'd to his throne a volume lies,
With all the fates of men;
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen.*

*His Providence unfolds the Book,
And makes his counsel known;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfills some deep design."*

We are filled with amazement while we trace his government in nature. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament his handy work. The

regularity in which each heavenly body moves is obedience to his decrees. Seed time and harvest, winters and summers, days and nights, respond with the most exact precision to the orders of his throne. And can we doubt that in the history of mankind - their rise and fall - their present and future destiny - are bounded by his all-wise decree?

We can no more deny or doubt his providential supervision of all the affairs of men and angels, than we can doubt his very existence. And we know that he exists, because we exist; and we could have no existence if he did not exist. And it is equally clear that he reigns, as it is that he exists; for no power inferior to that which created the universe could possibly sustain it one moment, and in this also we have cause for joy and gratitude.

Early as the entrance of sin, and the fall of man, was a Savior promised - and how could a promise be made, requiring four thousand of years for its fulfillment, with any degree of certainty, if he who made the promise had not a full control of all the events which were necessary for its fulfillment? Or how could he "Declare the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," if he did not hold the reigns of universal government in his own almighty grasp?

But while we are constrained to confess the power and absolute government of God - we have also to acknowledge our utter inability to comprehend his universal government. His footsteps are in the mighty deep; and

his ways are past finding out. High as the heavens are raised above the earth, so are God's ways and thoughts higher than the ways and thoughts of men - for

"Clouds and darkness are round about him."

Our vision is too weak and feeble to gaze upon the unveiled glory of the eternal God. Look we, which way we may, the impenetrable cloud conceals the dazzling splendor of his glory; or we should be consumed. He keepeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. Before, behind, on his right hand and on his left, the intervening cloud conceals from human sight the insufferable splendor of his eternal throne. O, where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

Yet, notwithstanding the impenetrable darkness which hides his person and his government from human scrutiny, the faith of the Son of God, implanted in his quickened saints, is permitted to view the bow which God has, by his spirit, disclosed upon that cloud. And the darker the cloud appears to our natural vision, the brighter does the bow present its living beauties to our faith, giving us the most joyful assurance that "Righteousness

and Judgment are the Habitation of his throne."

The depravity of our nature inclines us to question the righteousness of the divine government, because from our eyes the cloud conceals the wisdom, majesty and holiness of God. But while the infidelity of our fallen nature doubts and disputes the righteousness of divine government; and we murmur, complain, find fault, and rebel; the assurance is unmistakably given that righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. His throne signifies his power and dominion, and that power and dominion is founded in Righteousness and judgment, and therefore can never depart from the immutable principles of Righteousness, however dark and mysterious his government may seem to our reason. Sometimes we are subjected to trials which seem to us to bear no impress of the judgment, or decree of God, and we are perhaps inclined to attribute them to chance, or to some cause over which the throne of God bears no control; but however wrongly we may judge, all that concerns us for time or eternity must be controlled by the righteousness and judgment in which the eternal throne of God is founded.

When smiling mercy bestows our pathway with every desirable blessing, the throne from which our mercies proceed is to our eyes involved in darkness, and we enquire, "How can God bestow such mercies upon us consistently with his eternal perfections, when we are so very sinful, ungrateful, and undeserving? Again

when he recalls these mercies, our gourds are blasted, our comforts dashed, our dearest treasures torn from our fond embrace, the darkness of his cloud hides from our view the gracious hand of our kind and covenant God, and again we cry out in amazement: Lord why is this?

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

Middletown, N.Y.
October 1, 1861

P.S. I would just like to say, that I fully agree with what Elder Beebe was blessed to pen down in the above. I have read volumes of his writings, and I feel from the depth of my heart, he was a greatly God blessed child of God, who was enabled to pen down so clearly, some of the deep and great things of God and his government; and all this, without ever any praise of mankind for it so being. And that my Brethren, is what I so dearly love.

Your in hope of eternal life,
Troy G. Shepard
103 E. Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

Psalm 1:1.

*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.*

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE

Danville, Virginia
June, 1926

To Elder W.R. Dodd



It is with fear and trembling that I make this attempt to comply with your request that I write you my experience. It makes me indescribably humble that you should desire such a thing of poor insignificant me. You said if I had a mind. I have for a long time felt that I would love to leave behind me a written testimony of some of God's wonderful love, mercy, and tender care for me, a wretched hell-deserving sinner; yet, to this time I have never before ventured to try to pen any part of it, realizing that neither tongue nor pen can express what I have seen, felt, and handled of His goodness. I shrink from this attempt, feeling that those who know me best are ready to say (and truthfully) "She does not live up to her profession." Alas, "I am so vile, so prone to sin, I fear that I am not born again." Yet, as I go back, as it were, to Bethel, and feel surely there has been some kind of change; since the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love; yet I don't know how to tell about it. When I can exclaim with the poet, "I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see," the whole story is told.

In my nineteenth year I attended an association at Senaca meeting house in Campbell County, Virginia.

I was having quite a nice time with the young folks (according to my raising). When services began I would find a seat and listen to the preaching. I got a close seat in the afternoon on Sunday, and heard, as I had never heard before, the closing sermon delivered by Elder E.V. White. The text was "But it has happened unto them, according to the true proverb: The dog is returned to his vomit again, and the sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire." Oh! how plainly I could see that my profession at a Methodist Camp Meeting six years before was but filthy rags, and that I was a vile, helpless sinner. I found myself so miserable and undone. As they sung the last song and took the parting hand, I would have given all the world had it been mine, to have been one with them. Plainly did I see myself on the "left hand", with not one ray of hope. My sins, like mountains, rose before me, and I could see no way of escape from the justice of a sin-avenging God. I went home with a burdened heart, which seemed unbearable; but would not for anything have let my people know that I had a serious thought.

I often read the Bible for my mother, always finding it a dull, tiresome task, and would feel much relieved when she would say, "Daughter, that will do for this time." But now I had a desire to read it in search of some promise for a vile, penitent wretch. I would steal my chance to read it after this manner:

I kept a novel on the same table with the Bible; the novel I kept laying open, while I intently searched the Scriptures. But if I heard foot-steps down would go the closed Bible, and I would appear much interested in my novel. This searching continued almost three years; and instead of promises I found condemnation everywhere. The promises were there, but I could not claim them.

A few months after the association referred to above I was (in the absence of my mother) entertaining a Primitive friend. Elder Wright was having an appointment at Whitehorn, three miles from home. I really wanted her to want to go, so there would be no suspicion that I cared anything about it (it being in the week at a busy time). No arrangement could be made for us to ride so I casually suggested that if she cared to go I would be glad to walk with her (fearing that she would not go). But God gave her a mind to say, "Alright." There were just a few old brothers and sisters present; the preacher, an ordinary looking stranger, came forward, and to me preached a wonderful sermon along the line of experience. While he described conviction, I could but wonder how that stranger could tell exactly how I felt; but alas, when he began to describe deliverance I again saw myself "cut off." None of that fit my case. My burden of sin grew heavier all the time, as I journeyed on, trying to do something to induce God to be merciful to me.

But by and by the secret of my soul trouble leaked out, (It was in God's

time). People would talk to me on the subject of religion and before I would hardly be aware of it, I would be praising a sovereign God; that though He sent my soul to hell, His righteous law approved it well. In my poor heart there was a constant yearning that God would have mercy, and not mete out to me justice. I firmly believed that He had a chosen people; and that all for whom Christ died, would be everlastingly saved; but did He die for me? No not for so hell-deserving a sinner as me (words fail me here). Sinking, yes sinking into utter despair, there came into my mind a blessed hymn (I knew but little about singing, but this one line). I must have sung with the "Spirit" and understanding." I sung as I had never sung before, and have neversung since, - that pleading hymn, "Father, I stretch my hand to thee, etc." I did not finish all my words, for my soul burst forth in such rapturous adoration to Him, who I then felt had, for Christ's sake, heard and answered my fervent prayer. I could not see then, as it were by an eye of faith, how our dear Redeemer had (before I drew my breath) with His precious blood, paid all that justice claimed. In the place of despair, there sprang up in my breast a hope that has been an anchor to my poor tempest-tossed soul on to this present time. Many the times I have felt that the anchor was gone and the old vessel must sink, each time to find it still there, only down under the deep water just out of sight. On that memorable day, with my burden gone I knew not where or how, I enjoyed undisturbed bliss of mind

for just a few hours. After which period God, for a purpose of His own, let the Devil say to me "You are deceived, there is nothing to it." Then doubts, yes doubts that have followed me on and on, sprang up within me. What? hope all the way and doubt all the way? yet not contradictory, but too deep for finite minds. Now when I read the Bible, I dare claim those sweet promises as mine too.

I soon was given a desire to follow my Lord and Master in the ordinance of baptism (the form of which I had never a doubt). To do this I must ask a home with the people of God. I dearly loved them, and desired to be with them; but the feeling of unworthiness that followed me I cannot describe; neither can I describe my longing to be with them.

It was in the month of July, 1886, that my hope of deliverance came. The third Saturday of that year I went before the church at Whitethorne; could not tell them anything, only that I wanted to live with them, but was too unworthy. Oh, how deeply I felt it. They received me, and I was baptised the next day, with a sister who had freely talked to the church before me. As our pastor, Elder G.W. Hundley, raised me from the watery grave, I strangled just a little, but gave it no thought in my happiness, for this happiness was to be mine for only a few minutes. As we went up from the water to the mill-house to change our clothing the other sister just behind me remarked (it was thoughtlessly, I am sure) to a friend: "I am so glad I did not strangle; I have always heard that

it was a sign they were not changed.” Dear old sister Hodnett, who walked beside, lovingly put her arm around me, saying, “Don’t let that bother you.” But alas, it had taken hold on my very heartstrings. I saw myself deceived; and I had a public manifestation of it to so large a crowd of people. I was a reproach to the Church of God; and many other similar things I felt. But there was a deep yearning of heart that God in Mercy would (in His own way) show me clearly if I was deceived, that I might have my name removed from the church book and turn back from it all. My eyes closed in slumber that night with that petition in my soul. God gave me a dream, (you see it is said we cannot get along without a dream) of a most beautiful baptism and I the candidate. I awoke with a feeling of satisfaction concerning my baptism. I might write on and on but half would not be told of how God, in His love and tender mercy, has brought me on these many years. Sometimes on the mountaintop, but more frequently deep down in the valley, sometimes the deeper down the more beautiful the Lily I see. I am still clinging to that little hope, be it imaginary, or be it real, it is mine for God gave it to me.

Pardon me. I have written too much. May God give you, and all the household of faith a mantle of charity to cover my imperfection.

That means me.

Belle Neal

The above experience is of the mother of Brother Willie Neal. (See his obituary.)

IS GOD LIMITED?

R.F.D. 3, Box 123,
Axton, Virginia

To the Signs of the Times:



Is God a limited God, or is he just limited in the minds of men? I believe it was David who said that they limited the Holy One of Israel; and I believe David also said that He does his will in the sea and all deep places.

We find in the Old Scriptures that there isn’t anything too hard for God; and in the New Testament that all things are possible with God. Yet some say He wants to save everyone, but some won’t let him.

The Scriptures say that Abraham believed that whatever God promised, he was able to perform; and, since the Scriptures also say that God cannot lie, and the impossibility of it, it would seem that, if God has promised to save every man that ever lived, it would be impossible for anyone to be lost.

I hope I believe in the sovereignty of God, - yet I doubt that everyone who says so, does. I have heard some say that they believed it, and then say that it is impossible for God to save a man unless the man “hears” the Gospel. And then some say that God can’t hate, even though the Bible says that he did. And some say that He can’t be displeased, even though he was displeased with some of the things that David had done. I don’t believe in a God that can’t be displeased; but I hope I believe in one that can do, and

does, as He pleases, and has a perfect right and the power to do so; one that is not limited in any direction by what I believe, or by what any other man or group of men might believe; though most men claim to have a lot of wisdom.

Paul said that our faith is not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Some say that God's people can't be disobedient, but, if that is the way it is, then I am not one; for it is how to perform that which is good I find not. No man, except Jesus, ever lived in perfect obedience, and pleased God at all times. This is the reason I would hate to think that anything was conditioned on man's obedience. I believe God predestinated all things, but I do not believe that limited him, or made a sinner out of a man; for I read where Paul said that by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; and that by the disobedience of one man sin entered the world. So disobedience is what made me a sinner, and I do not believe that anything can justify man in what he does or does not do, but God. Jesus is the only reason I have a hope; and I wouldn't trade my hope for what most people claim they know, even if I could.

I hear some say that it doesn't make any difference what we do, but I do not get the idea. I do not believe that salvation is by man, but rather that salvation is of the Lord. And I fail to see how Adam, or any man, could sin, if he had a right, or was free to partake of any and everything. I also feel that anything we can't freely partake of, is just as much sin now as ever.

These are just a few thoughts I would like to send along. If there should be anything that is in error, I hope you could feel to forgive, as I am very limited in knowledge. I don't want to hurt anyone, unless with the truth.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Howard T. Edwards

BLESSING HIS PEOPLE



Often we speak of the finished work of Christ and of the many wonderful activities that he did while here on earth in fulfilling that work, and fulfilling the will of the father that sent him. The will of him that sent him was, in short to glorify the father and to bless his people.

The fullness of the blessings of God are hard to comprehend when viewed from this low ground. Yet both the old and new testaments are well documented with these blessings even in trouble, "...I "will" acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out... for their good. For I will set my eyes upon them for good..." Jer. 24: 5,6. And of course, Rom. 8:28. 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."

It is a glorious thing to think that Christ's activities toward us were all in blessing us. Even his last act on earth was blessing his people. "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried

up into heaven” Luke 24:51. Even with the scripture stressing the fullness of his blessing toward us it is still one of the most difficult things, it would seem, for the human mind to comprehend that God does not need man’s help or permission to do anything. No, not just difficult, but impossible for the human mind, and often difficult for the spiritual mind considering the conflicts that rage within. The natural mind with it’s pride and self-will does not want to consider that it’s help is not needed, nor is there room or reward for doing God’s work, because the work is finished, the way prepared, and He is our “....exceeding great reward” Gen. 15:1. As the warfare rages within, the spiritual mind is made to see that there is nothing good that man can do. We are defeated before we start. But it isn’t an empty defeat, when we are given to see that our righteousness is as filthy rags. Then we are given beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Isa. 61;3. Yes, in our defeat, being cast down, he gives understanding. We are given a glimpse of where our hope is anchored. It is in God’s sufficiency in both time and eternity. He is complete within himself needing nothing from man. He needed no one, nor asked for any opinions in creation, but did it for his own pleasure. Rev. 4:11. “Neither is worshiped with men’s hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;” Acts 17:25. See also Ps. 50:10,13. & Rom. 11: 34,36. Is it any wonder that Job would ask, “What is

man that thou shouldest magnify him? “Have you not asked the same when you are given to believe that some light of understanding has been given you? Light to see that not only was the work of creation finished by God, but also that the work of salvation was finished by Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. Finished, though it is not made manifest to the individual saints until they are quickened or born again in time. Then “.... with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation,” Then you read with thanksgiving, as the apostle Paul said of himself, and what had happened to him, “For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.” 2 Cor. 4:15.

Then if his purpose is to bless his people, and if he requires nothing from them that he has not already blessed them with, then shouldn’t we give earnest heed to those blessings. God has “....blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” Eph. 1:3.

I would refer you back to Luke 24:51 in which Christ was blessing them or explaining the blessings that were their’s and those to come. He told them to wait, or tarry until they be endued with power from on high. In other words they were to wait until Pentecost when wonderful things, that had never before happened, would take place. The Holy Ghost, which Christ said he would send, came and filled the house, and cloven tongues like fire sat upon each of them and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

This sending of the Holy Ghost and filling of the Holy Ghost is the completion of the double measure of blessings given to God's people, as is illustrated in Elijah's mantle that fell from him when he was taken up. II Kings. 2: 9-14.

You will recall that Elisha ask that a double portion of Elijah's spirit be upon him after he departed, and it was so. Now, in a very real sense the church and the individual saints have a double portion.

We would be much poorer indeed if we were only given spiritual life and left to wait until after death to understand anything else. What poverty to wonder what great thing had happened to us and had no understanding of how or why. But God has not left us there. We are blessed with the newness of life, and as new born babes need a teacher and comforter, so the Holy Ghost is given us. He speaks to us of the things of Christ, He does not speak of Himself. He is our revelator and does not leave the scriptures to our private interpretation. He is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And the highlight of his teaching, it would seem, is that the spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God.

Is not the Holy Ghost our double portion? Without the gift of the Spirit He would not have blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. We would not have a guide into all truth. John 16:13.

"He lives to bless me with his love.

*He lives to plead my cause above.
He lives to give me full supplies.
He lives to bless me with his eyes."*

*He lives to calm my troubled heart.
He lives all blessings to impart."*

Elder Wayman G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

HABAKKUK 1: 12,13.

Signs of the times,
January, 1940



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

My mind is now being exercised on some wonderful truth expressed by Habakkuk in the first chapter. The first paragraph ex-

presses "the burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see." The burden was why he beheld grievance, spoiling and violence, and why there were those who raise up strife and contention. It is evident that the wicked doth compass about the righteous and wrong judgment proceedeth. We are sometimes made to wonder with Habakkuk why these things exist. Some would have us believe that this is the work of the devil over which God does not exercise control. But that god is not Israel's God. Our God works all things. We hear Him saying, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there

is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46: 9, 10). "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. 4:35). We see the fact revealed in the second paragraph of the first chapter of Habakkuk that the raising up of the "Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places which are not their's" is the work of God. God declares through the prophet that the heathen will not believe this though it be told them. The heathen of today will not believe that the raising up of the bitter, hasty and wicked people is the work of God. In relating the characteristics and actions of this bitter and hasty nation he also makes plain that "their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves." They are not forced to do these things, but do them of their own accord. This is their nature and delight. This thought is in harmony with James 1:13,14, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Nay, the Chaldeans could not charge their wrong judgment and actions to the predestination of God, because it was their desire to do what they did do. Neither can man charge God with

being the cause of his sins, even though the predestination of God embraced them, for man "is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14,15). Yes, God created the waster to destroy, and the waster has pleasure in destruction. God also created the wicked for the day of evil, and the wicked hath pleasure in wickedness.

The twelfth and thirteenth verses of the first chapter of Habakkuk give sufficient explanation of the purpose of God in raising up the bitter and hasty nation that deals treacherously and oppresses the righteous. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore it is not for the sake of evil and iniquity, that these things are prevalent, but "O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O Mighty God,

thou hast established them for correction." They are established and ordained for judgment and correction of the chosen of God. The wicked are the sword of the Lord, and they are raised up for the purpose. God hath a noble purpose in all things, and, as Paul states, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. I believe it takes the wicked, the waster and all other things opposing godliness (even our carnal minds) to make up the furnace of affliction in which God's people are chosen. Ye are refined, but not with silver; ye are chosen in the furnace of affliction.

Now let us quote the complete twelfth verse of the first chapter of Habakkuk, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction." The first part of this verse is an interrogative affirmation, ascribing all power to God. As He is from everlasting, and beside Him there is none else, let us conclude that nothing has transpired without His establishment and ordination. In the phrase, "We shall not die," "we" embraces all those whom "they" oppose. There are two classes of people under consideration in this chapter. "They" include the wicked and "we" include the righteous, or children of God. Even though the righteous are oppressed and persecuted by the wicked (whose aim is to harm and destroy the righteous), God hath even established and ordained their wicked acts to the good of His children. He plainly states it is for judgment and correction. Instead of being for the destruction of His people (as the wicked aim) God hath established and ordained them for the judgment and correction of His chosen. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (Prov. 3:12,13) (See Job 5:17). "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). "But if ye be without chastisement ... then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb.

12:8). In Psalms 136:10-15, we read that God smote Egypt in their first-born and brought out Israel from among them with a strong hand and an out-stretched arm, and divided the Red Sea into parts, and made Israel to pass through the midst of it, but overthrew Pharaoh and his host into the Red Sea. God was using Moses to lead the children of Israel, and the enemy to drive them. The Egyptians were zealously pursuing the Israelites, with a motive in mind different from the purpose of God, which was to drive them to deliverance. Just as soon as Pharaoh and his army had completed the purpose God had in raising them up (to push the Israelites to deliverance) they were drowned. This brings to mind these two Scriptures: With lovingkindness have I drawn thee, and, as with the horns of an unicorn Ephraim shall be pushed to the ends of the earth. The Israelites were drawn by Moses and the cloud, pushed by the enemy and hedged in by the walls of water.

I know this is considered hard doctrine by carnal reasoning, and does not give any credit or praise to man, but it pleases God to use the furnace of affliction to reveal this fact to God's children. Thus they are "driven to the ends of the earth." They are driven to the end of their own ability and made willing to comply with that effectual command of sweet deliverance: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). The journey to the "ends of the earth" is extremely unpleasant, and the "furnace of afflic-

tion" well describes this process of the new birth. But this well qualifies the child of God to deeply appreciate the paradise which is the result of the remembrance of Jesus Christ being made manifest unto them.

*From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".*

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Pigg River Association to be held the 1st weekend in August, 1993 at Franklin County High School, same as last year, in Rocky Mount, Virginia on Route 40 in town.

Brother Jamie Cooper, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, N.C. Highway No. 700, the Fifth Sunday in August, 1993. Services beginning at 10:30 A.M. All lovers of the truth are invited. A special invitation to ministers of our faith and order.

Pleasantville Church will host this meeting.

Sister Rachel Wray, Clerk

REVELATION 21:6.

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of MARTINSVILLE CHURCH, a Presbytery met at 2:30 p.m. on May 15, 1993, for the examination of Brother Tommy C. Wall, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of GOD, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgement of the Presbytery, ordain the above to the full work of the office of DEACON.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Carl Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were; Lane Carter; Clarence Stone; Hale Terry; Larry Hollandsworth; Carl Terry; Junior Conner.

DEACONS PRESENT WERE: Chester Hagood, Herbert Dodson, Jamie E. Cooper, Tommy Lovell, Fred Murphy, Joseph Cahill, R.W. Aker, Alvin Shelton, Floyd Bryant, Jessie Tyres, H.D. Ingram, Woody Young, C.T. Abshire, W.W. abshire, Jimmy Holley, Wilford Parson; Nelson Bryant.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as Moderator. Jamie E. Cooper as Clerk. Elder Larry Hollandsworth was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Having been duly appointed by Martinsville Church Brother Willard Potter delivered BROTHER TOMMY C. WALL to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Clarence Stone

and all Elders present were invited to participate using Scriptural references 6th Chapter Acts; 1st Timothy Verses 8-13.

The Presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate administered the laying on of hands, with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Junior Conner. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Hale Terry & Lane Carter using Scriptural reference Book of Numbers, Book of Solomon.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of Ordination was presented to Brother TOMMY C. WALL, and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of The Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Martinsville.

The minutes consisting of the work of the Presbytery were read and accepted. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

ECCLESIASTES 5:18.

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

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY



ursuant to the request of Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Va.

A presbytery met June 12, 1993 at 10 o'clock for the examination of Brothers Wade Poff, Alfred Ratliff & Julian Rutrough and 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 Deacons.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Junior Conner. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were Elders Hale Terry, Noel Conner, Larry Hollandsworth, Willard Cox, Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield, Cleo Robertson, Junior Conner, Leonard Brammer, Lane Carter and W.T. Conner.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as moderator and W.G. Parsons as clerk. Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner and Willard Cox were chosen to perform the examination of the candidates. Deacon Andrew Agee having been duly appointed by Salem Church in conference May 8, 1993 as spokesman for the Church delivered Brothers Wade Poff, Alfred Ratliff & Julian Rutrough to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner & Willard Cox using scriptural reference 1 Timothy 3rd ch. 8-16v. & Acts 6th chap. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidates administered the lay-

ing on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Cleo Robertson. The charge was delivered to the candidates by Elders Lane Carter, Leonard Brammer, Raymond Goad & Hale Terry, using scriptural reference the written word of God.

The moderator asked Salem Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brothers Poff, Ratliff & Rutrough and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained candidates were delivered back to the Church as ordained Deacons of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Salem. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Marvin Brumfield.

Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church located just off the Blue Ridge Parkway, Carroll County, Va. on the highway between mile post 183 and 184. The time will be Friday September 3, 1993 thru Sunday September 5, 1993. We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Wilford G. Parsons
Association Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION



he union meeting of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Church will be held, with Mt. Ararat or (Old Mountain) church, the Lord willing the fifth Saturday and Sunday in August 28th and 29th, 1993

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us. Take Mt. Cross road (750) from River Side Drive go approximately 13 miles to the church on right.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1993

Eld. John Wingfield, VA	\$7.00
Lonzie W. Nichols, VA	2.00
William A. Johnson, WV	5.00
Mrs. Joel Alexander, AL	7.00
Hassell Allen, NC	5.00
E.H. Chandler, LA	7.00
Mrs. Muriel Strader, NC	2.00
Garner Horne, NC	5.00
Mrs. C.B. Richardson, VA	2.00
Norman Jenkins, NC	2.00
Eld. B.K. Smith, CA	2.00
Mrs. Eunice Thompson, NC	10.00
Mrs. Connie Page, NC	5.00
Mrs. H.A. Harlow, TX	5.00
Mrs. Nary L. Hawkins, NC	
In memory Jesse Somers	32.00
James B. Pugh, AL	2.00
W.D. Godwin, LA	2.00
Larry H. Gibson, NC	20.00

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM LEWIS NEAL

have been requested to write a memorial to a dear brother in Christ, William Lewis Neal. Born June 10, 1900, he departed this life March 8, 1993. He was the son of James William and Sarah Belle Riddle Neal. Surviving are his wife Alice Lillian (Lillie) Lovell Neal and his two sons William Lovell Neal of Roanoke, Va. and James Lewis Neal who lives in Boston, Mass. also six grandchildren and two great grandchildren. He was the youngest and last of three children, his two sisters having predeceased him. They were Lenna Neal Goodson and Ruth Neal Lovell.

Brother Neal enjoyed a long and fruitful life. He and sister Neal were a devoted couple and were able to celebrate their seventieth wedding anniversary at home in November of last year. Except for the last few weeks of his life when failing health necessitated a change, he lived all his life in the ancestral home on the family farm in Caswell County, N.C. His father died when he was only sixteen years old, leaving the responsibility of being the man of the house falling on his young shoulders. This prevented him from furthering his education. Nevertheless he was a knowledgeable man with a keen interest in life and blessed with a remarkable memory. A successful

farmer and business man he was known for his integrity. He believed in living with his fellowman by the golden rule and was loved and respected by all who knew him.

Brother Neal had a great interest in the Church long before he was brought to ask for a church home. He and his wife were received together into the fellowship of Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church in September, 1977. An ardent soldier of the cross he desired no honors and felt to be only a servant. He worshipped the God of all power, believing "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." He loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and manifested his love of God through his love for the brethren. His Church soon recognized in him the qualities of a deacon and he was ordained to this office.

A humble and peace loving man he had a quiet, easy manner of attending to the business at hand. He was a true servant indeed, not only in his church where he was ever ready and willing for whatever the need might be but to his neighbor and fellowman as well.

His pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key conducted his funeral rites at Barker Funeral Home Chapel in Danville, Va. adhering to brother Neal's wishes, he did not eulogize the man but rather used scripture to extol his Saviour. His earthly body was then laid to rest in the old church yard cemetery of Moon's Creek Church in the family plot by his parents. Along with the final remarks and prayer a group sang

"Father We'll Rest In Thy Love," a short hymn that meant much to brother Neal.

May the family be given to feel this same inner peace and assurance their loved one felt, especially his "adorable Lillie," who was unable to attend the service.

Humbly submitted,
Mary G. Blaylock

Proverbs 15: 31-33.

The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.

CLARENCE P. PRESCOTT

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst, our dear brother & Deacon on Jan. 11, 1993.

He was born Jan. 10, 1912 to Ivy Floyd & Beulah G. Prescott, the third of seven children.

He joined Hadnot Creek Primitive Baptist Church June 11, 1986 and was ordained a Deacon Sept. 3, 1989 serving faithfully until he was called home.

Clarence was married first, to Fannie Lee Hill Prescott on Sept. 19, 1931 who preceded him in death. They were blessed with four children, Geraldine Moore of Carthage, NC, Ray Prescott of Greenville, NC and Gordon Prescott of Greenville, NC, grand-

children and great grandchildren. His second marriage was to Lillie Mae Brown Prescott of Snow Hill, NC who survives.

He suffered much afflictions in his last days, but was not one to complain, rather it seemed to confirm him in the faith that was once delivered to the Saints. His love for the brethren was greatly manifested in so many ways, especially by his desire to be at his meetings when it seemed almost impossible (him being so weak).

Two brothers preceded him in death, Leo and Manly which leaves I.J. Prescott of Winston-Salem, NC, Irvin F. Prescott of Winston-Salem, NC, Mrs. Leola Bright of Snow Hill, NC, and the writer J.T. Prescott of Swansboro, NC.

I trust we are all thankful for the Gift of him for a brother but to me he was much, much more than a natural brother.

We all miss him greatly but would not wish him back, but sleep on, that blessed sleep, waiting for that blessed call, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit that kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world."

His funeral was conducted at Edwards Funeral Home in Snow Hill, NC with Elders Jessie Foreman, Joe Sawyer, O.V. Allen, and the writer of this. This was his request while living.

His body was laid to rest in the Snow Hill Cemetery.

Done by order of Conference March 1993.

Elder J.T. Prescott, Moderator
Vilma Rhue, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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NO NEEDED HEADSTONE

*The promise came in the form of a child
To live in a world both wicked and wild
To fulfill a will that was not His own
But in time would have the grace as a home.*

*He was tempted and tried more than all men
Teaching that in Him our trials would end
He walked and preached with power to save
And before Him always the knowledge of the grave.*

*He accepted in love all persecutions that came
And expressed love and forgiveness in His Fa-
thers name
He willingly suffered all the world gave
For the cause and the hour of the unknown
grave.*

*We find Him prisoner in judgements hall
In anguish and pain as the whip would fall
Yet not giving in to all the law gave
Knowing the hour was nearing to fill the grave.*

*Now hanging between thieves on a wooden cross
To fulfill that God's people would suffer no loss
Joseph comes with a plan His body to save
Yet our Christ had no prearranged grave.*

*A borrowed tomb would end earthly ways
Borrowed for use but three prophesied days
We too shall have but a borrowed tomb
Even in nature we came from a borrowed womb.*

*Pilate said place a stone and set my seal
So His dedicated people His body can't steal
Then the women came for the anointing day
And lo they are surprised the stone's rolled
away.*

*Now His work is all finished, He bowed His head
The soldiers came and say He's already dead
Let the world boast He could not Himself save
Yet Praise God - Behold The Empty Grave.*

C.B. Davis
June 1993

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EDITORIAL



ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. (Deut. 32, vs. 8-9)

The above scripture is found in the song that Moses was instructed, of God, to teach to the children of Israel just prior to his death. God had told Moses that he would sleep with his

fathers, and he told him the things that would befall the nation of Israel after his departure: they were a stiff-necked and a rebellious people, as all men are in the flesh, and the song prophesied of the things that would happen to them and was a testimony of the goodness and mercy of a loving God to his chosen people. The children of Israel, as a nation, would utterly corrupt themselves and turn away from all the ways in which Moses had taught them and commanded them to go. They would go in the vanity of their natural minds, lusting after the things of the flesh and striving for the treasures and values of the world, all of which perish with the using and which lose their appeal, when achieved. In spite of the warnings, in the son, man, in nature, continues to do those things, never learning from the mistakes of former generations: they are still walking in these ways, boasting of their accomplishments and the advances made since the beginning: never realizing that they are still the same stiff-necked and rebellious creatures that they were in that day, and still as blind to the treasures of the heavenly kingdom.

The song began, by setting forth the same glorious doctrine that the saints of God have treasured down through the corridors of time: the same sovereign work and power of the creator that is preached in the pulpits of His church in the present day. One of the most beautiful and comforting attributes of the doctrine is that it was, is, and always will be the same: the truth will always be true and will be believed by the chosen generation in

whatever age they may live. There are no old truths and new truths, there are only declared truths which are as eternal as the originator of them. Ps. XVI vs. 6, David expressed it this way, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage." Surely David knew the truths that he received were not for him alone, but, were the same things that had been let down to all, in their time: the same things had been revealed to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Samuel and David and would later be revealed to Peter, James, John, Paul the Apostle, and even to people in this day in which we live: the same glorious truths, not diminished by the disbelief of some but the same as in the beginning. The song, as sung, in that day is just as precious and comforting today, to the vessels of mercy, as it was to the chosen in that time: to all, in all ages of time, who have been blessed to see what they are in nature and trust in the one who made them in the flesh, to remake them a new creature in Christ.

They love the words of the song, "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 distill 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 Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is a Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment; A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he," because they set forth their experience, and bring again

to their remembrance the solemn way and manner in which the precious and glorious truths were revealed unto them. The song is from God, and he addresses the heavens and the earth, which are his creations, along with all of the inhabitants of both, and then declares the way and manner in which his glorious doctrine will be sent forth and the way in which it will be received. It will be as sovereignly dispensed as the rain which comes forth from heaven, at his command, refreshes and gives life to the herbs and grasses: the dew which is the same cleansing and purifying substance which distills and beautifies the plants, and cause them to radiate their beauty as they are cleansed from the dust and contaminates of the world, as a beautiful field or forest after the rain. This is the effect of the doctrine and the word of God upon those heavenly plants here on earth dwelling amidst the sin and corruption of nature: they hear the word, understanding the pure language which is for them and them alone of all of God's creation, they publish it abroad to all who will listen and ascribe all glory and honor to the Rock.

The song then refers to another people, those who have corrupted themselves whose spot is not the spot of his children, and tells them that they are a perverse and crooked generation, and says, "Do ye thus requite the Lord. O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee and established thee." These are indeed part of God's creation but they

are not of his elect: they are of those referred to later in vs. 31 of this same chapter when it stated, "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." The Apostle Paul spoke of these same people (Rom. IX. vs. 22, 23) "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured, with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory." The song was not to make the rebellious and stiff-necked to repent and believe, but rather, to make manifest the differences between the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy. The vessels of wrath, in all ages, have always rejected the truth and gone their own way deceiving and being deceived and fell to stand in need of no help from anyone. There are those today who say there is no revelation or spiritual birth, but that God's gift to the world is in the scriptures and any that will read and follow them are children of God; they teach for doctrine the commandments of man, glory in the respect that they receive one from the other and deny the creator who made them and gave them breath, life and everything they have. They charge that God would be unjust to create a people for himself and others who were fitted to destruction and yet the scriptures teach this over and over in both the old and new testament.

The scriptures above were written thousands of years ago and they are speaking of a work that was done a

long time before that time. Moses said, "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee: thy elders, and they will tell thee." This was ancient history at that time and was a work that God had, done independent of man or any actions or input on his part, and was, as all of his work, certain, sure and eternal, and here is the work being referred to. "When the most high divided unto the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lords portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." As man would say, this was a done deal at that time, whenever it was and nothing can be added to it and nothing can be taken away or fail to go according to that decree. The bounds are set by the Most High and they are set not to exclude the vessels of wrath but rather to include every heir of promise and to absolutely insure the eternal salvation of every child of grace.

All of those who are included in the Lord's portion are always keenly aware of the fact that this is the only way that they could ever have had a hope in this precious plan of salvation: they readily admit that if any part depended upon them to make it sure, they would have no hope at all, because they know the weakness and instability of the flesh. Just as God found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness and led him about and instructed him: they too were in a wilderness of sin, were saved and called with a holy calling

and have been led about and instructed in the truths of the kingdom of God. They know that, naturally speaking, there is no reasoning that can explain this marvelous occurrence other than the fact that the bounds were set in such a way that they were included in the Lord's portion. Proceeding on this basis then it is understandable: they are still sinners wandering in the wilderness but in spite of the vanity of the flesh and the sin which so easily assails them, they are still kept and made to ride upon the high places of the earth. The Apostle Paul stated the same basic truth this way. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." In all ages of time, the testimony of those who are of the flock, will leave footsteps in the sands of time, that will be evidence to those in later generations, that this is the way of salvation; this is the old path in which the saints of God have all trod in their search for that city.

Many times in different generations, separated by thousands of years: under the law or in the gospel dispensation, the writers use similar expressions in telling of their experience and sometimes use even the same words although in a different land and culture. These are times when those lines are let down to them in those heavenly places and they will say with David. "Yea I have a goodly heritage." These are timeless truths in a world of time

and nature and the Saints must be raised up above time and nature and be given of the eternal spirit to understand and to know them.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

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To the Editor,

E or the most part of this year, 1993, I have been in attendance at various Primitive Baptist Churches. I have by God's grace learned much about the primitive baptist, what you believe and why you believe it.

Today August 8, 1993 have been a most spirit filled day for me, if I be not deceived, having attended services with Elder J.R. Williams and then tonight attended the song service at Dan River Church.

My heart has been moved greatly by the love exhibited among the Old School Baptists, even in times of disagreement.

God blessed me with an experience to be in attendance at a particular service where there was a disagreement concerning certain matters of

church business. At first I was inclined to excuse myself from the service but for what ever reason, God knoweth, I remained until the end.

A concern I had had about Old School Baptists was that they lacked the will or desire, in order to maintain harmony, to reprove, rebuke and exhort as the Apostle Paul so instructed in his writing. That day God revealed to me that the Primitive Baptist Elders truly know how to handle disruptions and can reprove, rebuke and exhort and do it with a love that must emanate from God himself.

For I saw this particular Elder stand and handle a very difficult situation in a most noble manner, that could only bring honour and glory to God.

While I am not a member, as yet, of the primitive baptists I have truly been blessed to be in you midst and in your churches, worshipping if not deceived the God and Christ whom I love because he first loved me.

I realize that as long as we are in the flesh there are going to be problems, but I have been moved by the love shown between members of the primitive baptist churches and their willingness to reach out to a stranger, that God in his providence has moved into their midst, and show a love and concern for such a one as I.

Having by God's grace studied and read much about the absolute sovereignty of God by such men as Augustus M. Toplady, Elder Gilbert Beebe and Elder D.V. Spangler. I have a much better understanding of my God and who he is. While the depth of what I have read and studied has often

times been too deep for me. I have come to realize that the primitive baptist are not as I had come to believe, through my own ignorance, as a people always hiding their sin behind predestination, but as one dear Elder, whom I have come to love in the Lord wrote to me and said, quote "I am satisfied that those that truly believe absolute predestination have no desire to "blame" God when they sin. I have nothing but self loathing when I sin against God and yet I am satisfied that I will in time commit every sin that the dear Lord died for. It is hard to even see the glorious doctrines of grace when we live in sin. Rather we are made to join with Paul saying "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death end quote. How often in the years gone by have I made that same cry with the Apostle. Then God, I hope, in his wondrous and loving mercy showed me the way to repentance, forgave my sin, and returned peace to my wretched soul.

How often have I been able by his grace to claim the promise of forgiveness time and time again. May he grant me the same grace, as he told Peter in Matt. 18:22 to forgive my brother in like manner until seventy times seven or in other words endlessly even as he forgives his own elect, which cry unto him night and day, of which number I have the hope of being included.

I have to say with Cowper, God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. For I feel that He has given me an ever growing love for a people

that just a few years back I only knew existed as hard shell baptists.

May God bless and keep you all in his ever abiding love.

In the hope of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Larry Gibson

ARTICLES

SALVATION

The Lord willing, and trusting He will give me grace and mercy, will submit some of my thoughts on the above subject. For the past almost 60 years that I have been among the Primitive Baptists, from time to time I have heard expressions such as "Eternal Salvation" and "Time Salvation". I have searched the scriptures and have been unable to find only one scripture that specifically uses the words "Eternal Salvation"; i.e., "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. (Heb. 5: 8-9). Nowhere have I been able to find the phrase "time salvation". However, before going further, I will cite to you a scripture that has been used with the assertion that it has the meaning of "time" salvation, but I feel this is in error. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith

which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 1:3). This does not have reference to "time" salvation as some have taught, but just means that it is that salvation that is common to all the household of faith (Elect). We find these scriptures: "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possession and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." (Acts 2: 44-45). Also, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the thing which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." (Acts 4:32). In these two scriptures we have the assertion that those that believed had all things common. So it appears that the "common" salvation spoken of by Jude refers to all believers that are embraced in it. I do not think we should change the word "common" to "time". The word "salvation" is used many times in the scriptures, but notice it is always used in the singular form and nowhere have I been able to find where it is used in the plural, which confirms that there is only one salvation, and that it is of the Lord. Salvation means deliverance, and certainly we as God's children experience that while in this life, but in every instance, it is always "salvation is of the Lord." I hope to bring out other scriptures to support the doctrine that this is the fact.

Sometime ago I read an article concerning salvation, and the writer made mention of "two salvations"; "Eternal Salvation-God's work"; "Time Salvation-man's work". There is no salva-

tion, whether we receive the benefits in this life (which the elect do), or in the world to come "eternal life" (which only the elect do), that comes from any source other than from the Lord. We have this scripture - "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17). The "good gifts" embraces those things which are of a temporal nature, that God's elect (as well as others, receive in this life, and even these temporal blessings are of the Lord. The "perfect gift" is of course, the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom flows every gift of grace both in time and in eternity.

Jonah's experience when he was in the belly of the fish is a very identifying experience of his afflictions in this life, and he said - "I cried by reason of mine afflictions unto the Lord, and he heard me. Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." (Jonah 2:2). Herein is the basis of a child of God calling upon the Lord in afflictions. As long as things are going along smooth and well with us, we are sometimes forgetful of the Lord's delivering power. David said, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." (Psalms 34:19). Great were Jonah's afflictions in the belly of the great fish, where waters compassed him about, weeds wrapped around his head, and he experienced other great depths of afflictions (and these things actually took place with him - not just words to fill up space in the scriptures; though

it does foreshadow or typify a spiritual condition of the Lord's people). There are many in the world today who deny that many things the scriptures spoke of actually took place, for they say with human reasoning that it could not have come to pass as scriptures testify. Jonah was in an awful situation that he could not of his own strength extract himself, and realizing he needed help from another source, he spoke thusly: "But I will pay that I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord. And the Lord spoke unto the fish (yes spoke to the fish) and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." (Jonah 2: 9-10). This was a deliverance of Jonah during his life span upon the earth, and he very clearly and emphatically stated "salvation is of the Lord", and if it is of the Lord, man has nothing to do with it in bringing it to pass.

As previously stated "Salvation is always spoken of in the singular in whatever circumstances it is spoken of. It would not be expedient to herein quote all, but will call your attention to a few of the more powerful passages, it seems, both in the Old and New Testament. "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my SALVATION: he is my God and I will prepare him an habitation; my Father's God, and I will exalt him." (Exodus 15:2). "He also shall be my SALVATION for an hypocrite shall not come before him." (Job 13:16). "Behold God is my SALVATION; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my SALVATION; (Isaiah 12:2). "He that is our God is the God of

SALVATION, etc. " (Psalms 68:20). "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting SALVATION; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." (Isaiah 45:17). These are a few of the Old Testament passages testifying to the truth "Salvation is of the Lord". The Old Testament scriptures are just as important as the New for the benefit of the Lord's people. For it is written, "All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2nd Tim. 3:16-17).

Now to the New Testament for a few scriptures concerning "Salvation". "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be SAVED. (Acts 4:12). "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition; but to you of SALVATION, and that of God". (Phil. 1:28). Paul speaking here of the adversaries of the saints at Phillippi, giving a token that they (the adversaries) were those included who the Lord spoke of thusly: "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: (the adversary) that the scriptures might be fulfilled." (John 17:12). And Paul spoke of them in this manner: "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the

son of perdition." (2nd Thes. 1:3). Herein is described those that were not chosen to be vessels of mercy before the world began. Now, latter part of Phil. 1:28, "But to you (the saints) of salvation and that of God." Here again we find that SALVATION is alone of the Lord, and no one will ever know anything (from the heart) of this great truth except the Lord's elect. And they all, without the loss of one will receive that gift of eternal life. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23). A very prominent scripture quoted, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works least any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9). Here again we have "SALVATION" (one) and that by the grace of God. Nothing here indicated that there is salvation in various natures or times. No separation between "time" and "eternal". Just "saved by Grace".

Again the words of the Apostle Paul, "Who hath (past tense-already done) 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, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2nd Tim. 1:9-10). In the mind and purpose of God, we were saved in His Son before the world began, having our names written in the Book of Life by God Himself, but is made mani-

fest to each one when they are born of the Spirit. Jesus spoke of this and how it is accomplished with 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." (John 5:25). This voice, which is the "living word" (Jesus) is heard in the heart of the individual to whom it is spoken. The prophet Ezekiel spoke this way: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." (Ezek. 36: 26-27). And no matter how much "religion" one seems to have, and may appear to have the truth in word, but if it is just in the head and not in the heart, the Lord will not hear the supplication made unto Him. For Paul wrote: "Who hath also made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (2nd Cor. 3:6) And again, "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 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." (Rom. 2:28-29).

"Ye must be born again" are the words of our Lord and Master and "except a man be born of water (not fleshly baptism, but the washing of regeneration) and of the Spirit he can-

not enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:5). And further, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6). The nature of the flesh is not changed in the new birth, so that following being born of the spirit, the flesh is not better able to produce good works than it was before. Paul certified this when he said: "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (Rom. 7:18). So if there be nothing good in the flesh, how could it perform any good works? Isaiah wrote: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa. 64:6). Paul again said: "Now if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Rom. 7:20). It was that inward man within Paul, as well as any other child of God, that caused him and enabled him to serve God. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:25).

Certainly faith without works is dead, and because we have been brought into the marvelous light of the Son of God, the responsibility of the child of God is that he might serve the true and living God. Not in order that he might receive the blessing, for the blessing always comes first. Our obedience is in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we are enabled to do these things "because

of” and not “in order to”. The blessing is in having the desire from the Lord for the things pertaining to practical godliness. Grace produces the fruits of the Spirit. Paul said, “And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.” (Rom. 11:6). There are no conditions in what God had done for his people, and nothing we do at any time will bring God under obligation to do for us.

The Lord said: “So likewise, ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done only that which was our duty to do.” (Luke 17:10). Does this sound like we should receive some of the glory? Or receive blessings for that which we do in the flesh? No, not at all. In the latter verses of the first chapter of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle notes several things what God had done, and what man cannot do, then says “that no flesh should glory in his presence, and he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

Oh, that I may be counted worthy, not of my own worth, but by the blood of the Lamb, to be numbered with those who will, when the Lord comes again with a shout, and the voice of the archangel, to raise the dead from the graves, meet the Lord in the clouds, taken above to that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens, and this vile body will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of

God, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself, world without end. Amen and Amen.

Submitted in love by the
leastest, if one at all,
Elder Robert L. Miles

SPACEMEN FIND UNIVERSE'S LOST DAY-IN BEGINNING OF PROGRAM



mysterious events in space exploration found a missing day on the universe to prove supernatural phenomena, reported in the Bible but classified as myths by many scientists and students of religion, according to a long-term space program consultant.

Space program consultants in orbital mechanics for 11 years - since the Mercury-Gemini program began, said God gave the missing day to Joshua and Isaih.

Mysterious events took place as astronauts and space scientists in the space Astronomy Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin, checked positions of the sun, moon and planets 100 and 1,000 years from now.

“WE HAVE TO KNOW THIS, so we don’t send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite and where the planets will be, so the whole thing will not bog down.”

Astronauts and space scientists reportedly ran the computer measure-

ment back and forth over the centuries and it came to a halt, then the computer stopped and a red signal indicated something was wrong, either with information fed into the computer or the results as compared with the standards.

The service department checked out the computer and computer programming by the space team, then reported, "Its perfect."

Nobody was able to explain "a day missing in space in elapsed time," but a space team member referred them to Joshua 10: 12-13 in the Bible. The biblical reference tells of God stopping the onslaught of the night-fall to give Joshua "about a day" of extra daylight to help his army overpower the enemy.

SPACEMEN CHECKED the computers, going back into the time of Joshua and found their calculations were close - but not close enough. The elapsed time missing in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes - not a whole day.

The space consultant said astronauts and scientists remained puzzled and "still in trouble because if you can't account for 40 minutes in space science, you'll be in trouble 1,000 years from now; 40 minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits." The space team was then referred to II Kings 20: 3-10 when God "Let the shadow return backward 10 degrees for Isaiah". Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes. Twenty-three hours and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in II Kings make the missing twenty-four hours

the space travelers had to log in the log-book as the missing day on the universe.

EDITORIAL
WHEN THE LORD SHALL
COME AGAIN

From Zion's Landmark 1976

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

He is coming the second time without sin unto salvation in glorious celestial splendor. This is taught, it is said in twenty-three of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament and by all the writers. In fact, the main emphasis in the Old Testament is on the prophecy of His first coming, and in the New Testament the emphasis is on His actual coming the first time and the promise that He will return again the second time to gather His blood-bought jewels and carry them home that where He is that they may be also.

