

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

*Dear Lord! To us assembled here
Reveal thy smiling face,
While we, by faith, with love and fear,
Approach the Throne of Grace.*

*Thy house is called the house of
prayer:*

*A solemn, sacred place;
O let us now thy presence share,
While at the Throne of Grace.*

*With holy boldness may we come,
Though of a sinful race,
Thankful to find there yet is room
Before the Throne of Grace.*

*Our earnest, fervent cry attend,
And all our faith increase,
While we our heavenly Friend address
Upon the Throne of Grace.*

*His tender pity and his love
Our every fear will chase;
And all our help, we then shall prove,
Come from the Throne of Grace.*

*Dear Lord our many wants supply,
Attend to every case;
While humble in the dust we lie,
Low at the Throne of Grace.*

*We bless thee for thy word and laws;
We bless thee for thy peace;
And we do bless thee, Lord, because
There is a Throne of Grace.*

Medley

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EDITORIAL

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again with a lively hope by the resurrection of the dead to an inheritance which is 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 at the last time. (1 Pet. 1:3-5)



Elder R. H. Campbell

The apostle Peter, in these three verses of scripture, sets forth the absolute certainty of the salvation of the saints of God, and the source from which it comes. The source is first, last and always God, even as Jesus told a group that was following him and asked what they must do to work the works of God. Jesus' response to them was, (*John 6:29*) "*This is the work of God that ye believe on him who he hath sent.*" Jesus did not tell them of anything that they must, or could do, to work the works of God, and this was because all of the works, regarding the salvation of the saints had already been done. They were finished, from the foundation of the world, as is confirmed by many scriptures, and were as certain and sure as though they were already manifested in time. The scriptures state that God rested from all of the work that he had created and made, (*Gen 2:2*) "*And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made.*" and there are no references that he ever went back to work, to do anything that would assure their eternal salvation, or to finish something that he had not completed from the beginning.

The Apostle Paul referred to this

fact, regarding God's resting after his work was completed, when on one occasion he, speaking of man, (*Heb 4:19*) "*For he that is entered into his rest also hath ceased from his works as God did from his.*" Man enters into his rest, when he is brought to the realization that all of the work that was required to accomplish his salvation had already been done, and that there is not anything that he can do, to add to that which has been done for him. When man is born again, or quickened by the Spirit, he is made to know that he has been blessed with a very special and precious gift, called faith, and this faith includes all that is needful for his salvation. He also has been made to know that it is not in the hands of man to do anything that would have any bearing in spiritual matters, because it is beyond the realm of nature in which he dwells. (*Rom 8:7*) "*For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*"

Even though the will were present with him, in nature, the ability is not, for it is the work of God that man can even believe on him who he hath sent. Jesus stated very clearly and concisely how, and why, this is accomplished, (*John 6:37-39*) "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent*

me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." As we said above, the source of the salvation of the saints is of God, first, last and always.

Peter said, when speaking of the faith of the saints, (*1 Pet 6-9*) "*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 by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: who having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now for a season 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 soul.*" The, trial of their faith, is that highway that leads man unto salvation; it is traveled by man, in nature, but it is determined by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, from before the highest hills were formed, and the world was caused to exist.

(*Isa 35:8-10*) "*And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err*

therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This is a positive declaration of things that shall be, and the way and manner that they shall be made manifest in the lives of the saints of God, in days to come. This knowledge is available to man, only by the revelation of God, and is to make manifest that they are of the chosen generation. (1 Pet: 1:10-11) *"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that was to come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."* The holy men of old themselves did not understand whereof they spoke, when they prophesied of the glory that would come, so how could man with the wisdom of this world, understand except that it be revealed unto him, by the same power that ordained it to be..

These are very positive and comforting statements to the soul of those who has been so exercised by them, as in the above subject

scriptures, for they speak of an inheritance that has been reserved in heaven for them; an inheritance which is undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. There are no contingencies involved in these declarations, that would even remotely indicate any work contributed by the wisdom or power of the natural mind of man. All of this is to be accomplished by the works of God, before the foundation of the world, and man is not involved, in any way, regarding the success of this venture: it is solely the work of God, who is sovereign in all of his ways and just in all of his judgments. He speaks, and it is done, commands, and it stands fast, regardless of the attitude of man, regarding this work, or the awareness of it until it is done.