How shall He come? He shall come visibly. Revelation 1:7 reads, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." He will appear bodily, because in Phil. 3:21 it is recorded, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." So, this time He will not only appear visibly, but every eye shall see Him. This time He will appear in an incorruptible, immortal, glorified body,

and the precious promise is that He will raise His blood-bought jewels in a glorified body like unto His own that Paul referred to as incorruptible, immortal, and spiritual. Paul makes it clear that it is the same body, but it has been changed and fashioned like unto that of Christ Himself. That, surely, is sufficient for the elect lady who is embraced in this hope. Who will be with Him? I Thes. 3:13 says, "WITH ALL HIS SAINTS." That "He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ WITH ALL HIS SAINTS." Matthew 25:31 records, "WITH ALL THE HOLY ANGELS." He says, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and ALL THE HOLY ANGELS with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." And so it is clear that He will not reappear in a body showing those nail pierced hands and feet, but in a glorious, glorified body. He will have the redeemed of the Lord with Him; He will raise these bodies into an immortal state and reunite the soul, body, and spirit of every saint.

Matt. 25:32 reads, "And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." He will appear suddenly. I Cor. 15:52-55 says, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this cor-

ruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" And so the complete victory (the final destruction of the last enemy, death) will not have been won until these saints are raised in the same glory in which their Master now enjoys.

He will appear, not only suddenly, but also unexpectedly. Matt. 24: 37-39 has left on record. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the Ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." It is also a complete secret as to the time, for the angels do not know, neither does the Son, but the Father only. (See Matt. 24:36, also Mark 13:32). The promise is unto them who look for His appearing.

II Peter 3:10, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." What does the scripture say will take place when He comes? I Thes. 4: 16-18 records, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in

Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

For one who hopes he has felt His presence just for a few minutes here in time, it is a great comfort to hope that we may be in that number so that we may be not only with Him just a few minutes as it is here, but will be with Him forever. It will not be as it is promised here, in a world where you shall have tribulations, but where you will have perfect and continual peace forever, for where Christ is there is peace. He promised while here on earth that His people will be forever with the Lord. It is, indeed, something with which we are comforted and in which we comfort one another when one is blest with the same spirit that Paul was when he wrote this epistle.

The question was asked, What will take place at the second coming? The great thing that this elect lady is interested in is the resurrection. St. John 5:28, 29 reads, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." This eternal life is based on an inheritance, and an inheritance is not worked for. To receive an inheritance, one must be born into it. This elect lady has done good that was appointed unto her, as all the children of

God have done. They do not do this for reward, but it is because the spirit of Christ is worked in them, and His Spirit bears witness with their Spirit that they are the children of God. IT is strictly by inheritance. Again, St. Matt. 25:34 has said, "Then shall the King say unto them on His righthand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Since it was by inheritance and was prepared before the foundation of the world, works were excluded. That is, the conditional works of the flesh are certainly excluded. But, the work that His Spirit works in you also bears witness with your spirit. It keeps you nourished, alive and well in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a spiritual work under consideration in the scripture mentioned above. This applies to those who have done good. The Lord burns out any trust in conditional, self works in this elect lady, so she would have no confidence in them. This would be true even if Isaiah had not said they were as worthless as "filthy rags." See Isa. 64:6. His people, the elect lady, are made perfect in every good work to do His will, working in them that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ. See Hebs. 13:21.

Peter explains this inheritance exceedingly well in I Peter 1:3, 4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth

not away, reserved in heaven for you." This reinforces the other scripture that is his by inheritance, and that it is reserved in heaven for you; also, that while this elect lady is still here in the world that she does not keep herself, but she is kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. See 1st Peter 1:5. Jesus is portrayed in the scripture as the elder brother of this elect lady, and so as the resurrection was with Him, so exactly will it be with her, the church. The reader will notice that all this is done by the abundant mercy of God.

As stated before, no man knoweth the time of His coming, but there is some reference made in the scripture concerning it. This is found in Heb. 10:37: "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Counting time as God does, it may be centuries yet before Christ comes, "yet only a little while" on God's calendar. For in II Peter 3:8, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

The scriptures give abundant proof of Christ's resurrection. One place is found in I Cor. 15:6: "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once." After that He was seen of all the Apostles. Paul says He was seen of him also as of one born out of due time, for he considered himself the least of the apostles. See I Cor. 5:8,9.

There is much discussion about with what body shall it be raised, or in which it shall come forth. Paul says in

I Cor. 15: 42-44: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." That "IT" is referring back to the body that is sown in the grave. It is changed, but not exchanged.

The reference to the elect lady is taken from II John 1:1: "The elder unto the elect lady, and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth." This elect lady referred to here, of course, is the church. She is always given in the feminine gender. She is a chosen generation who obtains her salvation and her keeping here in time by inheritance and by promise through faith and by grace. She has been taught by experience here in time that her salvation is entirely and completely by grace and not by works. Her great hope is that the Lord will appear from time to time in order that she may be kept alive spiritually by the renewing of the Holy Ghost and of your mind. She, also, earnestly hopes that she may be kept as Peter wrote about, for she knows full well that she cannot keep herself. As she gets older in years here in time her great interest is in the resurrection. Paul says, "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." I Cor. 15:14. Also, "Then they also which are fallen

asleep in Christ are perished." I Cor. 15:18.

As we have previously said, the evidence is overwhelming, for in twenty-three of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament the resurrection is referred to. Christ was seen by all the Apostles and by over five hundred brethren, not just 500 witnesses as some quote it. See I Cor. 15:6. The evidences are rich to this elect lady, especially as she grows older in years. She hopes to see her Master face to face and know that she is His forever. Her Bridegroom has conquered death, hell, and the grave for her. More than all she wants, or desires, the final evidence on that glorious morning when she can know in the everlasting joy of God that her hope has now become a reality and that her faith has become sight. How we long for this! Paul's writing confirms that it is the same body that is sown that will also be raised in a glorified state like unto that of her Master, that the same body that is sown in dishonour will be raised in glory. The evidence is that she will know of a truth that it is she herself who is raised. That her body has been changed and that it has not been exchanged, for she wants to know Christ, indeed, and know that she is His forever.

George A. Fulk
December 17, 1975

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Zion's Landmark
Jan. 1, 1932

My dear Brother Dodson,



our good letter was received in due time and much appreciated. Yes, my brother, Joseph is a very bright type of Jesus, our blessed Lord and Saviour. We find in Genesis, 37th Chapter, that Jacob loved Joseph more than all his brethren, and he made him a coat of many colors and when his brethren saw that he was loved so much of his father, they hated him. Joseph's conduct was not the cause of their hatred, but the love of his father. So it is and always has been that the dislike the world has for Jesus and His dear people is not because of wrong doing, but because of the love of God manifest in them. The more Jesus manifested the love and power of God, the more they hated Him and sought to destroy Him, and it is so today that the more the love of God that is manifest in the Lord's dear people, the more the worldly minded hate them. It is not men that the world hates, but God. Jesus said they have hated me, they will also hate you; showing that the hatred for the disciples was because of the Spirit of Christ in them. The carnal mind is enmity against God. The world is full of religion, but Jesus is not loved by the world any better than He was when He was on earth in His human body; but he whom

his brethren hated proved to be their saviour from starvation they came to him in their time of need. He knew them, 42nd chapter and 8th verse reads, "and Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him." They did not know to whom they were appealing. Some natural causes occur to me as a reason why they did not know him. He was a boy of seventeen years when they last saw him. Now he is a full grown man. Then they had sold him to be a servant and if they had any idea that he was alive they supposed he was a servant. But Joseph knew them. They were men when he last saw and had not changed as he had, and they never would have known him had he not made himself known to them. So Jesus knows His people or brethren. They have not changed. They are the same old sinners they have always been, the difference being that they feel their poverty now and come to Him as beggars. God brought the famine that caused Joseph's brethren to come to him, and God brings the famine in the soul of Jesus' brethren that brings them to Him, and they find that all their good works are rejected as the money of Joseph's brethren was returned in their sacks' mouths, and they are given what they ask for and more, for they are brought into the land over which their own brother is governor and given the best land and furnished all they need without money and without price. Do not these things preach in type the doctrine dear to God's people today? Salvation by grace without the deeds of the law? Though they

have a righteousness it is of the law and Jesus will not have it. The only righteousness acceptable is the righteousness which is of God by faith, and this is the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ which He gives poor sinners. The faith to see is by Him imputed to them. So they say not unto us, O Lord, but to Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake. Notwithstanding the great sin of Joseph's brethren against him, he even afterwards dealt kindly with them, and so, despite the sin of Christ's brethren against God, the consequences of which Jesus has borne in His own body on the tree, yet He deals kindly, mercifully, lovingly, all sufficiently and constantly with them. David truly said His mercy endureth forever. O, that men would praise the Lord everywhere for His goodness and for His mercy unto the children of men.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

Elder Joshua T. Rowe

PSALM 15.

LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to own hurt, and changeth not.

He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

LIGHT AND TRUTH

Signs of the Times, August, 1945

"O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." Psalms 43:3.



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Light and truth are the prerequisites of one who worships God in spirit and in truth. Neither this light nor truth is among the characteristics composing the natural man as born of a woman. This light and truth is foolishness to natural reasoning for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him." this light and truth cannot be acquired by study because in the same verse just quoted the scripture says: "neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Then it behooves God's people to look to another source - other than themselves - for light or truth. Then they are made to pray to God for both light and truth. Both light and truth must be present at the same time in order that the saint of God be enabled to joyfully praise God in sincerity. "Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God" (Psalms 43:4).

The truth is foolishness to the natural man and unless accompanied by the light cannot be appreciated. The truth is that God determined "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." 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?

Unless this light accompanies this truth to show us our inability and lieth not in man to direct his steps and that all things work together for good to them who love God we cannot realize his sovereignty nor appreciate this truth. The truth is, God chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the world; that His people are the elect according to the foreknowledge of God. As John puts it, "ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Unless we are in possession of the light that reveals our inability to choose good things and that we naturally take darkness for light and light for darkness we cannot believe or appreciate the truth. The truth is that "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). Until we are enlightened to the fact that the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and with men it is impossible; but with God all things are possible, we cannot believe this truth. Our seeming ability vanishes when the light manifests the gross darkness of our rea-

soning abilities. We are made to realize that God begins this work in us.

Unless we are shown in our experience that we are not able to perform it after God has begun it in us we would be as the foolish Galatians. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Yes, it is needful that we undergo experiences as Paul, "to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not," before we can realize the truth that "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Peter was in possession of the will to stand by Jesus Christ; yea, to go with Him even to prison and in death, though He be slain; yet it was necessary that they go through the sad experience of denying Christ, cursing and swearing, in order to convert him that it took more than the will to enable him to confess Jesus Christ. Peter learned that God must enable him with the Spirit and truth in each experience before he could truly worship Jesus. The fact that he knew Him was not sufficient in this trial. It takes such experiences as these to enlighten and convert the individual to the truth that he cannot of himself do anything that is good in any part of the journey of the saint of God, and to bring about the confidence thus, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Then he is convinced that salvation, in any phase, is solely by grace.

The truth is clearly expressed in the scriptures thus, "So shall my word be

that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). The scriptures pointedly teach that the prerequisite for entrance into the kingdom of God is a radical transformation wrought by the Spirit of God Himself. And since this work on the soul is sovereign and supernatural, it may be granted or withheld according to the good pleasure of God. Consequently, salvation to whomsoever it may be granted is entirely of grace. The born-again person comes to see that Jesus is in reality "the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2). When Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth," a mighty power went with the command and gave effect to it. Lazarus probably was not conscious of any other than his own power working in him, but when he was enlightened to the situation he undoubtedly saw that he had been called into life wholly by divine power. God's power was primary - his was secondary and would never have been exerted except in response to the divine. The truth is as Paul teaches, that believers are not under law, but under grace. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). Sin cannot cause their downfall for they are under a system of grace and are not treated according to their deserts. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6). "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no

transgression" (Rom. 4:15). "For without the law, sin was dead" (Rom. 7:8). That is, where the law is abolished sin can no longer subject the person to punishment. "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ" (Rom. 7:4). The one who attempts to earn even the smallest part of his salvation by works becomes "a debtor to do the whole law." (That is to render perfect obedience in his own strength and thus earn salvation) Gal. 5:3.

When God sees fit to chastise His children by temporarily withdrawing His Holy Spirit or His providential mercies, or His light and truth - the poor child of God is corrected and converted from any trust or confidence in himself and will again by praying to God (not to himself) for both light and truth. This is the truth as proclaimed in the scriptures but light must accompany this truth before it can be believed or appreciated. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). If you contend that you are any part of that way you deny the words of Jesus. "The Spirit of truth, will guide you into all truth," (John 16:13) and will enable you to realize that Jesus is the truth. Yes, Jesus is the life. When the divine operation of God's Holy Spirit is inactive the individual is dead as far as ability to do good is concerned. My experience harmonizes with Paul's experience when he said, "I die daily." We are made to realize that God must work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure before we can walk godly in this present world. When

God sends forth His light it manifests man's righteousness as filthy rags in God's sight. Thus this life in and of ourselves that we have had confidence in has been worked out as God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. The farmer works in his crop and thus works out the obnoxious weeds and everything else that hinders his crop. Man's confidence in his own righteousness or anything of himself that he depends upon for salvation, whether in time or for eternity, must be worked out or abolished.

The truth is, that we do not reach perfection in this present life; that evil is mixed with all we do, and that the children of God must be delivered (in the future) out of this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberties of the children of God. Unless this light shines into our hearts and makes us to see our vile nature, the filthiness of our own righteousness and the imperfection of all our deeds, we cannot realize this truth. We are mortal creatures hoping someday to be raised as immortal. We are corruptible desiring to be clothed with incorruption. We are natural and yet carnal but we have hopes of being made spiritual. The natural blood runs through our veins now which inspires our fleshly lusts, but we trust in some wonderful way that the spirit of eternal life will replace the natural blood we now possess when we become residents of that eternal city not made with hands.

Elder E.J. Lambert

ECCLESIASTES 5: 19-20.

Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

MEETINGS**CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The Lord willing, the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church, Greenville, North Carolina on October 9-10, 1993. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

For location of Church refer to map contained in the 1992 Contentnea Minutes.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing, the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene on Saturday Oct. 2nd and Sunday Oct. 3rd with Old Sparta Church which is located on Rt. 42 in Old Sparta, N.C. If traveling by Williamston, N.C. take Rt. 64 west and turn left on Rt. 42. If traveling by

Tarboro take Rt. 64 east and turn right on Rt. 42. The Church is about 5 or 6 miles from Rt. 64 on the right hand side. We invite all who love the Doctrine and who are of like precious faith to come and visit with us.

M.W. Lupton
Association Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH AT DALLAS, TEXAS

aints Rest Primitive Baptist Church, 2710 Engle Street, Dallas, Texas invites all brethren and friends to meet with us in our annual three-day fall meeting.

The Lord willing, the meeting will begin at 7:30 P.M. on Friday, October 29, 1993, and continue through the fifth Sunday, October 31, 1993.

Telephone numbers for contact:
Deacon Frank D. Richards, 817-467-0005
Elder C.C. Morris, 903-769-4822
Deacon Dean G. Connell, 214-298-8068

SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

he One Hundred Fifty Second Annual meeting of the South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association is to be held with Pilgrim Rest Church, Dallas County, Arkansas September 18-19, 1993. The Pilgrim Rest Church is located off Highway 167 North of

Fordyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to church. Session begins on Saturday before the third Sunday in September (September 18-19, 1993 Saturday and Sunday.)

We invite all brothers and sisters and friends and especially all preaching brothers to come and be with us.

In bonds of love,
 Frances Townley, Church Clerk
 301 Trout Street
 Benton, Arkansas 72015
 Phone 501-776-2726

- Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Margaret Smothers, NC 2.00
- A Friend, NC 7.00
- Wallace E. Harvey, WV 5.00
- H.C. Brown, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Ida Taylor, MD 10.00
- Charlie Fox, AR 4.00
- Mrs. Jesse, NC 2.00
- Mrs. Mary D. Stanfield, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Lessie W. Tilley, NC 5.00
- Mrs. W.L. Simmons, VA 2.00
- Howard Peters, VA 2.00
- H.P. Conner, VA 2.00
- Mrs. N. Hunt, VA 2.00

OBITUARIES

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 25 & 26, 1993.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, La., will host the association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron,
 Association Clerk
 318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

- Mrs. Ruth Dubois, NY \$5.00
- Don & Hazel Garland, MD 25.00
- W.C. Lake, FL 2.00
- James O. Whaling, OH 2.00
- Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL 7.00
- A.W. King, NC 2.00

CLARENCE ALFRED HUSTON

Clarence Alfred Huston was called from this world December 15, 1992. It is with a lonely heart and a mind full of memories that I begin to write his obituary. He was my husband, companion, and a brother and deacon of Little Creek Old School Baptist Church near Delmar, Delaware, where he attended faithfully until the time of his last illness.

He was the son of the late Frank Anstine and Bessie Brooks Huston and was born June 26, 1910 near Seaford, Delaware.

Clarence and I were married September 22, 1934 by the late Elder H. C. Kerr. We were blessed to become parents of three children. Surviving are a son, Richard E. and a daughter, Norma R. Dukes. One son, Raymond A., died March 6, 1952. Three grand-daughters also remain and one great-grand-

daughter. He is greatly missed by all of us, but we feel to say "May God's Will Be Done." Our Lord makes us willing in the day of his power.

When Clarence and I first met in the spring of 1930 he had never heard of the Old School or Primitive Baptist religion. I had attended Broad Creek Church near Laurel, Delaware, with my parents since I was born. Clarence's home town of Seaford was only seven miles from our town of Laurel, but he didn't know there were any such churches in existence. When I first began to tell him about my church, I mentioned that I felt quite sure he wouldn't like it, as it was different from churches of other beliefs. I also mentioned we had no music, and he probably wouldn't be able to sing our hymns. I also assured him we didn't try to pressure people into believing the way we did. However, before we were married he did start going with me to church sometimes, and he did sing.

He was brought up by parents of another belief, and after we were married we attended his church for a few years except the one Sunday each month when there was a service at Broad Creek. Then I would tell him he didn't have to go with me if he would rather stay home, that I would understand. Anyway, most of the time he went, but later he gradually began to find fault with the preaching at his church and other forms of their practice. As time went on he no longer had a desire to go to his former church, and for a number of years we attended all the churches of the Salisbury As-

sociation. We helped with yearly meetings and associations and enjoyed having church people in our home. We were not members, but everybody treated us as though we were. However the time came when both of us wanted to be baptized and we went forward and were received into fellowship of Little Creek Church on the fourth Sunday of March 1975. Elder J.T. Prescott was serving, following the death of our former pastor, Elder Arthur Warren. We were baptized April 1 of the following week by Elder James Poole.

Clarence never talked much about religion, but believed in salvation by the grace of God and grew to love the Old School Baptist people. For several years we had the pleasure of visiting brethren and churches of some of the other states and Canada and met many lovely people and were blessed to have several of them visit in our home.

He had surgery for cancer three years ago and since then other changes in his health followed. His funeral was conducted December 19, 1992, at Yates and Watson Funeral Home in Seaford by his pastor, Elder C.B. Davis. Elder Julian Williams also read a hymn and made some comments. Burial followed in Odd Fellows Cemetery, Seaford.

May we be reconciled to feel that our loss was his gain.

Written with love and gratitude
for blessings shared,

Elsie Huston

**SISTER JULIA DORELLA
SPENCER NESTER**

We the church at Liberty deeply feel the loss of our dear friend, Sister Julia Dorella Spencer Nester. It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove her from our midst on January 24, 1993. She was very faithful to fill her seat at Liberty Church as long as her health permitted her to, we miss her very much.

Sister Dorella was born September 25, 1906, and was the daughter of the late Joe Ben and Minnie Ingram Spencer; she was a native of Henry County but lived in West Virginia and most of her life in Patrick County, Stuart, Virginia. She was married to Perless Nester. He was a well devoted husband to his wife during her long period of illness.

There was one daughter who survives, Irene Nester Willard, who made their home together. Also she is survived by two brothers, Carl Spencer, Vienna, Virginia; Leo Spencer, Martinsville, Virginia; one sister, Virginia Spencer Zeigler, Stuart, Virginia; and also one half brother, James Cleave Shough, Patrick Springs, Virginia; four half sisters: Sister May Shough Snider, Patrick Springs, Virginia; Fay Shough Snider, Stuart, Virginia; Rada Shough Durham, Bassett, Virginia; Reta Shough Martin, Archdale, North Carolina.

She was predeceased in death by a brother, Cecil Spencer, and half-brothers, Akers Shough and Raymond Shough.

Also surviving are two grandsons; one great-grandson; and one great-great-granddaughter.

Sister Julia Dorella united with Liberty Church on September 1, 1961 by experience and was baptized by Elder Bennie Clifton moderator of Liberty Church. Her funeral was conducted by Elder John T. Wingfield, moderator of Liberty Church and assisted by Elder Randall Saunders and was held at Liberty Church, with Moody Funeral Home Services in charge.

She was laid to rest in the Nester and Largen Cemetery at Laurel Fork, Virginia on January 27, 1993.

Therefore, we the church at Liberty Primitive Baptist resolve that three copies of this resolution be made, one for Church records, one for the Family and one to be published in the Signs of the Times, done by order of the church in conference May 1, 1993.

Committee of:
Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul Puckett, Clerk
Sister Virginia Zeigler
Sister May Snider

ISAIAH 26: 1-3.

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 1, box 420, Keeling, Virginia 24566

STEP BY STEP

*Lead me Lord just step by step
For I am lost without Thy help
Guide me with all love and might
Keep me headed in Thy light.*

*Lift me up and hold my hand
Or I shall stumble upon this land
Look and see my awful slight
Fix mine eyes on Salvation's light.*

*Search me out of darkness here
And let me know Thou art near
Teach me in Thy ways so right
Bathe me in the Glory light.*

*Help me seek the King's highway
A road that leads to endless day
The battles of sin Lord help to
fight
This darkness dispel with Godly
light*

*Tune my heart in joyful lays
That I might praise Thy righteous
ways
Remove the sin and cares of night
And let me awake in Grace's light*

*Give me the Hope to rise again
Free from sin, sorrow and pain
Behold, I long to see the sight
And be with Thee in Heavenly light*

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

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 EDITORIAL

MIRACLES



Elder C.C. Wilbanks



hough we have many miracles of God recorded in the Holy Scriptures, many of them are denied by much of the world. This denial is caused by unbelief; for they simply do not believe what the Scriptures so plainly state. They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him. (Titus 1:16) One sample of this is the very first verse of Genesis. *"In the beginning God created the heavens*

and the earth." Can any thing be more plainly written or spoken? Yet there are many who believe it not, and some of them are searching for how the earth was formed, for they seem to think that it is a part of another planet that exploded in what they call the 'big bang'. Even if this were so I would want to know, Who made the planet that exploded? However, we know that the Scriptures were not written to all the people of the world, but only to the children of God who were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and even these do not understand what is written until they have been born again; *"for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* All men are only earthly and natural and not spiritual until they have experienced the new birth. We read 2 Tim, 3:16,17: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* It is only unto the "man of God" that I now attempt to write, believing that most, if not all, the readers of this are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, (1 Pet,2:9), and are spiritual and have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor.2:15,16)

God created the heaven and the earth and all that is in them. *"For he spake, and it was done: he com-*

manded, and it stood fast.” (Ps.33:9) “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” (Job 26:7) God said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” Truly these are miracles that no mortal can comprehend, but by the grace of God we are given faith to believe God’s holy record. A portion of the record is: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (1 John 5:10,12). Who is he that believes? only he that is given to believe. “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). Who are those to whom it is given? Are they not his chosen children who were chosen in his beloved Son before the foundation of the world? They are the ones Christ came into the world to redeem; and how could he redeem them if they were not his? for only an owner can redeem any thing. In the 8th. chapter of Proverbs we find that even before the world was spoken into existence, before God’s works of old, that his Son was with him, and his Son rejoiced in the habitable part of his earth; and his delights were in the sons of men. How was that possible? Because

with God there is not time: he is an eternal being: all things existed in his will and purpose before they were ever brought into existence or came to pass. He knew each and every person who would be born into this world even before the world was; and he chose a certain portion of them and gave them to his Son in covenant. These are the body of Christ and he is the Head; for we are told in Eph. 5:38, *“For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.”* We read Ps.139:15,16: *“My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them.”* The book mentioned here is also mentioned in Rev. 20:15: *“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

The same children who were given an eternal life in Christ before the world were also given a life in the first man Adam, for he is the federal head of all mankind. Adam’s wife Eve and all his posterity were in him when he was created from the dust of the earth and God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, just as the bride of Christ, his church, was in him; for Adam was a figure of him that was to come, the second man Christ. This was a great miracle, yet it cannot be seen nor believed by any but those who have a life in Christ revealed unto

them. In the second chapter of Hebrews we read: *"Behold I (Jesus) and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is. the devil."* In his Godhead Christ could not die; therefore he must become incarnate, because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Heb. 9:22). And we read: *"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."* (Heb. 2:16,17). As our merciful and faithful high priest, Jesus offered himself a perfect sacrifice acceptable unto God, and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. (Heb. 10:14).

All of these things are miracles, but now let us go to the miracle of Jesus' birth into the world. Isaiah prophesied of this long before it came to pass. *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder."* And, *"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel."* (Isa. 9:6 & 7:14). Unto men this would seem to be impossible, and when the angel of the Lord told the virgin Mary that she

would bring forth a son she questioned how this could be, because she knew no man. And the angel replied, *"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."* (Luke 1:35). Let me digress for a moment to say that I believe the new birth is brought about in this same manner; for Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* (John 3:7,8). And the 6th. verse says, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* Therefore we must conclude that no man is spiritual until the new birth, and therefore cannot receive or know the things that are of the Spirit of God; certainly he cannot ask to be born spiritually any more than he can ask to be born of the flesh.

The birth of Christ by the virgin Mary was indeed a marvellous miracle, and it is celebrated throughout most of the world even unto this time; at least it is in pretext, for it is now little more than a commercial venture to most of the world. To many the birth of Christ was good news from a far country, but others were troubled by it. When wise men from the east followed his star and came to Jerusalem to worship him, saying, Where is he that is born

King of the Jews? king Herod, the chief priests, and all Jerusalem were troubled at this saying, and they sought to find and kill him; and this continued throughout his life on earth, but they could not, until the appointed time of God.

Jesus came into this world for the purpose of saving his people from their sins. An angel said unto Joseph, *"--and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people."* And Jesus said, *"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."* But while he was in the world he showed forth many miracles, some of which are recorded for the benefit of his saints, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. See 2 Tim. 3:16,17 as quoted earlier. But as John said, there are also many things which he did, if all were written, the world could not contain all the books that should be written. However, God has given us all the Scriptures that we need, and we should search them daily, for we are forgetful and doubting creatures. John proved this when in prison, after baptizing the Lord and seeing the Holy Ghost descend upon him like a dove, by sending his disciples to ask Jesus if he was the one that should come. or should we look for another? And Peter indicates that we need to be reminded of these things, though we know them and are established in the truth. (2 Pet.1:12). Paul exhorted Timothy to, *"Study to*

shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim.2:15. What is the word of truth unless it be the word of God recorded in the Holy Scriptures? And how could we rightly divide them if they were not recorded for our learning and instructions? Praise God that he hath given them to us!

The miracles that Jesus did while here were numerous, but I will mention only a few, and comment upon some of them, if God be willing, for I believe you already have knowledge of most, if not all of them.

The first was that he turned water into wine. The second was to heal a nobleman's son who was near death. As soon as Jesus said to the nobleman, *"Go thy way; thy son liveth,"* the man believed the words that Jesus had spoken, and he went his way, and his son lived. Oh, how I wish I could always have like faith, and not doubt so often; but, alas, I do not. I know, however, that faith is the gift of God and not of ourselves. (See Eph,2:8). His apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith, and he answered, *"If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be planted in the sea; and it should obey you"* And in another place he said, when they asked why they could not cast out a certain devil, *"Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, if ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove to*

yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” This should be proof enough that we have no faith, only as God giveth.

Jesus also healed many lepers. Leprosy in the Scriptures often is a figure of sin. One leper said, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, “I will; be thou clean.” And his leprosy was cleansed. It is so often that I feel to be as that leper, and greatly desire that Jesus reach out and touch me. Do you at times feel that way? or am I alone? In another place Jesus met ten lepers who begged for his mercy, and he healed them, but only one returned and fell at his feet and gave thanks: and he was a Samaritan. Are you as this Samaritan, or one of the nine? If you feel that your sins have been forgiven, and have seen Christ as your saviour, I feel sure that you have fell at his feet and worshiped, and gave thanks and praise unto God with your whole heart.

Jesus opened the eyes of many who were blind. In one place his disciples asked who had sinned, the man or his parents, that he was born blind. Jesus answered, **“Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”** Not in this case only, but in many, if not all, of the things Jesus did made manifest the wonderful works of God to his saints. His works were done in the fleshly realm, but they were typical of the works that he would perform in the spiritual realm. We read John 9:39:

And Jesus said, **“For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.”** And the Pharisees said, Are we blind also? And Jesus answered, **“If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sins remaineth.”** The man that hath been made to see, with a spiritual eye, has no sin, for he is born of God and he cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him. (1 John 3:9). This man can see Jesus his Saviour, and the things of the Spirit of God, by the eye of faith which is opened. Jesus did not tell the Pharisees that they would always be blind, but only that their sins remained to that time.

In Mark 7:37 we read: **“And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.”** This was said after he had opened the ears, and loosened the string of the tongue of one who was deaf and dumb. Spiritually speaking, all men are deaf and dumb until the Holy Spirit quickens them into spiritual life; removes the stony heart and gives them a heart of flesh; puts a new spirit within, and gives them the mind of Christ. (See Ezek. 11:19, 1 Cor, 2:16 and Rom. 8:6,7). Only then can they hear the Spirit, and sing praises unto God for his mercy, and tell of his love for poor, undone sinners. What a great blessing it is to be enabled to do these things! Praise his holy name! for his mercy remaineth for ever!

Jesus healed the lame also that they might walk as natural men, but in the

spiritual sense they became lame, as did Jacob. Jacob walked in what he thought was his own strength until the night he wrestled with a man until the breaking of day. To me, Jacob in type represents all the children of God, and our experiences must coincide with his if we be the children of God. In Genesis chapter 32 we read: *"And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh: and the hollow of his thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."* What a marvellous change was made in this old deceiver that night! I believe that the man Jacob wrestled with represents the first or old law covenant which was in darkness and gave no light; but the breaking of day brings in God's marvellous light in the new covenant of grace. When Jacob was made to see the breaking of this new day, the Gospel day, he saw that he was now crippled, and he begged for a blessing, and he was blessed there, and his name was then called Israel, a name that is applied to all the children of God. Being now halt brought about a need for a staff to lean upon, and Israel leaned upon this staff, (his faith in Jesus Christ), until his death. (See Heb. 11:21). Dear brethren, do you not also need and rely upon this staff of faith. I feel that I could not live without it. Much more could be written concerning this, but I must pass on or make this too lengthy.

All the miracles and works of Jesus are marvellous to believers, and if

there is one miracle greater in our sight it is his power to raise the dead, and himself from his tomb after his death on the cross. I will mention only one example to make this as brief as possible. Jesus stood at the cave where Lazarus was buried, and cried, *"Lazarus, come forth,"* and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes. At the call of Jesus, Lazarus, who had been dead four days and was bound hand and foot and his face was bound with a napkin, came forth immediately. There are those who say this represents the resurrection at the last day, but with all due respect I beg to differ. I believe this represents those who are called out of their dead alienated state in Adam, and given an eternal life in Jesus Christ. This life was hid with God in Christ before the foundation of the world, but it is now made manifest unto them. Lazarus would die a natural death again, but the one given an eternal life can never die. Jesus said, *"I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish."* I understand that Lazarus was bound head and foot by the old law covenant (the graveclothes) and his eyes were blinded to the new covenant of grace, therefore the napkin was about his face. But Jesus said, *"Loose him, and let him go."* I believe that he was then released from the old law covenant, and was given sight to behold the new covenant of grace. This is the experience of all the saints, for Jesus said, *"The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear*

shall live.” (John 5:25). He is speaking here of our death in Adam and not our natural death, for in the next verses we read, “--for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” (John 11:25,26.)

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Jesus laid down his life for his friends, (and he hath called us his friends, John 15:15), and he rose again for our justification. He said, “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.” He proved this when on the cross of calvary he yielded up the ghost, was buried, and rose again the third day as promised. That he arose was abundantly proved when he showed himself unto his apostles on several occasions, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Then he ascended in a cloud into heaven while they watched, after that he had given his last commandment, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Jesus had preached the

gospel to the poor in spirit while here, and it is still being preached by his servants who are called and qualified by him to do so: and, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus Christ the Saviour is coming again to receive his bride, the church, unto himself and present her to his Father, that she may live with him eternally in that kingdom that was prepared for her before the foundation of the world. My hope is that I am a part of that blessed church, and I believe it is also your hope.

Yours in blessed hope,
Elder C. C. Wilbanks

ECCLESIASTES 7: 7-13.

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.

For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:

If I say, that I believe Adam did not stand, but did fall; and then say that he was able to stand; is what I have then said a contradiction in terms, of forming of words?, I believe it surely is. And if I then also go ahead and add, - but I believe he was liable to fall, have I not then added still another contradiction in terms, of forming of words? I believe so. For, if I accept the Scripture as being the truth; and the Scripture does sayeth that Adam did surely fall; then where is any evidence of his ability to stand; and as for Adam's liability to fall; indicates of a likelihood, that there did exist a possibility of Adam's not falling. But where does the existence of a possibility of Adam's actions, being unsure of a certainty, as to whether or not he would or would not fall, leave "God?" Would such not surely indicate of "God" being less than sure in His operation of His government. I believe, it surely would.

As having to do with God's operation of His government; I am unable to believe there could ever exist, any (even the remotest) possibility, can FAILURE and SUCCESS, go together, to mean the same thing?, or are they opposites from each other in their meanings? I feel they are surely opposites in their meanings. Although Adam, before the fall, stood as a man without sin, without transgression; and therefore was, as God said, in

looking upon all His creations, they were good and very good; but I have been unable to find in the Scripture, where God ever said Adam was Holy, in himself; before his fall or transgression. And therefore, as having to do with Adam's self standing or attributes or self abilities, to perform any Holy Spiritual actions, even before his fall; I must confess of my inability, to accept any theory, that could indicate of Adam himself (before his fall), being some sort of God, who could (on his own) have chosen to do otherwise than fall or transgress, just exactly as he did do; and so, it is my feeling that, that good and very good, God was referring to, was and is, His good and very good work, He had done in His creation of all things, in exact like way, as was His will, purpose and pleasure in and for so having created it all for and to be, in the first place, His place. Now if I be wrong in my feelings of this; I do desire an awareness of the truth; and therefore would welcome anyone's comment that could possibly shed come better light, upon this subject for me.

Now, if I truly be aware of my heart's desire, I have absolutely no desire, to cause controversy or ill-will within the household of faith; by any means, controversy for the sake of controversy; Oh no, not that; but only desire to know that Holy truth as it is in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and for His sake; and my comfort in feeling an awareness of having some pure knowledge of His truth; that is my only

Greenville, Alabama
Signs of the Times,

desire at this time, so far as I am able to discern, what are my true feelings.

I am just a poor self helpless, worm of the dust of the earth; and yet, somehow feel a sweet and precious hope in my breast of a better place after this earthly world is no more. My God (and I hope, my Father) brought me into this world and has furnished me with my every need now for more than 80 years; and, as for my fleshly ways and actions, I could not possibly deserve anything better or higher than the bottomless pit of an ever burning hell; and yet, even that being true, I am still being let to hope, my Lord could be all my justification for a better place, after this world has burned with fervent heat. And so I say to any who feel you have been given light upon this subject; please share with me, your experience or feelings.

In hope, I could be your brother in Christ Jesus the Lord.

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

PSALM 112: 5-7.

A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

Dear Brethren!



I am renewing my subscription, and if God will direct my pen, I have a desire to write a few words on the washing of the Saints feet. This has always been a sweet part of the communion service to me. How else can you be more humble than at the feet of the brethren. A dear sister, 95 yrs. old, visited us at New Providence for our communion service. It fell my lot for this dear sister to wash my feet. Oh! how sweet this was to me. I remember how kind she was and how tenderly she held each foot, as she dipped her hand in the water, letting it run down to cover the foot and gently drying them with a towel. Dear beloved brethren, my cup was filled and did run over with joy. My mind was called to remembrance of what the Lord said to Peter in St. John, 13. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Ye call me master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Oh! dear gracious omnipotent God, How sweet is communion with the Saints.

In Bonds of Love and Hope,
Emmie L. Grayson

 ARTICLES

Dear Elder Key:

Was sitting here this morning meditating on the meaning of Justice and Mercy. The word Justice means a reward or a punishment as deserved. Mercy on the other hand is the kindness to the wrong doer or the enemy.

I would like to give my views on them if I may. Of course I could be wrong. In many discourses, and editorials, they address him as a just God.

The worldly judges not out judgments to those brought before them. If guilty they are sentenced according to the penalty of thy love. If innocent they are set free. If he would sentence the human race for their wrong doings, they would all be doomed for destruction. We ask the question are we looking for Justice or mercy. We readily admit mercy. Are we in fact trusting in a just or merciful God. We have to admit the later.

This chastening love that is meted out from the high courts above is the mercy that is rendered to this believing family. The judgments set up in the hearts of this believing family is what sustains them. When they stray or commit a wrong then is when this chastening power takes its abode, repentance will follow because of the godly sorrow. The born again believers are the ones who can testify to this. They are the ones who have come to the knowledge of his precious truth, which is hidden in him and revealed at his good pleasure.

Prayer is a word that is often misused. Carnally, literally, fleshly, we often ask for the things suitable to these three. This is an utterance of words which doesn't ascend any higher than the head. In this literal, carnal, or fleshly condition we don't know what to ask for. When the petition comes through the streams of his precious mercy, only then its prayer and thus fulfilled, and answered. In essence if the petition isn't in harmony with his will, it is completely fruitless.

When Christ spoke to his disciples he spoke to them in parables. Many present could not comprehend. Today when the gospel is set forth, only those enlightened by his grace are enabled to feast, those who have deaf ears are in a dead state.

Being in this helpless condition they can't see, hear or comprehend. They are completely helpless to act in anyway Spiritually.

The primitive baptists are a chosen few who advocate a belief, that controls the believing family, and sustains them in this helpless condition.

He that hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled. When these fleshly bodies hunger, we eat this earthly food to satisfy this. When the enlightened family hungers for this spiritual food, from the courts of glory, they are made then to feast from this heavenly manna, sent forth through the streams of mercy, by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. How beautiful it is when one is favored to sit in these heavenly places, and feast from this, from the king of all kings.

My twin brother has been serving the public for forty five years in the barber business. All we hear in regard to religion is a torment to the graceful belief, I know we shouldn't be critical of them. They are first as helpless in their belief as we are ours. We say he has all power both in heaven and on earth, and no one can question this. They advocate a belief giving the flesh the power to reject or accept this salvation. If this salvation is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of the believers through this precious grace, How can one grasp this fully?

By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, but it is a gift of God, not of works least anyone should boast, but we are his workmanship created unto good works, that every believer should be thoroughly furnished unto good work. This completely eliminates the power of this carnal flesh. All things pertaining to salvation are hidden in his precious love and revealed only when it is pleasing unto him. In closing I would like to say I didn't mean to make this as long as I did. If this grace is an unmerited favor through the realms of his love. How does the flesh have the power to accept or reject his graceful gift?

In bonds of his precious
Love, I hope,
Riley Justice

P.S. Here is a song I have composed, I sing it in a common meter.

*In His Precious Name
You don't join the church of God,
by the carnal of fleshly power.
This comes through abounding
grace
at his appointed hour.*

*He adds to Church daily,
Such as should be saved.
He brings them from this dark-
ness,
in the way he has saved.*

*By my loving kindness,
I have drawn thee
giving this guiding light,
that you shall come to see.*

*In the day of his power,
He enters the heart within,
and they come forth rejoicing.
When he forgives their sins.*

*This birth is brought about,
By his chastening love,
administered to the saints
from the shining courts above.*

*And at the end of time
when he reaches from above
He'll call this earthly family home
who were kept, by his love.*

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

**HOW LONG HALT YE
BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?**

January, 1946

*"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."
- 1 Kings 18:21.*



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT



This text has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many worldly wise professors. Most of the people try to change this important question that Elijah asked to why halt ye between two opinions, and they try to make it applicable to the whole Adamic family. This question does not even favor why but how long halt ye between two opinions? You will find by reading the context that the question does not apply to the entire Adamic race but specially to the children of Israel. I believe Elijah knew how long they would halt between two opinions. He knew that they would halt between two opinions until God made Himself manifest unto them that He was God. Then they would cease to halt between two

opinions. I think that this text was for the specific purpose of showing Israel that the Lord was God; and to eradicate the other opinion that was possessing their hearts that Baal was God. Baal had 450 prophets and Elijah was the only true prophet at that time (as they thought). The hearts of the children of Israel were halting between two opinions. Outwardly, Baal had 450 prophets to one of the Lord. False prophets today are about the same ratio and even the children of God, when left to themselves, wonder if there is something to their false doctrine, seeing that they have so many advocators. You will notice, in the text, that Baal's prophets were to choose between two bullocks. False prophets today make their own choice; they even advocate that the people may choose their Savior and direct their own steps and seal their own destinies. This is a false opinion as we hear Jesus saying: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Yes, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that "God hath from the beginning chosen you."

Peter said: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." Paul writes to the Ephesians: "According as he hath chosen us in him." This is the opinion as rendered in the Bible, which is different from the opinion as advocated by the false prophets. Thus here are two opinions; one is opposite to the other. False opinion: You are obliged to choose God. True opinion: God hath chosen His people. This false opinion will even be in the hearts of God's people until God sees fit to

burn out this false opinion by making Himself manifest.

Baal's 450 prophets were to have the choice of the two bullocks, the first call to their gods and the heat of the day as well as the dry wood on the altar to prove their gods. They called loud and long and even cut themselves until blood gushed forth for their gods to answer by fire. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah repaired the altar by building one of twelve stones and ordered great quantities of water to be poured on the wood and around the altar so as to fill a trench. After doing this he prayed quietly to the Lord to make Himself manifest and to prove to Israel that He was the Lord God and that He had turned their hearts back again.

"The fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" 1 Kings 18:38, 39.

Yes, our God is a consuming fire and it burned up every trace of man's work and left nothing. The false opinion had been burned from the hearts of this people and then (not before) did they cease to halt between two opinions.

Dear child of God, have you not experienced the consuming fire of Israel's God? Have you not experienced the burning that consumed every false opinion; all of your self-righteousness; every ounce of your seeming ability - in fact, every thing,

deed, or thought that you had ever trusted in a natural way? Yes, our natural opinion is that we can direct our steps. The opinion as stated in the Bible is, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." How long will ye halt between the two opinions? Ye will halt between the two opinions until God the Lord makes Himself manifest by proving to you that you cannot walk as you would.

It is the opinion of the natural man that he can choose light; yet, the true opinion is that man chooses darkness rather than light. The opinion of man is that the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit and by studying and applying himself know them. This opinion is a contrast to the scripture; "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." Man's opinion is, that surely, part of the way to heaven and eternal life is by the works of the creature. Yet, the opinion of the Bible is: "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."

Peter was halting between opinions on the mountain of transfiguration when he said: "Let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." I think Moses represents the law, and Elias represents prophecy in that trio. Peter was halting between two opinions as to which should be given the most honor. He continued to halt between these opinions until Moses and Elias

disappeared and the Lord God answered from the cloud and said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The false opinion of the law having any dominion over God's children was eradicated. We hear Jesus saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then it is not part of law and part of grace but solely an unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. The opinion of some men is that they are enabled through the act of regeneration to perform or not to perform upon volition of their own will and receive blessings in this time because of their obedience and cursings because of their disobedience notwithstanding the scriptures which say, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Also, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And many other scriptures too numerous to mention which is in contrast to this false opinion.

It is the opinion of man that he can live perfect in this present life. This opinion is not in accord with apostolic experiences; therefore, it is a false opinion that must be burned out. People of God will halt between these two opinions - opinion of man and opinion of God - until the opinion of man is burned out. The opinion of the apostle is plain, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate,

that do I." And "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Also, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

So, we are hoping and looking forward to the day when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Yes, we are awaiting the time when the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberties of the children of God, then we will cease from every false opinion.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CIRCULAR LETTER

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting while in session at the Mount Zion Meeting House October 17, 18, and 19, 1962, send greetings in the Lord to our correspondents and sister churches.

Dear Brethren:

It has long been the custom of the brethren of the various churches when they meet in an associated capacity, to send greetings to their brethren of other churches and Associations, and give an account of their faith and order, that there might be a mutual thanksgiving for the evidences of God's mercy and long suffering among them.

When we remember that we are as brands plucked from the burning fire, and that it is wholly of the mercy of God that we are not as those who are blown about with every wind of doctrine, but are firmly embedded in that which the Lord teaches, we walk softly as becometh those who receive so great a blessing. We cannot boast as if we have received a reward, but must humbly acknowledge our poverty and our unworthiness in receiving such great things, which are beyond the reach of mortal men themselves.

So our present theme will be centered around the questions of the Apostle to the Corinthians: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what has thou that thou hast not received? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hast not received it?"

The very foundation of God's dealings with us, is his grace and mercy, which are prompted by his great love for us; and this is apparent throughout all his dealings with us, and our relations with him. In our penury we have received bountiful gifts. We were dead in sin, and unworthy of his notice, but he made known his great love towards us. We need not remind our brethren that our salvation and redemption comes this way. And it would seem that the weight and importance of it would keep us mindful of it, to the exclusion of any thought of pretense or boasting.

But we deal with realities, we do become exalted, we do sometimes boast, as we and many of our brethren in the scriptures prove. Even the

apostle who wrote the above to the Corinthians, was given a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he become exalted above measure; and that he might learn that only the grace of God was sufficient for him in all things; and that, though he was weak, God was strong.

Thus we find Peter strengthening his brethren after he was made aware of his weakness; and we find Paul doing the same out of the depths of his experience. The true minister of the things of the Lord is taught in the school of grace, and learns his weakness by actual experience, and also his only source of strength, that he may strengthen his brethren; and on occasion reprove and rebuke with all longsuffering and doctrine. These things are food for the children of God, and they grow in the grace thus manifested.

Though these brethren composed the Church at Corinth, being sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, and had received the grace of God, for which the apostle expressed his thanks, saying, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Christ Jesus," yet there were contentions among them, envy, strife, and divisions, which made manifest the carnality, and their walk as men. Paul and Apollos were only their ministers, even as the Lord gave to them. Some become a fool, that he may be wise." And said also, "...let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things

present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

Thus, required to be faithful as a steward, Paul brings them again to recall from whence they had received their call and sanctification; and to consider the truth which was in their hearts, as to the source of all their blessings. How startling is the truth of Peter's query when it is brought home: "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

"Who maketh thee to differ from another?" the apostle wrote. And he might have answered by asking, Who called you out of darkness into light? Who sinned in your hearts? Who revealed to you that Jesus was the Christ? Who is it that shall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ? Who? Yes, who brought you into the knowledge of the glorious truth as it is in Jesus, and distinguished you as a light in darkness?

Then he asked, "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" And he would have answered by asking, Is there anything pertaining to Jesus, the church, your hope, your joy, that you did not receive solely by the grace of God? You know there is not! then why do you glory as if it were you own doing? Why do you act one toward another as if these things were of yourselves, giving you advantage one above another?

These are things which sometimes bring us abruptly to see ourselves in a true light - when they are applied in

our souls with power; and bring us to confess our faults and short-comings one to another, and to walk in true humbleness. When such is the case, we are glad to be blessed to be a little one among the brethren.

The apostle said of these Corinthians, "For ye are yet carnal? for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" The carnality that is in each of us, when it takes form as manifested among those brethren, is the cause of divisions and strife. Without it such would not be. The carnality in brethren causes them to follow men, and this same carnality causes men to want others to follow them. Without a following, no new thing would get far. So it behooves us, as we are given to be concerned in these matters, to prayerfully consider this or that; before we lend support to anything that would break the fellowship and peace of those we love.

The same Spirit that gave rise to the language of our text, also caused the following to be recorded a thousand years before: "These six things doth the Lord hate, yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." A faithful steward will declare these things to his brethren.

We value your love and fellowship, brethren, and are glad to have your

correspondence; and we are glad to have all of you who were able to visit us this year. May the God of all grace ever keep us mindful that it is by His grace that we are what, we are; and keep us little in our own feelings, that we may behold the image of christ in our brethren.

John D. Wood

The following ministers were present at the above meeting:

Elder John D. Wood, Elder George L. Weaver, Elder J.P. Helms, Elder Author Warren, Elder C.N. Bunn, Elder W.B. Barnes, Elder S.R. Boykin, Elder Cecil Turner, Elder J.R. Lane, Elder B.O. Thompson, Elder G.G. Trevathan, Elder J.L. Agee and Elder J.L. Smith.