The apostle Paul told Timothy, speaking of how God works his will in the salvation of the elect. (II Tim 1:9-12) *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I*

am appointed an apostle and a teacher unto the Gentiles." Notice, all of this is given in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, but is manifested in time by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ who had finished the work that his Father gave him to do, and ascended back unto the heavens where he is even now seated, on the right hand of the Father, victor over death, hell and the grave, for the elect, making intercession unto God for their sins.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Paul related the trial of faith of those under the law, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, received their dead raised up and others who were tortured, not accepting deliverances from these physical distresses; that they might obtain a better resurrection. He then said, *(Heb 11:39-40) "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* Those under the law were given faith, that they might endure the tribulations, but looking beyond them to the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, which is the inheritance that is reserved in

heaven for them.

(Heb 12:1) "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." This great cloud of witnesses, is the testimonies of those who have gone this way before, and left a record the way in which the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and by faith, come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. It is a blessed journey that they experience, although it may include many things that are distressing to the man in nature, but they have been blessed to believe that all of the afflictions and trials are more to be desired than all of the treasures that this world has to offer. These things shall fade away in time, but this city is eternal, and the beauty and glory are everlasting. This faith enables them to keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, which the times and tribulations of the world cannot take away. This better thing that Paul referred to above, to my understanding, is the Spirit that the children of God have, that was not available unto those under the law, as it was in the gospel day. *(John 7:37-39) "In the last day, that great day of the*

feast, Jesus stood up and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" This prophecy was fulfilled when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and the apostles were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This is the time when the gospel, the power of God unto salvation, was made manifest unto man, and the Spirit first indwelled the creature as Jesus stated above. This is the better thing that the gospel has that the law did not have: the better covenant, which was based upon better promises, as Paul said, *(Rom 8:2) "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."* The children of God, from that day forward, were no longer under the dominion of the law of sin and death, as they had been in former days, but

rather, were indwelled by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and *(Rom 8:16) "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

The promise unto all of the saints, that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time, is a blessing beyond the imagination of the natural mind. This grand and glorious promise is made by God, who cannot lie, to a people who were dead in trespasses and sin, aliens from God, and the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; and then suddenly they find themselves joint heirs with the only begotten of the Father, of an inheritance that is reserved for them, in his Son. This is the ultimate expression of a love, a love that man is incapable of even understanding in the flesh, an everlasting love that assures all of the recipients, that the giver is the Lord, who left on record the following promise for their assurance and comfort in the fact that, as the prophet said, *(Mal 3:6) "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* impossible that, after receiving the promise, some could fall away and be separated from that love that has been bestowed upon them.

(Heb 6:13-20) "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end to all strife. Wherein God, will more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is entered for us, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." This is possibly the most profound and all encompassing statement, to be found in the whole of scripture. This statement was made by, God the Father, the creator of the heavens and the earth and all the host of them; the God who cannot lie, who also promised these things from the beginning, unto Abraham and to all of his seed through Isaac, in all generations to follow, and then he confirms it by his own personal oath, that by

two immutable pledges, the things included in the original promise will most certainly be fulfilled. There is no more possible assurance that could be given unto the heirs of promise, than is given in this one statement. God promised it from the beginning, and confirmed it by his oath, and so it shall be.

The apostle Paul confirms this same fundamental truth in, *(Rom 8:35-39) "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."*

If we had only the two verses of scripture, in the proceeding paragraph, all God called ministers would have the same themes for any of their sermons, regarding the absolute surety of the elect's receiving of the inheritance that is laid up for them. The love of Christ is what assures them of the inheritance, and this scripture says that nothing can

separate them from that love, and Peter said that all of this is according to the abundant mercy of God, by which he hath begotten them again with a lively hope of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The faith of the apostles was strong as long as Jesus was in their midst, but, in spite of his having told them that he must die, and be raised again, they could not actually believe it, so that when it happened, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus said, *(Luke 24:21)* ***“But we trusted that it had been him which should have redeemed Israel:”*** The same day that Jesus rose from the tomb, they were questioning the fact that he was actually the Christ, and in the above text, Peter is saying that, ***“he hath begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*** living proof of the claims of Jesus, that he must so suffer.