**WHAT IS TRUTH?
TRUTH IN ITS PURITY,
POWER AND PRODUCTS**

By J.C. Philpot
(Sent in by Elder Noel Conner)

1. Truth in its Purity

I want truth in its purity. If I go to fill my glass at a fountain, I want pure water. I do not want water mixed with sewage. The purer and cleaner the water the better. The Lord said to the woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." This is the water I want - "living water" - the Lord's own gift, and in me too, as He said in the same blessed discourse: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst;

but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Of this living water, of its source and nature, we have a beautiful description in the last chapter of Revelations, where John saw "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." I do not mean to say that this river in its primary signification represents truth, for it rather represents divine life and love - the life of God and the love of God - but we may take it as an emblem of truth in its purity. For as the river of water of life proceeded out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, it may so far exemplify truth as stored up and flowing out of the Person of Christ.

But let us look at this point, truth in its purity, a little more in detail. There are certain grand foundation truths of our most holy faith, without holding which we cannot hold truth in its purity. Upon two or three of these points I shall briefly touch that I may answer the question, "What is truth?" in harmony with the oracles of God.

1. I commence, therefore, with the Trinity, that grand and glorious fundamental truth of three Persons in one God: a Unity of the divine essence in a Trinity of three distinct Persons. This is a grand, cardinal, foundation truth, manifested in Christ as "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person," revealed in the Scriptures, and more fully in those of the New Testament, and made known to believing hearts by the teaching and testimony of the Holy Ghost. Upon this grand foundation truth the whole revelation of the character, mind and will of God is based, and therefore every branch of divine truth stands fully and firmly in connection with it.

He therefore that is unsound here is unsound everywhere, be it in doctrine, experience, or practice; and as no one can know the mysteries of the kingdom of God unless they are revealed to him from heaven, as the Lord told Peter (Matt. 16. 17) and the rest of His disciples (Matt. 11:25; 13:11), we may boldly say that if a man knows not the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost by some discovery of these three Persons in the glorious Godhead to his soul, he cannot be said to have a vital acquaintance with any one branch of gospel truth in its purity, or with any one mystery of the kingdom of heaven in its power.

2. The Person of the Son of God – by which I mean His complex Person, uniting essential Deity with a pure, holy and sacred humanity, having two natures, yet being but one Person – is another foundation truth of our most holy faith, a cardinal branch of truth in its purity. His essential Deity is so closely and intimately connected with that vital, fundamental doctrine of His eternal Sonship, without which, in my judgment, the Trinity itself cannot be rightly or scripturally maintained, that, not wishing to speak controversially, I unite them for the present together as one. When, therefore, I now speak of the Person of Christ, I mean not so much His divine Person as the Son of God from all eternity as His complex Person as the great and glorious God-man, Immanuel, God with us. In His Person thus continued, as all truth was by the Father eternally lodged, so in Him as manifested, all truth necessarily centers, and from Him as revealed, all truth essentially flows.

Truth therefore in its purity embraces all the covenant offices and gracious

relationships of our most blessed Lord – everything in fact that Christ is in Himself, and everything that He is to the church of God. It embraces Him therefore in His incarnation, as taking into union with His own divine Person in the womb of the virgin the flesh and blood of the children. It embraces Him in all His course through life, from the manger at Bethlehem to the cross at Calvary, throughout which He was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, with all that obedience which He rendered to God's law, and whereby He wrought out a perfect righteousness in which the church of God might stand for ever justified. It embraces and comprehends His dolorous sufferings in the garden, when the weight of sin imputed to Him and the hiding of God's face forced from His surcharged brow that terrible sweat which fell in great drops (or, as the word means literally, "clots") of blood. It comprehends and embraces more especially that sacrifice and blood-shedding for sin which He accomplished upon the cross, when He offered up His sacred humanity upon the altar of His essential Deity, and thus as the Holy Ghost testifies, "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and "by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified." It therefore embraces that sacred and solemn giving up of the ghost, or the voluntary yielding up of His life, which He had taken for that very purpose, whereby He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and which was an integral part of His sacrifice; for the death of the victim was needful that the sacrifice might be completed. It embraces His lying in the sep-

ulchre, where He was entombed, not only that He might fulfil the Scriptures and especially the type of Jonah, but that He might perfume the grave for us; that we might not only die with Him mystically in soul, and thus know what it is experimentally to be buried with Him in death spiritually by vital union, but die also with Him in body, and be thus buried with Him literally and corporeally in the bowels of the earth. It embraces and comprehends His glorious resurrection from the tomb, when He was declared to be the Son of God with power, God setting His own attesting stamp upon His meritorious sacrifice, blood-shedding and death by raising Him from the dead. It embraces and comprehends His ascension upon high, in the sight of His disciples, when a cloud received Him out of their sight. It follows Him up as they did in heart and affections into the courts of God, and embraces Him where He now is, as the great High Priest over the house of God, the mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

Thus truth in its purity, as stored in the Person of Christ, embraces all those sacred transactions which were carried on in the days of His flesh by the Son of God, and are now being carried on upon our behalf by Him in the very courts of heaven. It embraces, therefore, and comprehends also all that the risen Son of God is to His church now. It embraces His priesthood, for He is now a priest, as the Holy Ghost declares: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a ministry of

the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Observe the words, "we have such an high priest," that is, have now. And you will bear in mind that this is one part of the peculiar blessedness of the priesthood of the Lord Jesus that He is executing it now, even now, for us who are still here below. The high priest under the law, you will recollect, performed two special offices for the people. First he offered the sacrifices, and particularly on the solemn day of atonement, when he killed the goat of the sin offering outside the veil. But secondly, he offered intercession for the people when he took the blood within the veil and sprinkled it upon and before the mercy seat. Christ, as the great anti-type of the high priest under the law, executed one part of His priesthood here below when He offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin; but the other part of His priesthood He is executing now, having gone Himself within the veil, and, by the virtue and efficacy of His blood once shed upon earth, there ever liveth to make intercession for us.

It embraces Him also as our prophet - our prophet for the present, as well as for the past and the future; for our Lord's teaching as a prophet not only embraces the days of His flesh and His gracious words as preserved in the New Testament, but His present teaching when, as our ever-living prophet, He still communicates to us from time to time sweet instruction by opening our understanding to understand the Scriptures, and especially by sending the Spirit down into our hearts to testify of Himself, to reveal Himself to our souls, and to make

Himself near, dear and exceedingly precious.

It embraces also His kingly office, whereby He sits enthroned as Sovereign Lord in the courts of heaven; for "all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth," and "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." Truth, therefore, in its purity embraces His kingly sceptre, which He sways from time to time over believing hearts, and His sovereign rule and dominion which He exercises over the church and the world – over all men, all things and all circumstances. It looks also into the future, for it embraces His second coming, when He will "appear the second time without sin unto salvation, "shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."

Thus I have endeavored to show you briefly, yet summarily, how truth in its purity is stored up in the glorious Person of Christ, and therefore embraces all that He has been, all that He now is, and all that He ever will be to the church of God. But how little is He known, believed in, resorted unto, and lived upon as the truth, the living, incarnate truth – not truth as a thing, a doctrine, a creed, but truth as a Person; and O what a Person! none less than the Son of God, and as such containing in Himself all truth as the sun contains in itself all light and heat, and is ever giving them out of its inexhaustible fullness as the very nature and character of its existence. O how few so know, believe and feel this, as to live daily unto and upon Him, and thus be continually receiving grace out of His fullness, so as to drink truth from the Fountain head in all its divine purity,

sweetness and blessedness. And yet how tenderly He invites us to come to Him and drink. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." And again, "Who-soever will let him take the water of life freely." Even to the poor woman of Samaria, He could say, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink: thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Encouraged by these invitations, may we leave those earthly streams which men have fouled with their feet (Ezekiel 34, 19), and by prayer and supplication, with continual reading of the Scriptures and secret meditation, may we ever seek to drink into truth in all its original purity as stored up in the glorious Person of the Son of God.

3. But if truth in its purity centers in the Person of Christ, it must be in perfect harmony with all that grace which is eternally in Him, and which He came to reveal to us; for "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." It was therefore in Him that this grace was manifested to believing eyes and hearts, according to that testimony: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Truth therefore in its purity embraces all the doctrines, or as I prefer to call them, the truths of grace. It thus comprises election, for the remnant who are saved are chosen according to "the election of grace"; special redemption also, for "in Him we have redemption

through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"; justification also, for, "we are justified freely by His grace," and to sum up the whole, the fullness and fixedness of salvation, or certainty of perseverance unto the end, for "by grace we are saved."

4. But I stated that truth in its purity was lodged and stored out only in the Person of Christ, but in the Scriptures which have been given to us by the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as a gracious revelation of the character, mind and will of God, which I gave as a simple definition of truth. It is indeed primarily in Christ that this character, mind and will of God are revealed to us: for He is not only "the brightness of the Father's glory," but "the express image of His Person," where the word translated, "express image" is literally "character," or stamped impression. In Him, too, is the mind of God seen, for He has made known to us the thoughts of God's heart, and the will of God also, for He came to do it and reveal it to us.

But that this revelation of the character, mind and will of God should be preserved safely for ages, and be made known to each successive generation of believers, it has pleased the God of all wisdom and grace to write it down for their instruction. O how blessed it is to have the Word of God – the inspired Scriptures, free from all intermixture of error, as a special, infallible revelation, that in them truth may shine forth in all its purity, and that we may daily read and search them, understanding their meaning by divine teaching, and drink into their spirit by a personal, experimental application of them to our heart.

MEETINGS

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Pleasant Valley Association will be held with Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, on November 5, 6, 7, 1993. For directions or other information, contact Marvin Curnutt, (713) 987-0250.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing with Malmaison Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October. A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren, and friends.

Elder Julian Williams, Mod.
Peggy Wells, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1993

Jerry P. Cockran, NC	\$7.00
Alpha Ramsey, VA	2.00
Rudy L. Ogburn, NC	7.00
Mrs. Ruby Wall, TX	
In memory Eld. Lloyd Wall	15.00
Mrs. Phyllis Farlow, MD	2.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN	
In memory Minnie L.	
Atwood Biggs	25.00

John D. Manning, NJ	5.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC	2.00
Mrs. Minnie Morgan, AR	4.00
Mrs. Anita L. Hash, VA	2.00
Eld. Hale Terry, VA	4.00
G.W. Carter, NC	2.00
Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA	2.00
Mrs. Geneva Scarce, VA	2.00
Eld. Willard Cox, VA	2.00
Eld. Larry Hollandsworth, VA	2.00
William Nidkiff, VA	2.00
Mrs. Amy D. Heppler, AZ	12.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA	5.00

MOVED OR MOVING ?

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

Editors

OBITUARIES

**IN LOVING MEMORY
OF OUR DADDY:
JOHN IVEY MOBLEY**

Daddy was born February 12, 1911 and departed this life March 27, 1993. He and mother raised 6 children, by God's help and grace. There were 4 boys and 2 girls.

He was preceded in death by the oldest son, Elwood and a grand-son, E.C., who was drowned in a boating accident July 4, 1969.

Daddy and mama Gertrude were married July 30, 1934 at Jacksonville,

NC by Elder Ed Pollard, they were married for nearly 59 years.

We were privileged to live beside daddy and mama after we married and we became very, very close to them. Daddy was a very humble man, and very easy to love, always willing to help in any way he could. He loved to work with wood and build things.

We were privileged to see daddy baptised in his seventies by Elder J.C. Carroll. I well remember times we would return home at night, and I would go in our back door. I would always look to see if I could see daddy through the window sitting in his chair. I would wave goodnight and blow him a kiss and he would wave back. Each time the thought would come to my mind, that one day we would wave for the last time.

We have many good memories, the times we went to the mountains and daddy fished in the trout ponds, the trips we took together to the ocean, and visiting the sick, but the greatest memory is the times we shared in God's Word - daddy's voice would break many times and tears flow down his cheeks as he would talk about God and His goodness, one scripture daddy quoted was Ephesians 2: 8&9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."

In my memory I can still hear daddy as he would return thanks at the table and "thank God for His blessing." These are memories to treasure.

Daddy's funeral was March 29, 1993 with Elder Johnny Carroll officiating.

Daddy loved him very much. At his departure he left our mother, (his wife) Gertrude, whom we are so thankful to still have with us, also, 5 children, 16 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren, 2 sisters and 1 brother.

Daddy was laid to rest at the Batchelor Family Cemetery, close to the home-place in Richlands, North Carolina.

We miss him dearly, this poem God gave me the night daddy passed away has been a great consolation to me.

A SPECIAL DADDY'

Daddy Heaven is more real today
 Because of your presence there-
 Rejoicing in the Savior's Love-
 no sorrows, pain or cares.
 Reunited with loved ones gone
 before
 Just waiting for us to come
 and sing a song around God's
 throne-
 A song no one has known.

You were so very special
 In oh! so many ways.
 You'll always live within our hearts
 and abide for all our days.
 Until the Lord then calls us home
 To meet you some sweet day.
 What a blessed, blessed happy
 time
 Reunited in Heaven to stay.

Written by his daughter:
 Elizabeth Simpson
 Richlands, NC
 June 26, 1993

GENOVA LUCILLE RUSHING

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved Sister Genova Lucille Rushing. Sister Rushing was born to Inez and John M. Musgrove at Bastrop, La. May 11, 1943, and was called home by our Heavenly Father August 13, 1993. She leaves behind her husband, Ellis M. Rushing; her father John M. Musgrove; two daughters, Susan Rushing, and Mrs Paula Manning; one son, Steve M. Rushing; four sisters, Phyllis Musgrove, Patsy Barton, Caroletta Ogima and Lucy Hutson; six brothers, Jim Jr., Terry, Phillip, Douglas, Juan, and Madison Musgrove.

She was preceded in death by her mother Sister Inez Musgrove, her sister Shirlyn Musgrove, and daughter Becky L. Rushing.

Sister Rushing was a firm believer in the doctrine preached by Old Primitive Baptists for many years, but did not ask to be baptized until about three months before her death. She was sick with cancer and could barely walk with help, but she so greatly desired to follow her Lord's example that she braved being led into the waters of a bayou during a rain, and was baptized by her pastors Elders Theron Jones and Clifford Wilbanks. She was able to attend church services only one time before God so graciously and in mercy called her home.

Sister Genova is greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Submitted in love,
 Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Signs of the Times

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HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION, YE SAINTS OF THE LORD

*How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath
said,-
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?*

*In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home, and abroad, on the land, on the
sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength
ever be.*

*"Fear not, I am with thee; O, be not dis-
mayed!
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid,
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause
thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.*

*"When through the deep waters I call thee to
go,
The rivers of wo shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress*

*"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall
lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.*

*"E'en down to old age, all my people shall
prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples
adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be
borne.*

*"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for
repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to
shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."*

G. Keith.

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 EDITORIAL



ELDER R. H. CAMPBELL

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.

This scripture is found in the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah vs. 8, and it is written by the prophet, referring to a time that would be in the future, in which things would be very different for Israel than the time in which this prophecy was written. Isaiah lived under the law, which

demanded complete obedience but which gave nothing in return; and it continued its demands as long as they lived. As our civil law today demands perfect adherence but gives nothing in return: A lifetime of obedience gives nothing in return, but the moment you break it judgement is rendered and you must pay the penalty required.

There is no joy in living under the law, no mercy or compassion just unyielding demands upon all who live under its dominion. As in our day, seeing a policeman especially a traffic officer makes us check our speedometer and automatically slow down a little because of the authority and power that the law has over your life. If we get a letter or any official correspondence from the I.R.S. we will immediately become apprehensive and begin to wonder what the problem is and to wonder what you have done wrong, because if they begin investigating you it can lead to serious problems even if you can eventually prove that you are not guilty of any wrong doing. This is the way it was with Jesse, David's father, when he heard Samuel, the judge was coming to their city; the scriptures state that the elders of the town trembled, at his coming, and said comest thou peaceably. They were not guilty of any wrong doing but, because of the authority and power of the judge, they trembled and became fearful of what his coming could mean, and how it could affect their lives.

Isaiah, living under the law with the stern and foreboding effect that it has

on the lives of those who are under its dominion, is by inspiration, writing of a time in the future in which it will not be so with the children of Israel. He speaks of a time when the wilderness and the solitary place (the place where God found Jacob and led him about and instructed him) shall be glad: where the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose: shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. How strange this must have sounded to those who were so accustomed to the sacrifices and offering required of them and their strict adherence to the demands of the law of Moses: those who as the children of Israel who exceedingly feared and trembled when God spoke to them that they prayed that he would speak to them only through Moses. How strange it must have been to hear the prophet speak of a time of joy and gladness and to hear him say, Be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, even with a recompense; he will come and save you. How different from the God who they had known through the law and in the thunderings and lightnings, and the noise of the trumpets and the smoking mountain, when he spoke to them in the wilderness.

Isaiah, speaks to them of a time when God will open the eyes of the blind, unstop deaf ears, Cause the lame to leap and the dumb to speak. This is referring to the day in which we live and we have seen these things fulfilled in our experiences and the lives of others. The book of Isaiah begins by saying. "The vision of Isaiah

the son of Amos," so Isaiah could prophesy because of the revelation, but, those living in that day could only ponder of the meaning of these words. God gave this knowledge to his servants to prophesy of them so that Israel may know that it is of God as they see these things unfold even though it may be hundreds or even thousands of years later.

And an highway shall be there and a way. This is speaking of Christ and his coming into the world, the way the truth and the life; the bringing in of a better way which is established upon better promises and will stand forever. This is the kingdom that will break in pieces and consume all others. Christ is the highway, the only way of salvation. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "Having therefore brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh."

And it shall be called the way of holiness. There is nothing holy that is not so determined by God and consecrated by him for a specific purpose as, holy mountain, holy place, holy seed, etc. and only God can cause anything or anyone to be holy. The way of holiness must therefore have been so decreed by God for a specific purpose and that purpose is to bring all of his elect unto himself holy and without spot or blemish; and he sanctified this way of holiness by the sacrifice of his only begotten son to redeem them from under the curse and demands of the law, so that they stand

before him holy and without blame. This way of holiness is the way and manner in which all of the children of the heavenly king are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son: who of God is made unto them wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; all that is needful to insure their inheritance in that heavenly kingdom.

Jesus, during his ministry here on earth fulfilled all that was written of him in the law and the prophets but all of his life on earth was spent under the law and only his death on the Cross and resurrection could secure the way of holiness for every heir of promise. The way of holiness is the way of the spirit and this began in the household of faith on the day of Pentecost; for the first time the spirit of God indwelt the saints of God and they spoke with tongues as the spirit gave them utterance of the wonderful truths and the wonderful works of God. They understood for the first time the wonderful truths of the teachings of Jesus and the miracles performed by Christ and the truths set forth in them. Jesus told them, while he was with them that the Comforter (Holy Spirit) would not come except he went away, but if he went away he would send him to them. This is the beginning of this, way of holiness, where only the redeemed shall walk and where the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head.

The way of holiness is experienced only by the new man, the new creature

in Christ; the one of whom John wrote. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." It is never experienced by the man of flesh because he continues to serve the law of sin. This causes a great conflict in the life of the individual as these two entities continue to live in one body. This is the cross that all must bear: the cross that Jesus spoke of when he said. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." It will be their lot as long as they live in this body of flesh but at the same time, as much as it distresses them, it is evidence that they are going in the way of holiness because the natural man does not have this burden.

Jesus told his disciples just before he ascended unto the Father, "ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This was fulfilled when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place and the promise of the Ages was made manifest among them; they were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance, of the wonderful works of God, of his kingdom and of the truth and glory of the way of holiness that they were entering into. This is the way that they were to witness unto the way of the Cross, the spirit that indwells them and leads them in

the way of holiness and they for the first time understand the teachings of Jesus and truth of the scriptures in the writings of the holy men of old: men who wrote and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

When an individual is born again he is born of the spirit and is a new creature in Christ, old things pass away and all things become new. And all things are of God. Their sense of values change, their love for the things of the world change and their desire now becomes the things of the spiritual realm and more knowledge of this new life which is so dear and precious to their soul. They love to read of the experiences of others who have come this way, and to bask in the loves and fellowship of their newly found family who they love and cherish above all others. They have learned to put things in their proper perspective and realize that the riches of the world, fame and esteem of their peers in this world are as nothing and even less than nothing when compared to the beauty and glory of the heavenly kingdom that they have been blessed to see and to inhabit. They realize that the things of this world perish with the using and attaining of them while the treasures and experiences of the spiritual realm remain ever lovely and precious regardless of how many times they experience the joy of their presence in their life. Their initial change will always be a Bethel spot in their memory: They will tell it to each new brother and sister they meet and will rejoice in its memory every time. I have heard the experience of some brothers and

sisters many times and I still love to hear it because it reminds all of the beauty and mystery of this miraculous transforming from the natural to the spiritual kingdom. It will never cease to cause a thrill to course through the veins of the believer.

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. Surely this scripture embodies more of the substance of, the way of holiness, than I could ever do even though I do hope to have a part in that way. It is where only the redeemed of the Lord can walk, there are no places to get on or off, they are placed there and nothing unclean comes near them. It is a one way thoroughfare going to only one destination, the holy city new Jerusalem: and they come with songs and everlasting joy on their heads. Surely singing the songs of Zion is one of the most joyful aspects of the journey on this way of holiness: it is those living now joining into the experiences of those of other times and expressing joy and praise of the God of heaven and earth who is the common bond or link between them. The oldest scriptures and the oldest song still stirs the heart and soul of those living today as much as they did in the day they were written. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me." Surely this is the way of holiness and the only way unto the Father.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

My Dear Brethren:

What I am (the Lord willing) about to write, is not intended to reflect upon my fellowship for you, but is only in the hope it might stir up our pure minds to such a degree that we might stand still and give serious thought and consideration to this subject and ask ourselves these questions (and God willing) with a prayerful heart;

1. Do I believe that Christ came down upon this sin cursed earth to suffer, bleed, die and arise, for His Church?

2. Do I believe He finished what He came down to do?

3. Do I believe His Church are His people whom His Father gave Him?

4. Do I believe those people His Father gave Him are ALL that go to make up His body the Church, Him being her Head, He being her Groom, and her being His bride?

5. Do I believe that on the morning of the resurrection each of His people, whom His Father gave Him, shall be like Him and be satisfied?

6. Do I believe He, Christ, will take them each and every one to heaven and immortal glory on the wings of His everlasting love?

7. Do I believe He, Christ, will present them to His Father and say - here they are Father, of them all, I have lost none?

8. Do I believe that no hand of man, had any part in the forming or building of this Church?

9. Do I believe that this (Christ's) Church, or any part or portion thereof, does - not consist of any nails, any mortar, any lumber, any brick or stone, or any other natural material?

10. Was my answer Yes, to all the above questions?; and if it were Yes; upon what solid and truthful foundation would or could I base a belief, or reference to, a man constructed building or meeting house, AS THE CHURCH?

11. Now after I have given serious thought to this subject, do I believe this Subject to be of sufficient importance, to abstain from referring to a building or meeting-house, as a Church?; or do I believe that referring to that man constructed building as the meeting house, would be so out dated, or old timey, that the true Old School Primitive Baptist membership would, either resent it, or not even know (perhaps), what were being referred to? or do I fear the ridicule of the world toward the Old School or Primitive Baptist for being a backward people.

Well my Dear Brethren, the worldly have always ridiculed the followers of the Lamb of God and His truths, and so long as time lasts, I feel sure they will continue to do so; and that being the case, could to my mind be some portion of evidence, that the Old School or Primitive Baptist faith and order are in accord with that same faith and order as were John the Baptist.

Now Dear Brethren; it is neither my place, nor is it my intent, to even attempt to try and tell you what you

should do but as I indicated in the beginning of this writing was only for the purpose of stirring up our pure minds; and leave each of us, where we already were; in the hands of our Lord and God. I do desire to just add this - I was raised by Old Baptist parents, and grew up among Old Baptists, and as my memory serves; until I was about thirty years of age, I cannot recall of ever hearing an Old Baptist, referring to their meeting house as the church in any way shape or form. Of course all the different worldly denominations of work mongers in that section of the country always referred to their meeting house as their church. And then, once in a while I began to hear one here and there (members of the Primitive Baptist Churches) refer to their meeting house as the church; and slowly, over the years, I began hearing more and more members doing that same thing; at the time, I just wondered, why the change?; it was not of any great concern to me at that time of life for my interest then was limited only to a respect for them. But lo and behold, many years later, practically all of the membership were calling the meeting house the church, in both their speech and writing. Now to more questions to us all; Do I believe the Primitive or Old School Baptist did adopt that saying, and writing, from the work mongers? and if so; for what reason or purpose?; Was it because of a desire for more membership, more attraction to larger crowds of people at meetings?; or was it from a desire to be more like the world?; or does it

just not matter, one way or another, what we call our meeting houses?

I just desire more light upon this subject, and request of the Editors of the Signs, to please give your views upon this through the Signs, or to me personally, by letter, or come to see me, and give me your views; for it has burdened me now, for many years. If in accord with God's will, may He grant us with more knowledge of His greatness and goodness and a thankful heart for all His gifts of His mercy and grace to usward all the days we have spent upon this earth. I have absolutely no desire whatsoever, to argue religion with anyone, I just desire for Holy truths, that my speech and writing, might not be mixed with untruths.

Your brother in Christ (I hope),
Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES

By Elder H.M. Curry



suppose that every one who professes to believe the Bible at all, looks for the fulfillment of the prophecies. To what quarter then are we to look for this fulfillment? How can those who deny predestination, either in part or in whole, ever expect the exact, timely and certain fulfillment of any or all of the prophecies of the divine oracles?

God has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Part at least of this declaration he has made known unto us by the mouths of his prophets as recorded in the holy Scriptures. The events thus foretold must certainly have been foreordained or predestinated, and therefore must be fulfilled, each in its time and season. The Saviour said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass, until all be fulfilled."

When God says a thing shall come to pass, does he mean that he will bring it to pass? When he says a thing shall be done, does he not pledge his word for its performance? Were the prophecies of the Scriptures uttered upon any other authority than the authority of God's decree? Do they rest upon any vicissitude of time for their fulfillment that God's decrees do not embrace? Would mere foreknowledge, or bare permission warrant or even justify the expression, "It shall come to pass?" or the expression "Shall," in any sense of the word? In this part of the country people read and notice Hick's weather forecasts. When such changes come as have been prophesied, they will say, "Hicks hit it this time;" when the forecasts fail, they say, "Hicks missed it this time." Are we to look upon God's prophesies in this way? Are we to say, when we see the Scriptures fulfilled in this thing, God hit it this time? or when we fail to see them fulfilled in that thing, God missed it this time.

Are we to treat his prophecies as mere prognostications? One would say, O no, God knew all these things would come to pass, and so he was kind enough and thoughtful enough to tell us of them beforehand. This is a very puerile makeshift, a very fallacious and deceptive subterfuge, and involves the one accepting it in a difficulty far more serious and ungodly than he supposes the one to be which he is trying to evade, to wit, God's decree of predestination; for if God knew that an event would transpire, that event is inevitable, that is, it cannot fail to come to pass exactly as foreknown; if inevitable, then it has been determined, and if determined, who determined it? If God did not, who did? The difficulty that I meet here, is an absolutely determined future, and with no determining power outside of God, and independent of him. This is fatalism, and the one accepting such a theory is a fatalist in the fullest sense of that word. So here he is plunged into the very thing which he flattered himself that he was avoiding. In endeavoring to shun an imaginary Scylla, he has fallen into a real Charybdis.

How often do we come upon the expression in the New Testament, "This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." When Herod sent forth and killed the little children in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, it was said then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for

her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." Suppose Herod had not sent forth and killed the little children, then the words of Jeremiah would not have been fulfilled; if his word should fail in one thing, what confidence would his prophecies be entitled to in anything? But it is not Jeremiah's word which is at stake here, it is God's word that must be fulfilled. Herod's persecution also caused the flight into Egypt, and this was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." On the return from Egypt, notwithstanding Joseph had been warned of God to take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, he through unbelief, fearing Archelaus, turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Here not only the wicked persecution by Herod, but also the unbelief of Joseph alike fulfilled the Scriptures.

When the time arrived that Jesus should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, the betrayer was at hand, not as one who accidentally turned up in time of the emergency, but one who had been foretold by prophecy. David had given a pen picture of him hundreds of years before. It had also been said by the Christ that one of the twelve should betray him. Not only was the man marked out by prophecy who should do this, but it had also been foretold how much the traitor should receive for his work; and also what should be finally done with the money. The son of man truly went as

it was written of him. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and when Herod and Pilate and the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against him, they were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. (Acts 4:27, 28).

When the Saviour was crucified, he was put to death between two thieves. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said, He was numbered with the transgressors. Suppose there had been no thieves or transgressors, how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled? It was the custom to break the legs of those who were put to death by crucifixion, but on this occasion they broke the legs of the thieves, but did not break the legs of Christ. This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which said, "Not a bone of him shall be broken." This prophecy was fulfilled in its reference to the literal body of Christ, but it still remains in force in its relation to his spiritual body, and must be fulfilled to the utmost in this also. So this prophecy warrants the eternal security of all the redeemed family, for we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones; so not a bone of him shall indeed be broken. Instead of breaking his legs according to the custom and the request of the Jews, they pierced his side with a spear. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled. "They shall look upon him whom they pierced." When in his last agony he said, "I thirst," they in their fiendish cruelty, gave him vinegar to

drink. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They gave me vinegar to drink." And after all, when they came to dispose of his raiment, they gambled for that, in order to fulfill the Scripture, "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots." In the most exact way, the Scriptures were fulfilled in the life and death of Christ, so that it may well be said, He died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Men are saved to fulfill the Scriptures. "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," is a prophecy that must be fulfilled; but for it to be fulfilled, the redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. This prophecy cannot be satisfied as long as one for whom Christ died, is away from Zion. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me," saith the Son. The righteousness, wisdom, power and grace of God are all engaged to fulfill these words, therefore there is no power or contingency that can ever interfere with the timely and triumphant victory of all the election of grace over every enemy. On the day of Pentecost, when that great number of people cried out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" was exemplified in the fulfillment of prophecy. A great number of these men were Jews, those who only a few days before had crucified the Son of God with wicked hands: they had spit upon him, had called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and to express their resolution never to repent, they said, "Let his blood be upon us and our children." But their obduracy could

not hold out - God's prophecy must be fulfilled. The redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. When Abel offered unto the Lord a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, this prophecy lay at the root of the matter. In the days of Seth, when men began to call upon the name of the Lord, the words of the prophet, "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," was being fulfilled in them. One might say that this prophecy had not been written in the days of Seth. It had not been written upon parchment, but it had been written in the book of God's decrees, and experienced in the hearts and consciences of men. All the prophecies of Jehovah are from eternity, and are yea and amen in Christ. Every poor pilgrim, whose anxious heart and weary footsteps seek that city whose builder and maker is God, is upheld, forwarded and guided on his journey by the immutable decree that the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion; and through the certain fulfillment of God's word, he shall reach the holy city and rest forever in her sacred palaces.

Men are lost to fulfill the Scriptures. Is this a hard saying? Can you not hear it? I am not responsible for the saying, however hard it may appear to be. The Saviour said to the Father in speaking of the twelve, "All of them have I kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." (John 16:12) Had Judas not been lost, the Scriptures would have been broken. The thoughtless and presumptuous man

would say, If Judas had to do what he did, he would have been exempt from crime; he would have had no sin. Upon what ground would he have been without sin? What law would exempt him? According to whose judgment would he be innocent? State the law and name the judge, and if it be the law of God and God himself be the judge, then I will agree that the conclusion is the correct one. Jesus, who is himself the embodiment of all law, and the judge both of the living and dead, said with regard to this matter in reply to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Instead of the judgment of Christ in this matter concurring with the judgment of men, that under such circumstances a man would be without sin, he declared that for this very reason, he had the greater sin. Here is a question of responsibility for some of the champions of that cause to settle. And here is another one: Christ said to the Jews, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of righteous Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matthew 23: 34, 35) The Saviour here declares that these men should fill up the measures of their fathers. He also designates the crimes that they should

commit in order to do this, not only generic crime but specific crimes; and the end to be answered thereby was that upon them might come all the righteous blood that had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of their most recent victim.

Now upon what principle of justice and judgment could four thousand years of crime be required at the hand of one generation? Let some of the champions of free agency solve this problem from their favorite standpoint of accountability. I have been accused of denying human responsibility, but in this as in many other things, I have been willfully misrepresented. I have only denied that the atonement of Christ left any responsibility upon his people: and further, I have denied the foolish, imaginary, sentimental and ungrounded conclusion that predestination relieves men of accountability and acquits them of crime upon principles of equity and justice, and that therefore in order to be accountable, a man must be what men are pleased to call a free agent. I have here referred to these things to show that in the fulfillment of God's decrees according to his word, a deeper principle of justice is involved, than human standards set forth, or human pleaders comprehended.

Again it is said of some in the divine record, that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Now if they were before of old ordained to condemnation, when the condemnation came, did it not come in fulfillment of a decree? Who made the de-

cree? Some would say that God made it, but he made it upon conditions. This they think necessary in order that the character of God stand above reproach in the judgment of men. They admit that the decree of election unto life is unconditional, but that the ordination of condemnation is conditional, and that the subjects of this decree are endowed with a free agency whereby they are permitted to work out their condemnation. This notion involves a monstrous absurdity, and that absurdity is this, That God has denied to man the freedom and ability to righteousness whereby we must be saved, but that he has endowed man with that freedom and ability whereby he may and can work out a sure and foreknown condemnation. And this is resorted to in the vain imagination that the character of God is thus vindicated from the charge of unrighteousness, and be justified in his ways to man. Peter in speaking of certain ones, says they were appointed to disobedience and stumbling. (1 Peter 2:8) Now if they were appointed to disobedience, must they not fulfill the appointment? This they must do, even though God sends them strong delusions to accomplish it. (2 Thess. 2:11)

Many are ready to exclaim now, If this be true, who is to be blamed? This is an old question, and I will give an old and authoritative answer. I will first state the question in its ancient form: "Thou wilt say unto me then, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Reader, do you recognize your question? If you

have never seen it before, if you will read the ninth chapter of Romans, you will find it. I will now give the ancient, time honored answer: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Do you recognize the answer? If not, read the ninth chapter of Romans and you will find it. This is not your question; this is not a question of this age only. This question was asked two thousand years ago. Neither is this my answer. This is God's answer, and I am satisfied with it. This question comprehends everything that the cavillers of all ages have urged against the doctrine of God's sovereign decrees. Is not the answer of inspiration plain and decisive? If the solution of this problem is to be found in exceptions to God's decrees, and in making excuses for him, would he not have put a very different answer in the mouth of his inspired apostle? Is not this the place above all places for such an excuse to be given? Is not this question sprung here for the express purpose of giving a decisive and unequivocal answer? Is not such an answer given? Shall we receive it as final and decisive, as coming from God himself, or shall we seek another, which, although necessarily false, is more pleasing to our pride and presumption, and more acceptable to ignorance and unbelief?

The unbelief of the Jews fulfilled the Scriptures. It is recorded by John that, although he had done many miracles, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled: "Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, that I might heal them." (John 12:37-40) Here it is expressly stated that the reason they could not believe, was that Esaias had foretold their blindness and hardness, and further that this blindness and hardness of heart was given from God. The object of this blindness and hardening was to prevent them from being converted that he might heal them. This language seems to imply that there might have been a possibility of their believing and being converted, had not God's decree intercepted and cut them off.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, said Christ, but my word shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. Whatever the divine record says shall be, must be. The same authority that says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, has also said, The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The same book that says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," has also said, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." The same God that opened Lydia's heart, that

she attended to the things spoken by Paul, hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. The same God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, has also put it in the hearts of wicked rulers to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God be fulfilled. (Rev. 17:17)

When Paul was arraigned by the Jews for preaching what was to them an obnoxious and destructive doctrine, his defense was that he had preached nothing but what Moses and the prophets said should come. If I am censured for what I have herein written, I have but one defense to make, and that is, I have only written what Moses and the prophets and Christ and the apostles have said should be.

(The above is copied from the Signs of January 15, 1900. We feel that the subject is presented clearly and is worth the close attention of our readers. - Editors.

ROMANS 9: 8-11.

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.

For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

(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;)

Williamston, Kansas
Jan. 28, 1952

Dear Brother Winfrey:



am writing you my views on the absolute predestination of all things.

We are living in an evil age and a terribly disrupted world. Wars and rumors of more wars. Blood shed and all manner of debauchery, graft, and corruption is being practiced on every hand from our highest public officials and down to men and women of low rank. Truly it was foretold in the Scripture, - "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived." And again, "Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter day perilous times shall come." One need not be a sage to see the development of these divine prophecies. Recently the doctrine of God's absolute Predestination has been assailed. And having a faint hope that God has placed me as a watchman upon the walls of Zion, I feel it is my duty to at least sound a warning and to offer what defense God will enable me to render. I feel it is no small matter when God's wisdom and power are assailed for these are some of the very attributes of God.

His very name, "God Almighty" implies there is no power but of God, and I find this agreeable to Scripture testimony, to wit: "There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." I can find no exception to this divine expression. Therefore the influence of these powers,

whether it be for good or evil, it is irrefutable, they were ordained of God. But though evil is everywhere extant there is no danger that it will ever get beyond the control of God who ordained it. These ordained powers are limited while the power of God knows no limit. Thus He has ordained that "The wrath of man shall praise Him and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Just why one should doubt or deny the absolute government of God is beyond me. Indeed, one cannot deny this without acknowledging another power somewhere that controls that part that is not controlled of God, or else to say a certain part just goes at random, which, of course, would be the height of absurdity; or to say God has a superior rival. I would say Superior rival from the fact there is a great deal more wickedness extant in the world than there is good. Therefore, this fancied power, whatever or wherever it may be has great superiority over God Almighty. This idea is no less absurd than the other and it is easily defeated by a thus saith the Lord. "I am God, and besides me there is none else, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." "Yea, thou art worthy, oh Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Who would dare make the claim that these things, or any of these which are and which were created for

His pleasure should react to the contrary.

Satan, the serpent, is a conspicuous element in God's creation. God endowed him with a power and subtlety such as none of the beasts of the field possessed. He was ordained to perform his work which none other could perform and all of his devilish work from Eden down through the ages responded to the eternal purpose for which he was created. Through his influence, man sinned, but consider well. Was this a sign of laxity in the government of God; Was it the part of wisdom or lack of wisdom on the part of God when He placed these elements all in the garden of Eden; Did the serpent sneak in unawares to God; Was God disappointed in the outcome of this venture; If so, then we must yield the point and confess that God is not absolute. We must confess that matters begin to go awry right from the start and that God had created something that he could not control.

Such a conclusion is worse than folly. God is absolute. His purposes are laid deep in divine wisdom. The devil and all his creation cannot thwart Him in one of His purposes. He created the devil and He created man and made him susceptible to the wiles of the devil that in the end Jesus should be glorified in saving His people from their sins. To say that man, or Adam, was made able to stand but liable to fall would be equal in substance that God willed that he should stand but the devil overruled Him in that purpose. Why did the law enter; Does this

betray a lack of foresight in God. Was it not that the offense might abound? And why should the offense abound only for the paving the way for the operation of sovereign grace. It is written. "The law entered that the offense might abound but where sin abounded grace did much more abound." It is therefore quite evident that God had a purpose even in the entrance of sin into the world. How could Jesus have been glorified otherwise? One might inquire, Why did God create an evil nation. Was it not that His power over evil should be made manifest? His decree to Abraham was that his seed should serve an evil nation 400 years. Their bondage was timed, I should dare say, to the very moment when they should be liberated. Was this Predestination? What power but that of God was at the controls in this affair. It was no accident that the seed of Abraham came down to this evil nation, for inasmuch as God had decreed it everything else must of necessity work in harmony with that decree. It necessitated suffering on the part of Israel to bring them to this evil nation but their deliverance was also predestinated just as surely as their bondage.

The arrangement for their sustenance while they were there was also fixed and this involved suffering on the part of Joseph. It was not a voluntary act of Joseph that he dreamed dreams that caused his brethren to hate him. But as a brilliant type of Jesus they hated him without a cause. They abused him and they meant it for evil but God meant it for good. Why

did God harden Pharaoh's heart repeatedly and effect his final destruction in the Red Sea? God, Himself, gives the answer: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show My power in thee and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth." Israel could not come forth until their bondage was complete. They were a long time in bondage but God is not slack concerning His promise; 400 years and after that they shall come out with great substance. "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven."

Why did not David allow his servant to slay Shimei as he cast stones at David and cursed him as he went along? David said let him alone. God hath commanded him to curse. Should one question the justice of God in this and similar acts? God is absolute. His decree and His government, His predestination and indeed, all the attributes of God are absolute. He governs the movements of all His creatures yet He Himself is above reproach. All creation is His and He holds the undisputed right to use His creatures and dispose of them in any way as it may seem good unto Him.

Why should anyone heap this indignity on His pure and holy name by saying, "If you say that God predestinated the evil acts of man you make Him the author of sin." Since God is under no law by what law can He be judged and tried? By the law, no man, of course. But this verdict will not stand in the court of divine justice. He has declared, "I am the Lord. That is

My name and I will not give My glory to another, neither My praise to graven images." God has reserved unto Himself the right to do His will and this He doeth "In the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, what doest Thou?" "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 make His power known endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction or that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He afore prepared unto glory;" What if God does this? Must His divine wisdom suffer impeachment in the laws of puny man?

It cannot be questioned but that God could have softened the heart of Pharaoh just as well as to have hardened it if that had been agreeable to His will. But it pleased Him to harden his heart because His decree must be fulfilled. Some will say God is unjust if He has not given every one an equal chance to be saved. But the Scripture answers this contention: "Nay but oh man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?" God has declared "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and whom I will I hardeneth." Does this make God the author of sin? The deeds of a man do not made him either good or bad but they reveal the true character of the man. His deeds are commensurate with his

nature whether they be good or evil. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Jacob and Esau, which is Israel and Edom, God loved and hated respectively before they were born. Thus it cannot be established that their works were a factor in shaping their final destiny. Their destinies were sealed before they were born," neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." The purpose of God in this as in all cases is preeminent. No power but of God was employed in shaping this allegory. So may I repeat, their works are merely commensurate with the nature God has given them.

Now to the climax of the whole story culminating in the crucifixion of our Lord. God has said "Awake oh sword against My shepherd. Against the man that is my fellow. Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered and I will turn My hand upon the little ones." The wicked are designated as His sword. Hence the wicked come and go at His command and are made just as subservient to the will of God as the weakest saint. So in response to this divine command, wicked men led Jesus as a lamb to the slaughter. Hence it is recorded: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God Ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And again, "For as a truth against thy Holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the people of Israel were gathered together to do whatso-

ever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. They could do no more and they could do no less, for in the words of Jesus, "How could the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be."

Thus we see a glorious triumph for the complete Absolute Predestination of God, overruling the powers of darkness to His glory and ultimate salvation of all His elect people. Jesus died but it was not possible that He should be holden of death. He is risen from the dead, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. He thus addressed His elect, saying, "I am He that was dead but behold I am alive forevermore and because I live ye shall live, also." So to the wicked all down the line it may be said as it was said to Pharaoh: "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show My power in thee and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth." Christ crucified is our theme. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can do helpless sinners any good.

I have by no means exhausted the great array of testimony relating to the Absolute Predestination of all things, but this may suffice for the time being. Thanks be unto God "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

From Elder Lamberts Book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

SPIRITUAL INVENTORY

May, 1946

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail. - 2 Peter 1:10.



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT



This language is addressed "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior,

Jesus Christ." It is not addressed to any other than children of God. None can receive these sayings save the called and elected. Those who are the called and elected were so solely because of the righteousness of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. Let us now proceed in our meditations to make our calling and election sure by using the same formula advocated Peter in this same scripture. I have termed this formula a lesson in Spiritual Mathematics.

First, he says: "Add to your faith virtue: and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-8).

All these that we are to add must be of the same denomination and we must be in possession of them before we can add them. If we can determine the source of faith then we must conclude that these other things are from the same source in order to be of the same denomination. "By grace are ye saved through 'faith'; and that not of yourselves: it {faith} is the gift of God."

Faith is the gift of God, so all these other things we are to add must be gifts of God. If the virtue and these other things be good they must be gifts of God. James says: "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." So all these are good - thus gifts of God, and we must be in possession of each of them before we can add them.

So, in this problem of Spiritual Mathematics, it does not concern any works of righteousness that we may perform but our pure minds being stirred up by way of remembrance of these wonderful gifts that God hath bestowed upon us. When we are so enabled by the Spirit to study ourselves (as being) approved unto God: we make our calling and election so sure in our minds that we are enabled to rejoice and not fall into despair. In working out our own salvation by recalling all the things that we have experienced we fear and tremble. We wonder has God been so gracious unto us as to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Now in solving this problem for our own consolation, we must now consider: do we have faith in God and Jesus Christ as our Savior? If we find that we have any trust or confidence in ourselves for any part of salvation, to such extent we are void of faith in Jesus Christ but if we find that our experience teaches us that we must be saved solely upon the merits of Jesus and have no confidence in ourselves then we may conclude that we are in possession of faith.

Next, let us consider virtue. We fear and tremble now because in our flesh we can find no good thing. We are but sinners, vile and needy. Sin is mixed with all we do. We are comforted with this thought, surely it takes virtue to reveal to us our sinfulness. Were it not for this virtue we would be righteous in our own eyes. Surely, then, God hath given to us this virtue. This pure heart or virtue enables us to see ourselves as we are. It enables us to behold that sin is mixed with all we do. We see that in us (that is in our flesh) dwells no good thing.

Next, we are glad to add knowledge. His children grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God had taught us through experience more and more of the meritorious, complete work that Jesus has performed, is performing and will perform for God's chosen. Surely knowledge may be added in the meditations of the pure mind concerning our experience.

Next, we are to add temperance. Have our experience and belief tempered our actions? Have we not been

restrained in some degree from thinking and acting as we have thought and acted heretofore? Are we not more sane minded in our estimation of others as well as ourselves? Have we not been restrained from trusting in ourselves? This peculiar experience has tempered our actions and even our associates and ideals are not the same. Now we see temperance added to the list in our meditations.

Next on the list is patience. Paul said: "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience." Through much tribulation we have learned to patiently wait upon the Lord. We have been taught by that great Teacher that we are depraved and have no ability to lift ourselves from this condition but God has been so merciful unto us that when we were deepest in despair He has reached us many times. These experiences have wrought in us a degree of patience. we now see that God has blessed us with patience.

"And to patience godliness." God has been so gracious to us and has blessed us in so many ways. There is such vast difference between us and God. No comparison, but what a contrast! We are incapable; God is all powerful. We are foolish; God is all wise. We are sinful; God is all holy. We are creatures of time; God is eternal. We are finite; God is infinite. We are mortal; God is immortal. It is with reverential fear and amazement that we are made to bow to the shalls and wills of Jehovah and trust through Jesus Christ the God-man that His abundant mercy may even reach us.

May we not add godliness to the list being possessed with this reverential awe and fear?

To godliness, brotherly kindness. Once my earthly father, who was an ordained minister in another religious organization, accompanied me to a Primitive Baptist Church. While we were enroute home I noticed tears trickling down his cheeks as he said, "I would to God that the brotherly love you people have one for another was practiced by us." I asked him why he made such a remark, and he said, "Everyone can see that you folks love one another, the lovely smile, the warm hand clasp and the smiling countenance on your faces shows that you really love one another. In our church, there is confusion, strife and pride displayed in a big way."

Even the heathen can say, "The Lord hath done great things for them." They can see the brotherly love that exists between brethren. When a brother rejoices, the brethren rejoice with him. When a brother mourns, the brethren mourn with him. Surely brotherly kindness may be added to our characteristics.

"To brotherly kindness, charity." Do we possess charity, which is love? We love God because He first loved us. We love the brethren with that godly love. This love is not akin to natural love. The same love God loves us with goes back and loves God and goes out and loves the brethren. We cannot be so selfish as to retain this love but it is efficacious - reciprocates - it loves God and the brethren and enables us to do good to all mankind, especially to the household of faith.

Now, we have worked out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We have added each of the gifts that God had so graciously blessed us with. We have made our calling and election sure by the Spirit stirring up our pure minds by way of remembrance of the things that we have experienced. We will not fall in despair; our minds have been gladdened and we are made to rejoice over our experience that God has so graciously blessed us to enjoy. Now we praise His holy name for His goodness to the children of men.