All of this work is, by God, for man, and is a gift unto the creature. The apostle Paul makes this very plain, and positive, when he said, *(Eph 2:8-9)* ***“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*** Don't you just love this scripture? it is the most comforting of the scriptures to be found in the bible, to those who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, by being exercised in this same way and manner, and being made to believe it by their own ex-

perience. They were all, as the apostle Paul, in a state of ignorance and unbelief, until the light of truth shined around about them and into their heart, and they were born again, or quickened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the seal of approval of their faith. This is, as the circumcision was, the seal of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised, even so, the indwelling of the Spirit within their heart is their seal of righteousness.

May this seal be upon your heart, for it is the gift of God unto all of the saints, and it can never fail because God is perfect in all of his works. He does not give this gift to any who are not of the chosen generation which he hath purchased with his own precious blood, the only sacrifice that is acceptable unto God for the sins of his children.

In bonds of love:
Richard H. Campbell.

PSALM 117.

An Exhortation to Praise God

○ Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.

ARTICLES

SIN VS. RIGHTEOUSNESS

I will endeavor to write an article on sin compared to righteousness if it is in the will of, the giver to all good, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Sin entered into the world by the first man, Adam, through disobedience, Righteousness through Christ which is for the forgiveness of man's many sins.

Mankind while in the darkness of nature walks in darkness and the evil acts of the flesh. Righteousness on the other hand comes through the channels of God's Grace which is an unmerited favor from the courts of glory at God's Holy discretion. This comes through the channel of God's Love at his appointed time.

When the seeds of Righteousness is sowed in good ground, that is, in the hearts of his believers, then comes the good works that are experienced through the gifts of his loving Grace. When these seeds, are watered with the dew from on High, then the great workmanship of our Lord and Saviour is exercised. This seed cannot sin, but when it lies dormant, one goes back to the darkness of nature. These seasons are as much purposed as the season of the trees in nature.

The sins that are inherited in the

Adam tree or the Adam generation are possessed by all mankind. Paul, one of the greatest preachers that we read about, said of himself that he was a sinner and a chief sinner. Remember that this was after that great light was shown on him on his way to Damascus. The Lord asked, Saul, Saul why do thou persecute me? Then Paul asked the Lord, what will Thou have me do? Paul was made a willing vessel when the power of the Almighty God took abode in his heart.

Paul's fleshly mission, when he reached his destination, was to persecute the Saints of God.

This brings to mind the Bible verse that says, "*My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power.*" So when he speaks, it is done and when he commands, it is steadfast. None can then say why doest Thou?

This statement that I'm about to make may sound strange, There have been many times that I wondered if there was a God. Then there are other times when I enter this great church of believers, that I am lifted from this darkness in nature, I am made to rejoice when feasting from the food from that for country. Yes, surely there is a God.

When we go back into the darkness of nature this becomes a dormant time in God's Goodness. We are unable while in this darkness of nature to perform spiritual works.

Paul said, "*When I would do good, evil was present. Not I, but*

the sin that dwells in my flesh.” Paul also said, “that the preaching of the gospel is not of man but by the revelation of Jesus Christ Paul gained this great wisdom, by the revealing light, on his way to Damascus.

All believers, who are delivered from the darkness and given a precious hope of heaven and immortal glory, come in a graceful way. They give the praise, glory and honor for the Salvation that is the deliverance of God’s goodness to the hearts of his believers, at His disgression, through the precious grace from God’s courts of Glory!

It is then their desire to be honest, truthful and do what is right when led by that Holy Spirit. It is the believers desire to do so.

The thorn in the flesh which all believers come to recognize when they go back in the darkness of nature. They, like Paul, find that when they do good that evil was present, again not I, but the sin that dwells in the flesh.

I do not feel worthy to be a partaker of these Holy Events when sitting under that great gospel sound. One is made to rejoice when lifted up and given that ear to hear.

We find in our traveling with the Primitive Baptist, that the population is declining. This doctrine, that we hear and believe is risen to those of the Arminian belief. I find that you don’t need five hundred in the congregation to worship his Holy name. God tells us that where two or three

are gathered in his name, there am I also. Many times, I have met in these small gatherings and the Preacher was lifted up with a parcel of food that was stored for his little ones. You can look around and see the streams of joy descending down their cheeks, while they feast from his precious rations. This feeding makes your trip to the church worth while.