Dear Sister Donaldson,



hope you and Hovis had a good trip. And both are well, and enjoying good health. I went to LA last week to a meeting, we had a good meeting. I was glad to see all the brothers and sisters. It was a joy and love in Christ I hope. There are some scriptures still on my mind. Exodus 33: 21, 22, 23, and the Lord said: Behold there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen. I know that the Lord was talking to Moses. But I believe this was surely God's people in Christ. In verse 21 and the Lord said. First I would like you notice who was talking, it is the Lord. Next he said, Behold there is a place by me. I believe this place was for Christ. Before the high-

est hill was ever formed. This place was for Christ to set down on the right hand of God, Where he is sitting now. And thou shall stand upon a rock. And I believe what the scripture said. I believe every child of God shall stand on that rock. For he said upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I believe this is that sure foundation for God's people. And it shall come to pass. It can not fail. It must come to pass. For God has spoken and his word shall not return to him void. But shall accomplish that where unto I send it. While my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock. I believe we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. We were in him when he hung on the cross. And we were in him when he was buried in the grave. And we were in him when he arose. This was our part in the first resurrection. Where the second death had no power over God's children. Will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. I believe that hand was the hand of God. That did all the work when he said it is finished, and gave up the ghost. And he has covered all their sins, and never remembers them any more. He has cleansed them and justified them before this great God. Who can lay any thing to their charge. And I will take away my hand. This is where God took Christ out of this world. For I believe Christ is his hand. And thou shall see my back parts. But my face shall not be seen. Thou shall see my back parts. This back parts is the righteous work that Christ has re-

vealed in his little ones. That is so marvelous in our eyes. We see this with the eye of faith. We don't see his back parts with these natural eyes. But my face shall not be seen. This is the same shall, that he has been using in the other places. You shall not see my face. You cannot look at God's face and know as he knows. For you are not equal with him. You cannot see my face and live. This is the glory that he said he would show you while he passes by. He has called them with a holy calling in Christ. He has loved them with an every lasting love. Exodus 33:12 I know thee by name and 33:13. Show me now thy way. I believe the things we have been talking about is His ways. I believe Christ is our way. If I can be in this matter, this has got too great for me. O what love is this. He has called us the sons of God. I believe in this God. That works all things after the counsel of his own will. A brother in hope, if one at all.

Both our love for Christ's sake,
Elder J.C. Townley and wife

HEBREWS 11: 1-3.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

For by it the elders obtained a good report.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1993

Andrew C. Agee, VA	\$2.00
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Nolan Lanier, NC	7.00
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William Mitchell, VA	2.00
Glenn R. Slate, VA	5.00
Mrs. Fannie D. Wiles, VA	5.00
Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC	2.00
Mrs. James Meador, VA	2.00
Elder C.M. Haygood, TX	2.00
Mrs. Edward B. Hodnett, VA	2.00

This contribution list should have been published earlier, please pardon the delay.

Editors

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

OBITUARIES

SISTER MAMIE LEE BRUMFIELD



It is with a sad heart that we try to write a few lines in memory of our dear Sister Mamie Brumfield. Sister Mamie Brumfield 82 of 1327 Claiborne St. Danville, Va. died in Danville Memorial Hospital, April 14, 1993.

Born Jan. 19, 1911 in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of the late Robert Lee and Maria Brumfield. She was married to the late Albert C. Brumfield.

She joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist Church June 21, 1952. A faithful and loving member, attending regular as long as her health permitted, and loved by all who knew her, the idol of her children.

Although not able to attend church for several years, her faith and love for the church remained strong, telling the writer the day before she went back to the hospital, (I can't help what the Dr. says, I will live every day and minute the Lord intended.) When the Dr. told the family that she only had a short time to live, her granddaughter wrote this poem.

Our Grandma

Her skin is soft and silky;
Her hair is like untouched snow.
Her eyes are tired and weary,
She knows its time to go.

But she is the one who loves us,
cause

She's our grandma you know.
She raised us up from babies;
That's why it is so hard to let go.

She has been there through the years
For each and every one.

Now we are all grown up and married;

Her work is finally done.

There will be no other one to take her place,

I hope she is in a place,
That is quiet and
Full of grace.

For she will be remembered
Long after our tears are wiped dry.
Because we hope Grandma's gone,
To be with our Father in the sky.

Written by Penny Reid Dooley for
her Grandma, Mamie Brumfield.

She leaves to mourn, four sons, Robert Lee Brumfield of Sutherlin, Lours Brumfield of Greensboro, NC, Larry D. Brumfield of Danville and Edward Lee Shaw of Roanoke; Four daughters, Francis B. Buchanan, Effie B. Davis, and Susie B. Brooks, all of Danville, and Faye B. Brooks of Eagle Rock; two sisters, Sister Doris Rowland and Sister Carrie McDaniel, both of Danville; 17 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted Sat. April 17, 1993, at 2 p.m. at Barker Funeral home Chapel, by her pastor Elder H.W. Wray, and Elder Marvin Brumfield. May the family be reconciled to God's will.

Her body was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, A token of love from her family and many friends. Where her body will rest until that Great day, WHEN Christ, the righteous Judge shall come to take His ransomed people home, Written at the request of Old Mt. Church.

Sarah Barker

WALTER CLEVELAND HAMLETT JR.

Brother Walter Cleveland Hamlett Jr. Passed from this life April 1, 1993. He was born in Prince Edward County, September 5, 1942. He was the son of the late Walter C. and Lottie Nash Hamlett.

Brother Hamlett was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, Va. He was received by experience June 9, 1985. Brother Hamlett didn't attend Meeting very often but when he did, he seemed to always enjoy preaching and fellowship.

Brother Hamlett was preceded in death by two sons; Anthony Wayne and Howard Cleveland Hamlett and one sister, Carrie Hamlett Leftwich.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth (Libby) Younce Hamlett. Three sons; Carrol Ray Hamlett of Flora City, Florida, Steven Greg Hamlett of Tampa, Florida and Chris Wayne Hamlett of Rustburg, Va. Two brothers; Herbert Hamlett of Evergreen, Va. and John Hamlett of Kenbridge, Va. Four sisters; Mrs. Garland (Joyce) Harris of Evington, Mrs. Reid (Janie) Sapp of Chesterfield, Mrs. David (Jean) Phelps (twin sister) of Brookneal and Mrs. William (Dorothy) Foster of Phenix and seven grandchildren.

Brother Hamlett was laid to rest in the Hamlett family cemetery at Charlotte County.

May all who mourn say "Thy Will Be Done".

Written in love and hope,
Sister Carol R. Pickral
Oscar D. Pickral, Clerk

ALVIN E. LANCASTER

December 23, 1924 - June 30, 1993



quiet, softspoken, stern, loving, peacemaker, and helpful are qualities that describe Brother Alvin E. Lancaster who departed this life on June 30, 1993.

Brother Lancaster was a quiet and gentle person moving among the brethren enjoying their fellowship and greeting them in his soft spoken tone. He was always helpful when duty called at his church, always a caretaker performing any tasks that are required in keeping the meeting house and grounds in operative order. Brother Lancaster possessed a special love for his family, wife and two daughters, was always excited when his girls came home, and spent much time traveling to see them.

He was also a peacemaker. Not always did things go as he would rather, but usually he was willing to abide by the wishes of the brethren rather than create confusion. He wasn't a "yes" man, but a man with convictions and once made this statement that continues to ring in my ears - "when a man does anything against what he feels he's been shown by God, he's on dangerous ground."

In times of controversy he would let the brethren know in a stern tone his feelings about what went on at home or abroad.

Brother Lancaster united with the church at Pleasant Hill April 24, 1954 and was baptised the same day by his beloved pastor, the late Elder C.N. Bunn. On September 22, 1974 he was

ordained a deacon and served his brethren faithfully until his death.

We at Pleasant Hill Church miss our dear brother, but know it would be selfish to wish him back, therefore we say to his wife, Mae Flood Lancaster, his daughters Margaret L. Neikirk, Alice L. Pettitt, and his sisters, Sisters Lessie L. Lancaster, Fannie Mae Calhoun, and Mrs. Martha L. Brake that we extend our love and sympathy to you at this time when we share your great loss.

Brother Lancaster's funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home, Sunset Avenue, in Rocky Mount, NC by Elders D.B. Stokes and Henry Jones. His body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, NC.

Sleep on Brother Alvin, we hope you are resting in God's love awaiting the second coming of Christ when your hope in Christ will know redemption.

Written by one who served the church with him, respected him, and now feels so lost and insufficient.

God's will be done.

J. Carroll Williams

PSALM 148: 1-5.

PRAISE ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.

Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.

Signs of the Times

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TRUTH PASSED

***I searched my soul, and found
me clothed,
With nothing but sin and rags,
I desperately tried, these things
to hide,
With all my lies and my brags,
But when the one, much stronger
than I,
Began to intervene,
I knew he'd won, and with a
sigh,
I surrendered to my King.***

***I didn't know the joy I'd feel,
When he brought me to my knees.
And taught me that I'd do his
will,
To wait for his expertise.
The threshing floor was a guide
for me,
To follow in his steps,
And I'm so glad I was made to
see,
And tribulations made to accept.***

***This world has lost it's beauty
for me,
I'm looking for much, much more,
A continuing city to always be,
My home forever more.***

Katherine Mathews

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EDITORIAL

LOVE



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

A portion of a prayer by David was, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us: and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. that thy

way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let all the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee." If I know truly the thoughts of my heart, this is also my prayer for the saints of God the world over; and it should be the prayer of all

His beloved children. "That thy way may be known upon the earth." Jesus christ is "the way, the truth, and the life." No man can come unto him, "except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Neither can any man know the Father or the Son except they be revealed, "and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." This revelation does not come to the natural or carnal man, for we have only a natural or carnal mind; and "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." The word enmity means hatred, not enemy, for an enemy may be changed and reconciled, but hatred must be destroyed. Also we read 1 Cor.2:14: "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." If Jesus revealed the Father unto us we have eternal life: for Jesus said in his prayer, (John 17:3,) "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." This eternal life is a spiritual life, "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." To receive this spiritual life we must be born again, for "that which is born of the flesh is

flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This birth cannot be obtained by man asking God for it, for it is *"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* To whom is this life given, and why? It is given to the children who were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."* It is according to the good pleasure of his will that all things that are, and all things that shall come to pass, were ordained or predestinated to be by him. Their names were also written in the Lamb's book of life; and he stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world to redeem them from the curse of the law. He was made a curse for them; for, *"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."* These same children that were chosen in him are partakers of flesh and blood. We read, *"Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death,*

that is the devil" These children are also called sheep, and Jesus said of them, *"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."* This life that he gives has ever been theirs, but is given to them in the new birth: for they are dead, and their life is hid with Christ in God; and it was in him before the foundation of the world. Birth does not give life, but only brings forth the life already there. There are many more scriptures that prove who the ones are that are given this eternal life, but these should be sufficient. God is love, and he spake unto Jeremiah, saying, *"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."* God's love for his people is the reason that he hath redeemed them from their sins. His love and his mercy did not save them, but was the reason. It took the shed blood of His beloved Son to make the atonement. *"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live."* *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath made us sit together in heavenly*

places in Christ Jesus." As we stated before, God's love did not redeem his beloved children, but was the cause. The words love, loved, loveth and charity (Godly love) appears in the Holy Scriptures 380 times, and most of them have reference to the love of God. Paul speaks of charity in 1 Cor, chapter 13, in this way: *"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth."* These are things concerning brotherly love, of which Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, *"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."* There are various other loves, such as love between husbands and wives, parental love, love of children for parents, love of other relatives and friends, etc. There is also love that is evil, as, *"The love of money is the root of all evil."* However it is the love that God has bestowed upon his people that we are considering most at this time. All of God's attributes are perfect and they are equal. One cannot override or cancel, or void another, therefore neither his love nor his mercy can take the place of his justice. His justice must be satisfied, and his perfect law

says, *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* We have been found guilty and sentenced, *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."* There is not a just court any where that would allow one person to die in the room and stead of one that has been sentenced to death; but even if it was allowed would justice be served? No, for the guilty one would still be just as guilty as ever. Yet Jesus Christ came into the world to suffer, bleed and die for guilty sinners. How could God's justice be satisfied with the death of Jesus for his people? Paul gives the answer in Eph.1:22-23. God *"hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."* And in Eph.5:30 Paul says, *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."* Therefore we have a living unity or oneness with him. When Jesus the head died, we must conclude that the body also died, for the body cannot live without the head. We were in him when he hung upon the cross of Calvary, and we were buried with him, and we arose with him. We read Rom.6:4-6. *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this,*

that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not live in sin." Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."* Jesus is the first resurrection, and we are told in Rev.26:6 that *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."* Brethren, if we were in him when he hung on that cross, we had a part in the first resurrection, and shall not be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels, which is the second death. How wonderful, how comforting, how refreshing, and yes how astonishing it seem to us at times, that we have been given a hope in Christ! For this hope is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. This hope is that we are one of those who were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, and that he is coming again, without sin unto salvation, to receive us unto himself in heaven and immortal glory. As we said before, if we are what we hope to be then we have a living unity or oneness with him. In his prayer, (John 17:21,) he prayed to the Father, *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."* And in verse 24 he said, *"Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast*

given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Can there be any doubt that what Christ prayed for will be given him? In the 11th. verse he prayed, *"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."* Surely God keeps his children as long as they live in this sin filled world, but in the flesh they continue to transgress his laws and commandments, which is sin. In Psalms 89:31-33 we read, *"If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."* God uses the rod of afflictions when they go astray, to bring them back into the right way, for they are a stiffnecked and rebellious people, and will be as long as they remain in this world. It is said in Ps.119:6-7, *"Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."* In the 12th. chapter of Hebrews we find: *"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with*

sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (verses 6-8.) Our fathers in the flesh chastened us after their own pleasure, but he (God) for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. (Verses 9-10) John said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." What is the manner of his love? It is the manner or way that he hath, and does, bestow his love upon us, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And in Phil. 1:29 we read, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Jesus Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake." It is only to the children of God that this belief and suffering comes by his grace. And, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 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 that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall follow." (Rom 8:16-18). A portion of his way with us is his chastisement of us, as mentioned above, when we err from the way of righteousness. In the 1st. chapter of James we read, "My brethren,

count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." (v.1-2) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. 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 lusts and enticed." Yes, brethren, God blesses us even in our temptations, and we read, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor, 10:13). Brethren, we are told that in this world we must suffer trials, temptations, persecutions, tribulations, etc., but God gives us strength to bear them, for he will not suffer us to become completely overcome. In all these things we should be of good cheer, for Jesus hath overcome the world. (See John 16:33). And Paul tells 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 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." How wonderful to know that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of our God! *"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."* All of our days are not consumed under the chastening hand of God, for there are times of refreshing and great joy in his love because of the faith and hope that is given unto us. We read 1 Peter 1:1-8: *"Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."* Wherein ye greatly rejoice, 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 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." We read in 1 John chapter 4: *"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in the world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."* Brethren beloved, let us love one another with godly love, always esteeming others better than ourselves. Written in the spirit of love to the beloved brethren in Christ Jesus our Saviour by a poor worm of the dust. I feel the need of your prayers of faith. May God bless the truth herein and pardon all errors.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

PSALM 148:1.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Signs of the Times:

While it is fresh on my mind, here are a few thoughts about the 103rd Association of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptists.

What a blessing it is when His little ones can meet together in love and sweet fellowship.

I don't believe I have ever been involved in such an occasion before when there was no interruption of any kind to take away the joy that was being shared there. We had many visitors from other parts of our country who shared this feeling with us. Never have our visiting ministers seemed so humble and yet so completely full of the spiritual news, nor the members so ready to hear.

After the meeting was over, the husband of a sister of one of our members (he belongs to the Methodist Faith and Order) said to me "wouldn't it be a blessing if what I saw and heard in this building today could be shared by other churches all over." I believe he did see something he had never witnessed before. This meeting was something that had to be shared to know about it. You cannot tell it to anyone.

I believe this two-day Association we have shared was prepared for us by our Heavenly Father for our comfort and consolation at this specific time, yet will not suffice for tomorrow or next week or next month. We need

a new supply day by day. How blessed are we to have such Elders who are called, set apart, taught the right way by the right Teacher, and therefore qualified, to bring a fresh supply when needed.

They spoke to us of how the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, shares all our trials and sorrows and promised to never leave nor forsake us. That Word teaches and makes us believe He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He tells by opening the scriptures to us that because He lives we may live also. He is now seated on the right hand of His Father making intercession for us with words we don't have. They, through inner working of the spirit and the power of the gospel, convince us of that glorious truth contained in the scriptures, that this truth shall make you free, not in order to become sons, but because you are sons of God. God sends forth the spirit of His Son into your heart crying Abba Father. This spirit places within our heart faith, hope and love that carries us safely through this lifetime we spend here.

How good and pleasant it is when brethren can meet together in unity.

Remember me in your prayers,
Elder Graydon Smith

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12 / 93
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.**

September 15, 1993

Dear Elder Key:



As far back as I can remember I can remember going to Norkfork Church with my family. My mother's father and mother (Mammy & Pa) to me were members there. I loved that little church then and I still love it. I still don't feel worthy to have a home with the church but wouldn't take a million dollars for this little hope I have in my breast sometimes. Every month when I get the Signs of the Times I read it through and I really enjoy the letters the brothers and sisters write in there. I was born a farmer's daughter. It was 11 of us children. Six girls and 5 boys. There is one brother and 4 sisters still living. I lost my Father, Mother, 1 sister, 4 brothers, husband, baby and a nephew, all of them I loved dearly. I am the third child and when I was 17 yrs. old I got a job and went to public work.

I remember the Sunday Brother Paul Wyatt joined Norkfork Church. The song they sang was "When I can Read My Title Clear." After this me and my mother, he and his wife would go to meeting every weekend. I remember one Sunday at Martinsville Church (The Church then was on college St. and they was having their meeting at the city park. We had good preaching and lunch. After lunch some of the brothers and sisters talked of their experiences and I began to cry. I remember Elder Cecil Turner shook my hand and asked if I belonged to a church I said no. He said you are an

Old Baptist. He didn't know how I loved those words. I never got to tell him how good he made me feel.

After Brother Paul Wyatt wasn't able to go to church a lot; Sister Odell Wells joined the church at Norkfork. After this she came to see me during the week when I got home from work and we always went to meeting together and I enjoyed her a lot. We went to Chappel one Sunday and when the singing began Elder Tench asked if anyone had a song. This man, woman, and two young boys were sitting in front of us. The smallest boy sang every word of the song. I was so full I couldn't sing but from that day to this I will never forget that song.

One Sunday at Malmaison Elder Noel Conner preached about seeing a picture of the Lord that he had seen on a wall. I don't remember if it was a dream he had but I had the same experience happen to me in a dream and I wished I could have told him about how I felt then. I loved every minute of it. These sweet feelings don't last long but the ones that have had them knows what I am talking about.

When the association was held at Canaan Church it was held out doors. It seemed that every preacher that day (I don't know how many was there) fed me a crumb. I was so happy. We were singing the closing hymn and Elder Raymond Goad said (I don't know what you are waiting for?) The next meeting day at Norkfork I sat at my usual seat because I didn't feel worthy to ask for a home with these good people. I prayed and cried a lot and on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday I

played the record ("In His Arms I'm Not Afraid"), by Jim Eanes (my cousin). I work, prayed and cried all day long asking God to have mercy on me a poor sinner and to let me feel good enough to ask for a home with these dear people.

On August 14, 1988 after Elder Goad had preached and when they started singing ("Amazing Grace") I couldn't hold to that bench no longer. I found myself going down the isle and asked Elder Goad for a home with these dear people. I was received and I think that was the happiest day of my life. The next 3rd Sunday at Martinsville, Elder Carter announced about me joining Norkfork and would be baptized the 2nd Sunday in September in Roger Hatcher's Pond at the end of that meeting they started singing the song ("Amazing Grace") and a dear brother joined the church.

The 1st Sunday in November me and my sister went to Union Church. After church we rode with William and Sister Larry Bowlin. Elder Goad, Sister Phyllis and a large number of people went to Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.'s church and after service and communion a lot of us went with Elder C.B. and Sister Davis home. After supper we sang a lot of hymns and Elder C.B. had wrote 2 more verses to the song ("In His Arms I'm Not Afraid") which we sang and this brought back all of my sweet memories.

The 2nd Sunday in November Elder Davis held service at Norkfork he went home with us for lunch after lunch he told us why this song meant so much to him. On the 5th Sunday in Novem-

ber the Union meeting was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. They had five preachers to preach and I really enjoyed all of them? When Elder Joe Sawyer preached about a dream he had (I think) this carried me back about forty years ago I had a dream about seeing miles and miles of muddy water I had a 40 Ford Coupe, and me, my Brother (Clinton) and Sister (Ranie) were caught in that car and were going down in all of that water and a white dove pulled the car from all that muddy water. So this dream was brought back to me so sweet. On Friday night before Christmas I was blessed to be with a lot of Brothers and Sisters that met at Elder Lane and Sister Carter's home. We had supper and sang a lot of hymns and I really enjoyed this meeting. These are just a few of my experiences. I know God is a just God and I try to thank him every day for being so good to me a poor sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

A Little Sister in hope,
Sallie Hodges
Rt. 1, Box 580
Martinsville, Virginia 24112

ST. MARK 1: 1-3.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

 ARTICLES

To the household of faith:
Which faith is, a free gift from God:

In recent years, it seems, that more and more frequently with me, the question comes to my mind, with more and more seriousness in my feelings; what do you in truth really feel and believe, concerning the attributes of the true and living, three-in-one God?; well, here I sit this morning, with a mind, to attempt writing some of what I feel, concerning this most sacred subject; feeling deeply of my own self complete helplessness; and feeling to know full well, that ALL success in this endeavor, is absolutely and entirely dependent upon, what is the mind, purpose, pleasure and will of God.

I feel and believe that, even before, God began His creation of ALL things; in both His mind and purpose, ALL that was to be or take place or come to pass, was already seen, fixed, established, and absolutely predestinated to be, in that exact manner; time and place, as He did see it ALL would, and shall be, and come to pass. That it was and is an entire impossibility, for Him to ever be surprised, in any of what should ever transpire, in ALL allotted time, for this world to stand; not only the final out come of any certain things, but any and ALL things, surrounding them, both great and small, that were either (seemingly) directly or indirectly connected with

its arriving at its final consummation; and ALL after effects evolving, as a result of it so having come about as it did. That, He holds and controls ALL power, from which ALL strength that exists does come. That God is Self existent, and therefore is without beginning or ending. That every word what goeth out His mouth, never returns unto Him void, but does always and always accomplish ALL that for which He spake them each and every one. That the fulfillment of His PLEASURE, (as having to do with the existence of this time world, and the fullness thereof); completely encompasses, every importance, connected with its being herein the first place. That, He is an unchanging God; therefore ALL that He does, is done forever. That, His ALL seeing eye, does see ALL things at ALL times, and eternally before, during, and after this time world is no more. That, ALL that will be or takes place, in ALL time for this world to stand, has come, and shall come, by His appointment of them ALL; for there exists no thing, with anything, to either hinder, or hasten, or prevent, either of them from their appointed rounds. That He has and does, indict true prayer, into the hearts of His chosen people, that they be made to realize from whence all their help does come; and within His indicting of that true prayer unto one, also goes a willingness, that, God's will be done, both in heaven and earth; and further still, He already knows our hearts, and what our needs are; and so, has already prepared the supplies for our needs; and just so sure as that

prayer was groaned or uttered, just that sure is it, that true prayer will be answered, in His good time and way. That, He is so full of grace, that His shedding of grace upon ALL His little children, does in nowise deplete His supply. That, His supply of mercy, upon whom He will, does in nowise diminish of His mercy. That, His school of grace, is the one and only school, whereby one could ever learn, even one iota of Him and His Holy truths; for He Himself, not only owns that school, but He is its very One and only Teacher. That, He is verily life and light itself; therefore, without His furnishings, total darkness would surely be the results; and outside Himself, there could exist no life at all. That, that love He centered upon, each and every one of His vessels of His mercy and honor, was and is so very great, that His beloved Son, went and prepared a place for them in heaven, that they should (after this time world is no more) spend a never ending immortal glory, with their Heavenly Father; singing ceaseless and undivided praise, unto His great and Holy name forever. That, by His appointment, this body of flesh of us all, both lives and dies. That, as when He said, "Let there be light, and there was light, so it is all, that be outside Himself; if He let it be, it then is; otherwise, it just simply cannot be. That, His purpose in and for, His creation of this world, and the fullness thereof, is fulfilling that exact purpose, for which He did bring it all into being, in the first place. That, this One and only True and living three-in-one God, has never (as if it were left

up to man) invited anyone; for to do this or that; for, He speaks and it is done, He commands and it stands fast, for His almighty unhindered power, goeth along with His every spoken word; and also, even, as He has thought, so shall it be. That, He has never once, asked for assistance or help, from anyone; for He owns all, to do with as He pleases; and so, it is impossible, that He could be in need of anything; and especially that, that mankind might do or offer; for, what man claims, of worldly things are his, are like as it were a loan, for a short period of time, at most; and furthermore, all those worldly goods or things, that man claims are his, shall melt with fervent heat, at the ending of this time world. During my eighty years here, upon this sin cursed earth, I have heard numerous people, speak of their place of abode, as their home, the same as I myself have said, but the very truth of the matter is, their stay in that place, was only for a short period of time, as measured by, how long this earth has been here; many of those buildings that were called home, have burned down, during its inhabitants earthly life; then they either built an other building, or moved to another location; but in either case, that burned building no longer existed, and no longer could it be rightly called, either home, or a place of abode; in speaking of the above, its just my poor way of an illustration, as to just how temporary, even this time world is, as to be considered, as any where near, our permanent home; much less, to consider a particular spot or build-

ing upon this earth, as our permanent home; for in Holy truth, all appointed time, for this world here to stand, is but just a day, as compared with, forever after this world is no more. It seems to me, that somewhere, within my sweet and precious hope, I feel to say, this world is not my home, but, is just a temporary place, for me to await the return of my Lord and Savior; He knoweth for sure; I must just continue in hope, if so be His will, for my hope to continue with me in this earthly life. I just feel to know for sure, of this one thing; In my fleshly self, I could not possibly be worthy of even one, of the blessings He has showered upon me, all the days of my unprofitable life here. I do desire a thankful heart unto God, for them all; but except He place that thankfulness within my heart, it is entirely impossible with me; for without Him I can do no thing or nothing. I feel to know, that there are many, many volumes more (perhaps, more than this world could hold), of Holy truths, concerning the attributes, of this true and living three-in-One God; But it is my desire, that I might be so led and directed, as to refrain from the writing of such, as that, that I have not, been given light upon; that light referred to, which is not that, that the light bulb emits, but is that which gives knowledge; far above, what fleshly mankind is capable of acquiring. The Spirit maketh alive, while the flesh profiteth nothing. It is not in the fleshly nature of man, to even desire, a true knowledge of that truth, as it is in Jesus Christ.

I feel and believe, there surely was and is a process, a certain un-

changable process, whereby, all things shall work in perfect order, that it shall be for the good of His Chosen ones, and to His Own glory. I do so hope, this love I feel for you all, could be, that same love, wherewith He first loved His chosen ones. May we all (in as much as be in accord with His will), be truly thankful unto our God, for His grace and mercy, toward us all the days of our lives.

In hope, this hope I feel, is not in vain.

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

VOICES OF THE PAST

2 JOHN 10.

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."



What is this doctrine without which one cannot be received into the houses of the church and without which one cannot be bade Godspeed? Doctrine is here declared by the inspired apostle to be the essential thing, the real test of one's being a true follower of Jesus. Without this doctrine, one lacks the necessary qualification for the fellowship of the saints. Since, then, this doctrine is so important, let us inquire what it is. In doing this, we shall not do better than to consider other expressions in this second epistle of

John. For instance, in the seventh verse: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Here it is plainly stated that not to confess the coming of Christ stamps one as being a deceiver; that is, not to confess Christ's coming in the flesh. The Scriptures plainly teach that Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, was born of a woman, that he took not on him angelic nature, but the seed of Abraham. Now, the seed of Abraham comprises the elect family of God, chosen before the world began. This chosen seed was not elect angels, but elect human beings. So Christ was made a little lower than the angels, and came in the flesh for the suffering of death. To deny this coming in the flesh, to deny that Christ was as truly man as he was truly God, is antichrist and a deceiver and such is not to be countenanced by the house of God. However, it is not enough that we confess the coming of Christ as a historical fact. That, anyone could do, just as easily as he could say that George Washington or some other man lived years ago. There must be a confession that Jesus Christ has come in one's own flesh, that he has come in the individual experience of the believer himself. In other words, a living experience of Christ is the real test of genuineness. This doctrine or teaching of Jesus, more than any other one thing, was the test of discipleship when Jesus was here in the world as a man among men, and this teaching of his caused many who had been

following him to withdraw from him. For proof of this, turn to the sixth chapter of John and read the wonderful discourse on the bread of life, from the thirty-second to the fifty-eighth verses. In these words Jesus taught that He himself is the bread of life and that the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood are an essential test of whether one has eternal life, that "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." In the sixty-sixth verse, we are told, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." Jesus was not here referring to the gospel ordinance of the Lord's supper, but was plainly stating that without which one is brought into a living fellowship with Jesus in his sufferings on account of sin and into a living knowledge of the cleansing power of his blood, there can be no such thing as one's possessing eternal life. Life is knowledge, and there is always a certain amount of knowledge accompanying a certain amount of life. Eternal life is always accompanied with a certain quality of knowledge. Wherever eternal life dwells, there cannot help but also dwell the knowledge that one is a sinner and that his condemnation on account of sin is just. But spiritual knowledge does not stop there. It teaches that human nature is altogether unprofitable in the way of righteousness, that it is wholly incapable of any good thing in the sight of God. In a living way, and not out of books nor by tradition, the sinner continues to be instructed by the Spirit of the

great Teacher until he fully realizes his utterly lost condition and is made to throw himself entirely upon the mercy of God, without one jot of anything to merit that mercy. He becomes a beggar, but being really a beggar in heart and not merely by word of mouth, he is not turned empty away from Mercy's door. Christ Jesus appears for his relief and reveals himself to and within this beggar's soul as the Savior, the only name given under heaven among men whereby that beggar must be saved. By the grace of God now appearing through Jesus to this beggar, the beggar is lifted from the dunghill of total depravity and is set among princes, is manifested as the son of the King; that is, as a child of God. From now on the believer finds his struggle has but begun. The burden of condemnation lifted from him and his heart singing for joy because of the new hope springing within him, he finds himself in the company of all the people of God from Abel to the present time; but finds himself, like them, engaged in a warfare, one from which at times he would fain be free, but which cannot end until natural life ends: the warfare of flesh against Spirit and Spirit against flesh. He finds a dying daily going on within him, a continual being delivered unto death, a ceaseless rendering of his body a living sacrifice. In some such way as this there is a continual confession in heart and life that Christ Jesus has come in the flesh. It need not be that one is all the time confessing this by word of mouth, but the confession nevertheless will show itself in the outward life, in the

actions of the individual; it will manifest itself in the conduct of the one having this living experience, shining out through the hands and the feet, bringing forth the fruits appropriate to repentance. Without this manifestation of Christ in the flesh one is a deceiver and an antichrist and cannot be in the fellowship of the house of God. When Christ came in the flesh it was not in order to reinstate or to reinforce the covenant of Moses. That covenant could never bring in salvation to the children of God, but Jesus came to make an end of the old ineffectual covenant and to establish a new and successful covenant. The covenant became a vital reality to the children of God through the death and resurrection of Christ. This new covenant was promised to be put in the new heart of the child of God and to be imprinted in his mind. In other words, the new covenant or new law was not to be something abstract from the child of God, but was to be part and parcel of the new creature in Christ Jesus. It was not to be a covenant conditioned upon the volition of the believer, but was to be enforced in the life of the believer by the "wills" and "shalls" of God. Christ, after his resurrection, said "go" and they went, he said "come" and they came. All gospel obedience is this way and no other. It is obedience springing from the manifestation of Christ in the life of the believer. He said to his disciples, A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another. This loving one another is not something we can bring about ourselves. Might just as well try to make the sun

shine as to try to make one's self love the church of God. It cannot be done by one's own effort. But how easily one loves the brethren when this commandment is written in the heart by the finger of the Holy Spirit. This love is Christ manifest in the flesh. God is love, and love is God, and whosoever loveth is born of God. If we love God we love those who are begotten of God. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, it is vain to say we love God whom we have not seen. Not having this love, we are deceivers and an antichrist. No wonder, then, Paul says in the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians that charity (love) is the one thing without which we are unprofitable to the house of God. Having not love, no matter what else we have or think we have, we are nothing. We might be able to speak ever so angelically, might be able to dive down into the deep mysteries of God, might be able to expound all prophecies, make great sacrifices or expend ourselves and our substance bountifully, but if it be not prompted by love, have not love in it, what does it all amount to? Nothing. It seems to us that this is the doctrine without which John said a man was not to be received into the house or church. In order to gain admittance there, one must have a vital knowledge of the coming of Jesus in the flesh, and the essence of this living experience is love. Having not this love, one is classed a deceiver. In another place the inspired writer tells us to mark them that cause divisions, and have nothing to do with them. One who would divide asunder brethren in order to establish his own cause

has not the love of God, therefore he does not confess that Christ is come in the flesh. From such, turn away. It is like those two women who brought a child to King Solomon, each woman claiming to be the mother of the child, and asking Solomon to decide the matter. Solomon called for a sword, and was about to divide the child when the woman, who was really the child's mother, called out to the king to let the other woman have it. Thus the woman who really and rightfully loved the child was willing to relinquish her right to it rather than see the child killed. True love in the church of God will always seek the good and welfare of the church itself before the personal good and advantage of one's own self. This is the living teaching or doctrine that Christ is come in the flesh, this doctrine gives one an open door into the houses of the saints; without this doctrine or teaching of love in one's own life one fails to possess that secret of God which gives access to the holy of holies. There is no sight on this earth more pleasant than a church of the saints where all love each other, where each esteems the others better than himself, where all are imbued with the desire to spend and be spent for one another, and any individual who would mar that peace to serve himself would most assuredly not have within him that doctrine of the Master, Love one another. Not having this love he could not confess that Christ is come in the flesh, therefore must be a deceiver and an antichrist. From all such may the Lord deliver his people.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

"But, if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15)



Christ has delivered us from the law of sin and death, therefore we owe complete allegiance to him - as "being under the law to Christ." (1 Cor. 9:21) ***"The people of God, who are purchased with such a cost and set free by such power, are constrained by a sense of deep love to live a Godly life."***

The first lesson we learn in the school of Christ is self-denial. (Matt. 10:37-39, 16:24-28).

The heart of religion is living our profession. A dead profession is worth nothing. ***"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."*** (Titus 3:8) ***"And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."*** (Titus 3:14).

Notice the religion of the dead professors: ***"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."*** (Titus 1:16).

Working for life or blessings is a fruitless task and lost labor. But working from life is a glorious privilege and sets the seal upon the reality of our

profession and evidences a living experience of the power and grace of God in his predestination and purposes. (See James 2: 14-26).

Notice this command which is applicable to the Children of God: ***"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."*** (Mark 5:19) Beware of satan's temptations to take the Sovereignty of God and present it in such a way that would discourage us even to the extent of being unconcerned about our duty in keeping his commandments and precepts, and to charge our negligence to the sovereignty of God by such expressions as this: ***"When the time comes I will join the church."*** This is true, for there is a time for all things in the secret purposes of God. Yet, who are we to attempt to follow the secret will of God as a rule of our life and conduct?

Let us be concerned with exhortations in the Scriptures: ***"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."*** (Romans 12:2) This is the revealed will of precept and commandment that we should be very careful to seek after and follow. There are many exhortations that the Apostles were given to write. They were given for the welfare of the church. ***"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."*** (Gal. 5:15)

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” (1 Peter 1:22) ***“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”*** (1 Peter 4:8) The church should “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel.” (Phil. 1:27; also see 2 Cor. 13:11, Rom. 12:15).

The Brethren are exhorted to help the poor, and to contribute to the needs of the Pastors. (Rom. 12:13, 1 Cor. 9: 7-14). As to ministerial support, I would like it to be understood I am certainly against salaried and the hiring system so popular in the religious world. (John 10: 10-15). A minister is a servant of his flock. (Matt. 23:11). He is under Christ and is set over the flock to lead and oversee them. (Acts 20:28, 1 Tim. 3:5, John 21: 15-17).

The minister should not be greedy of filthy lucre. (1 Tim. 3:3) The ministry is not for lazy persons and any minister who will not work with his own hands to care for the necessities of his household is not worthy of the name of a minister.

Of course, it is the duty of the church to help the pastor so that he can direct his labors to the spiritual welfare of his flock, freely giving his time, strength, health, etc. We should watch over one another for good, and bear with one another our weakness. ***“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.”*** (Rom. 15:1) The Children of God should

walk in newness of life, and should be faithful to attend church meetings. (Hebrews 10:25).

Dear ones, the life we manifest is of vital importance. It proves whether we have a profession or possession of true religion. One cannot hold to the world with one hand, and hold to the church with the other. The people of God in the Old Testament were a separate people from the other nations around them. Therefore, we are in the world, but not of the world.

We request the reader to read the 9th chapter of Ezra, and we quote a portion of verse 2: “...so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands...”

It is the work of satan to entangle the children of God into his net of the pleasures of this world. He tells them, “this is all right, there is not any harm in this, etc.” Little by little our minds are taken away from God and godliness to the extent that we seldom open the Bible. Oh! how many hours do we spend with our minds taken up in the pleasures of this life. What profit has all this vain pleasure been to us? May we be given the spiritual mind and Grace to choose “that good part.” (Luke 10: 38-42) Pleasure seeking is a temptation of young followers of Christ. (see Luke 8:14, 12:19, 1 Tim. 5:6, 2 Tim. 3:4) Satan promises everything, as he tempted Christ, but gives nothing. (Matt. 4:11)

As we read the book of Ecclesiastes, we notice the general teaching of it is to expose the vanity of all worldly enjoyments. Furthermore, it shows that a person’s happiness does not lie in natural wisdom and knowledge, nor in worldly wealth, nor in civil

honour, power and authority, nor in the mere externals of religion; but in the fear of God and the worship of him. The fear of God encourages man to a free use of good things of life in a moderate way with thankfulness to God.

In his search for the true and best way to use this world for our good and profit was not found in worldly wisdom. (Eccl. 1: 12-18) It is not to be found in carnal pleasure. (Eccl. 2: 1-3, 7:6) It is not found in great possessions. (2: 7-11) (Here is where Satan tempts us to put temporal interests before worship.)

May God keep us from coveting the vain things upon the world. (Read Acts 5: 1-11, Luke 12:15, Eph. 5:3) May we follow this exhortation: *"And they that use the world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."* (1 Cor. 7:31) It behooves God's people to live a life of Godliness. It is profitable unto all things. (see Tim. 4:8).

Dear reader, please look up the Scripture references. These are a few of the great precepts and commands laid down for our good for the directions of our lives while we live here in this world. *"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."* (2 Cor. 9:8)

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ." (Phil. 1: 9-10).

(Elder) C.M. Haygood

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

HOPE

September, 1946



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT



For some reason I am impressed to write a short article on the subject of hope. I desire to use Romans 8:24, 25 as a scriptural basis of reasoning.

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Before treating directly on this subject, permit me to state that I believe the Holy Scriptures are to the children of God who have been born of the Spirit of God. Restating in other words - the Bible can be received only by those of God's children who have been born of the Spirit of God. When Paul speaks using the present tense of a verb it is experienced in time by those who have experienced this call to be saints. When he speaks using future tense it is yet to be experienced. When Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted," I think he meant that God's children are mourners in this present world after they have received this pure heart, but shall be completely comforted after their sojourn here in time.

According to Webster, hope is a "desired expectation." According to Paul the things you have experienced

is not a hope but a reality. Hope looks to the future. We do not hope for that we are experiencing, but these experiences enliven within us a hope for something that is yet future. Paul reasons that we have the first fruits of the Spirit in this present life. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. All these proceed from the new heart that God has given His children. We yet bear about the body of this death. This pure heart enables us to see the vileness of our sin-polluted bodies. This pure heart reveals to us our awful condition and makes us to cry unto the God of heaven for deliverance from this sinful state. Although we are in possession of the first fruits of the Spirit, the creature itself is yet in the bondage of corruption. It is yet natural and thus subject to sin and death. We expect deliverance from the bondage of corruption solely upon the merits of Jesus in accordance to God's amazing grace. We desire this deliverance because the new God-given heart has made us to hate sin and love holiness.

Paul said, "The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." This is our state of being if Christ dwells in us. The creature that sins is the body of death that the child of God bears about in this present world. These sins cause the child of God to groan within himself waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. This will be realized when "the creature itself also

shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The word "also" in the above scripture means in addition to that which has already been experienced by us, to wit, the change of heart. Those who are in possession of God's Spirit are new creatures in Christ but have not realized the redemption of the bodies. He comforts us with this grand hope, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." A quickened mortal body would be immortalized, thus would never die. I do not think God's children experience this immortalization of the body in this present time. This promise inspires us to patiently await this grand change. Paul did not expect it in this life as he said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." So this hope goes beyond this life. He anticipates this change when he says, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Death and the grave are things that we cannot converse with triumphantly until the grave has given up its victim, to wit, this body of death. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we

know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." This is the reasoning of John and should suffice for us. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalms 17:15). I am not concerned over the question of whether we will know each other there, or any speculation concerning things yet to be experienced beyond that which is written. My only concern is, will I be among the number to enjoy eternal life wherever and whatever it is?

May God grant that we who have this hope implanted in us be enabled, by His grace, to dwell together here in time, in sweet communion and fellowship with and for each other. May He grant us the spirit of forbearance and humility. May He enable us to strive for peace and edification instead of strife and destruction.

MEETINGS

MT. OLIVE CHURCH



he annual 5th Sunday meeting at Mt. Olive Church (La.) will be held, the Lord willing, on Jan. 30, 1994.

Mt. Olive Church is located about 5 miles south of Jamestown just off La. Hwy. 154. Turn at the Sailes fire tower.

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

Elder Graydon Smith, Pastor
(318) 778-3801

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1993

Eld. Robert L. Miles, FL	\$5.00
A Friend, VA	7.00
William Vick, TN	5.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD	55.00
Mrs. James Burgin, TX	2.00
Mrs. Nannie Moran, VA	2.00
Wallace Harvey, WV	2.00
Mrs. Lovie A. Thompson, NC ...	10.00
Floyd Oakley, AR	2.00
Herman Webb, IL	7.00
Mrs. Bernice Greer, VA	2.00
Jamie Cooper, VA	1.00
Mrs. Clinton V. Ferris, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER CLARISSE BROOKS



Who are left as members of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church near Woodsdale, N.C. feel a great loss in the death of Sister Clarisse Brooks. She was the daughter of the late Reuben Phillip and Alma Hall Brooks. Her dear mother was a long time member of Shiloh and though her earthly father never joined he was indeed a strong believer.

Sister Clarisse was a school teacher and taught for thirty-two years in the southeastern part of North Carolina. She had received her degree in music

as well as others from Meredith College, Duke and U.N.C. at Chapel Hill. She was truly dedicated to the profession and loved a good and pleasant relationship with those she had pleasure in teaching.

The twenty-second day or August 1926 she asked a home in Shiloh Church and was unanimously received. She attended as regular as possible during her years of teaching and after retirement did not miss a meeting unless sick. Sister Clarisse served as our clerk for many years until her health and mind began to fail after which she could not attend meetings. This bothered her much for she had visited far and wide enjoying the love and fellowship, yet bore her bodily afflictions with patience. She was a great lover of singing and the expounding of the Gospel.

The long days and nights of afflictions ended for our dear sister on Saturday before the first Sunday in March of 1993 making her time here on earth ninety three years. Her seat is empty now as are those of her mother and many other close relatives who were also members at Shiloh. She leaves to mourn two sisters, Sister Dorothy Brooks of the home and Margaret Brooks Reade of Woodsdale, N.C.

We who remain miss her but would not desire her back feeling that her trials, afflictions and illnesses are over and she is resting in peace promised all of the Elect of the Lord. May we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done in all things."

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The funeral was held in Shiloh meeting house by this writer and her body placed in the family plot of the Church Cemetery to await the shout of victory we all shall await.

Written with love and esteem,
Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

PROVERBS 7: 1-3.

My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

LELIA HALL LAWSON



It is with a sad heart that I try to write the obituary of another one of our Dan River members who was also a neighbor for fifty-six years.

Lelia Hall Lawson was born July 31, 1902, daughter of Charlie and Eliza Hall.

Sister Lawson died suddenly January 9, 1993 at the home of her daughter and son-in-law Lois and Mack McMichael.

She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 23, 1964 and was baptized by her pastor, the late Elder D.V. Spangler.

For several years she was not able to come to church, but was faithful to attend as long as she was able to do so.

She was the wife of the late John Riley Lawson. They both attended church as long as I knew them. To this union were born two girls and three boys: Lois Lawson McMichael of Eden, NC, Mae Belle Lawson who died at birth, the late Charles Odell Lawson who lived in Pelham, NC, the late James Lloyd Lawson who lived in Eden, NC, and Morris Lawson of Danville, Virginia. There are nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Her funeral was at the Fair Funeral Home Chapel and was conducted by her pastor Elder Kenneth Key. Her body was laid to rest in Overlook Cemetery, Eden, NC to await the coming of her Lord. She was a strong believer in Salvation by the Grace of God.

May the Lord comfort us at our church, and give the family sufficient Grace to reconcile them to His will.

Written by request of Dan River Church in conference.

Lottie Minter
Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Bro. Bob Collie, Clerk

BROTHER ROBERT MURPHY



W e the members at Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church, bow our heads in humble submission to the Heavenly Father's pleasure to take from our midst our precious brother Robert Murphy, whom we loved so dearly and miss so much. Brother Robert was a peace loving gift to our church He had so many trials and troubles in this life,

but God gave Him strength to bear all the sufferings.

Brother Robert united with Oak Grove Church June 7, 1958 and was ordained for deacon October 7, 1975. He was faithfully present at church until several years ago, his health failed him and he had to go into the nursing home and even then he came when he was able.

Brother Robert was 88 years of age when he passed away April 2, 1993 in the Lincoln General hospital in Ruston La. He was preceded in death by his wife Mrs. Allie Beatrice Murphy, and two sons Robert Wayne Murphy and Tommy "Doc" Murphy.

Survivors include one son, Jerry Marvin Murphy of Hattiesburg, MS; Four daughters, Mrs. Girline Smith and Mrs. Allie Lunsford, both of Jonesboro, La. Mrs. Lois Carlile of Rocky Branch, and Mrs. Eula Futrell of Quitman, La.

Two sisters, Mrs. Ellie Greer of Jonesboro, La. and Mrs. Velma Hammons of Hiddenite, North Carolina; 18 grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren.

Funeral services was held April 4, 1993 at Southern Funeral Home Chapel with Elders David Godwin and Rev. Tommy Long officiating. Burial was in the Springhill cemetery under the direction of Southern Funeral Home of Jonesboro, La. with his grandsons serving as pallbearers: Shawn Murphy of Jonesboro, La., Tom Murphy of Garland, Texas, Randy Murphy and Ricky Murphy both of Houma, La., Matt Lunsford of New Orleans, La.,

Dennis Futrell of West Monroe, and Adam Futrell of Jonesboro, La.

We at Oak Grove Church feel that Brother Robert fought a good fight and is now peacefully sleeping, awaiting for his Lord to carry him home to his mansion prepared for him to forever be with his Lord.

Requested in church conference.

Elder Godwin, Moderator
Sister Kate Mathews, Clerk

JESSIE PAGE WHALEY

Sister Jessie Page Whaley, a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church was called to her eternal home on May 10, 1993. She was the daughter of James and Zona Page. She was educated in the schools of Durham County. On February 19, 1944, she married Douglas Whaley. They were blessed with a happy marriage and became the parents of two sons.

Her funeral was held on May 12, 1993 at the Howerton-Bryan Funeral Chapel. The service was conducted by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder C. B. Davis. Interment was in Woodlawn Memorial Cemetery. She is survived by her husband, Brother Douglas Whaley, Two sons: Gerald Whaley and Douglas Whaley, Jr; two grandchildren, Luke and Shannon Whaley; one brother, Emerson Page of Durham, N.C.; four sisters: Frances Brinkley of Durham, N.C., Dorothy Brinkley of Fortville, Indiana,

Catherine Wychoke, Westchester, Illinois and Zona Scitar of Romeoville, Illinois.

Sister Whaley was received into the fellowship of The Durham Primitive Baptist Church on April 19, 1959. She greatly enjoyed attending her church and visiting among the Primitive Baptist Churches. She believed the doctrine of election and salvation by grace and her hope was based on the finished work of Christ. She had been sick for several years but she endured her affliction with faith and hope and waited with patience for the Lord to deliver her from her suffering.

Her patience and faith were reflected in the beautiful hymn written by the poet Watts:

“When I can read my title clear
to Mansions in the skies
I bid farewell to every fear
and wipe my weeping eyes.

Let cares like a wild deluge come
And storms of sorrow fall
May I but safely reach my home
My God, my heaven my all

There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest
and not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.”

We believe her spirit has entered the haven of rest to await the resurrection of her body unto everlasting peace and joy.

Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk
Durham Primitive Baptist Church