Before I close this article I would like to stress, that if the Primitive Baptists aren’t setting forth this great apostolic doctrine, then it isn’t being set forth today. They are the only ones who say, that they could be wrong.

In this world today we have many groups that say the following: *“Let God have his way,”* or *“Let God come into your heart: or “God wants to save you,”* The Bible tells us that God has his way in the whirlwind. Don’t exclude God’s great word of Grace. If Grace is an unmerited favor, how can one let or not let God have his way?

I also would like to state that if I have been given a mind to see how one comes into this great Church of God, they can only come as beggars asking for God’s great mercy. So, in conclusion, that he adds to the church daily of those who are saved, the blood shed on Calvary sealed the destination of the ransomed. In bonds of his precious love I remain.

Riley Justice
Box 272, War, W. Va. 24892
Ph. 304-875-2960

July 4, 2006

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

Dear Elder Key:

For many years now I have thought about writing something to the Signs of the Times, but the Good Lord has not let me. Recently, that may have changed. At least He did let me write what I have written. My mother, Katherine Mathews, and I have talked together about our beliefs for many years now. Also, my 96 year old uncle, Elder David Godwin and I have talked. We all believe that my beliefs are clearly stated in the following writing. I want to know; is the following in harmony with the beliefs of the Primitive Baptists?

I Do Not Want To Be the Author of My Own Salvation

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Heb. 5:9. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name in heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" Ac 4:12. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the

right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12:2.

I search for my own salvation, because I have been made to know that I must have it; I am forever lost without it. Feeling a desperate need, I must seek out the place it is to be found. Some claim to think it is within their power to simply "accept" salvation, thereby obtaining it. My experience has shown me that I do not have that power, and I believe the inspired scriptures tell me that Christ alone has that power.

If I were capable of being the author of some kind of salvation, what sort of salvation would that salvation be? I would have a puny man-made salvation of who knows what, and what would I be saved from? It would end up just like everything else I have done in the flesh, and would not accomplish that which I need.

I need to be forgiven of my sins by the very one I have sinned against, by the very one who is the lawmaker of the laws I have not kept. I need to be remade into a child acceptable to God, even a son of God. *"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."* Heb. 11:10. *"But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city",* Heb. 11:16. I feel to want to know my Creator and Saviour in a way that would cause me to adore Him

forevermore. The only one who can give me that salvation I am hungering for is my Creator. My Creator is perfect in every way, and everything must be accomplished in the manner that He was ordained. All of His rules not only must be followed, but will be followed. He had already seen to it. If He gives me salvation, I will have everything that I ever would need in this lifetime, or any other life time.

If I am to receive salvation, I must receive it from Him through being reborn in His image. I can only be reborn if the Holy Spirit breathe upon me and make me to be so. Even as the first man Adam became a living soul upon having the breath of life breathed into his nostrils, the reborn creature becomes reborn upon being breathed upon by the Holy Spirit. Jesus told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." Jn 3:6-8. Life, whether it be natural or spiritual, can only be created by God. No person can receive life simply by wishing for it. I believe God draws those who are His, therefore there certainly will be a desire to have that which you are being drawn to. That is a different matter from desiring something just to have it. A person is

"dead" before receiving life, and therefore has no ability to ask for anything. Life can only be obtained if God has ordained that a person have it.

The inspired Apostle stated, "*Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling*" *Php. 2:12*. Does this mean that I can work for and receive my salvation by working for it? No, no, no. "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*" *Eph. 2:8,9*. Salvation is gained by the Grace of God. Works is not the method by which we receive salvation, but works is the process that God leads us through and into His fellowship. (We do not lead Him. He leads us.)

What is this work that I must perform in fear and trembling, what should I fear, and what is it that will cause me to tremble? Christ said, "*Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life which the Son of man shall give unto you for Him hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might do the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*" *Joh. 6:27-29*.

Work

"*For we are his workmanship,*

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Eph. 2:10. “That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Ti. 3:17. “Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us. Is. 26:12. “Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen.” Heb. 13:21. “Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is.” 1 Cor. 3:13.

I am not here in this earth simply to pass the time away, but I am here to live out the experiences God has for me to pass through for His pleasure, and for my experiences with Him. In those experiences a work is to be accomplished which could not be accomplished except for those experiences. It is in these experiences that I get to know Him, and find evidence of the fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Ga 5:22,23.

“Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my

faith by my works: . Jas. 2: 17-18. Faith is not needed until we are exercised by the works which God has ordained that we walk in. Once the work begins, then faith becomes a necessity, and it is in these experiences that we learn that we have received the gift of faith. These experiences lead us into the substance of unseen spiritual things that we hope for, as evidenced by our faith. This faith is a marvelous thing, for it reveals to us not only the substance of things hoped for, but also that the Giver of those things truly cares for us and provides all good things to us. That is why Peter said “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pe. 1:7.

Fear

Fear plays a big part in showing to us that without salvation we are lost forever. Within ourselves we know that we have sinned dreadfully, and how we want to be freed of those past, present and future sins! “And unto man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding.” Job 28:28. Also, “Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy.” Ps 33:18. We fear because we are afraid that our works will be of the sort to be burned, rather than

an abiding work acceptable to God. *"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" Ma 10:28.* God is real, has all power in heaven and earth, and is respected by those who know Him.

Trembling

Inside we tremble for we are afraid, knowing that we have sinned greatly, and, like Paul, we seemingly cannot do that which is right before God. *"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. Ro. 7:18.* We can only receive salvation if the Lord has chosen us before the foundation of the world. We do not know of a certainty that we have been chosen, therefore we fear and tremble. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Ro. 8:19. "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?" Ro. 8:24. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pe. 1:5. These verses indicate that we are hoping and waiting for a manifestation that we are His elect. We know that God is perfect, and we are not, and that He has the power to destroy both body and soul, and we

tremble, hoping against hope that He will spare us.

If I understand the scriptures, no flesh shall glory in His presence, and I believe that this truth is lived out daily in the lives of all who are first man Adam. If I have learned anything at all, I have learned that I, as a representative of first man Adam, am incapable of doing anything that is pleasing to God. If that is true, how then, can I approach God to say *"Have mercy on me, a sinner."* The question is not whether I have accepted Christ, but has Christ accepted me? If I am one of the Elect, He found me, and accepted me long ago; even before I was physically born first man Adam. But do I accept Him? Yes, yes, yes, Lord make it to happen!

Christ said, *"No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn. 6:65.* Also, *"Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Jn. 6:65.* What a pleasing and satisfying doctrine it is to feel that the Father loves His own, and sees to it that His Elect are drawn irresistibly to Him. That is proven and perfect love that passeth all understanding, and is greatly to be desired.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen: He 11:1. If I hope for salvation, I must find it through faith. *"But without faith, it is*

impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* Ro. 10:17.

No, I would not want to be the author of my own salvation. It is more pleasing and satisfying to feel that my God desires me as one of His own children so much that He sent His only Son to die in my stead, and rise from the grave bringing me up from that grave with Him. If He did that for me, I will be very happy to live with Him forever.

My desire is that I let someone know what I believe, and that we share a common belief together. I do thank the Good Lord for all that He has done to me, for me, and with me. It is so good and peaceful to feel that He has done so much for me. I desire to be with Him.

This is the first writing of this sort that I have ever done. If the Spirit led me, then everything is OK in what I have written. Furthermore, if the Spirit did not lead me, I wish that I never had written it.

Charles Mathews

PSALM 30:4.

Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

VOICES OF THE PAST

North Berwick, Maine, Dec. 23, 1904.

Millie A. Little — My Dear Sister in the Lord: — I have been much hindered I so lacked the inclination for any letter writing. I much appreciate the letters of my dear kindred in Christ Jesus, and sometimes even a glance at their handwriting stirs up affectionate remembrances. Still there are writings that are more wonderful and precious by far than all that all the saints have written, and when I can have a glimpse of and read these writings that are more wonderful and precious by far than all that all the saints have written, and when I can have a glimpse of and read these writings I have blessedness indeed. Look at this: *"Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."* — Luke x. 20. *"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."* — Jer. xxxi. 33. *"Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart."* — 2 Cor. iii. 3. *"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name*

written in their foreheads.” — Rev. xiv. 1. I “will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” — Rev. ii. 17. “I will write upon him the name of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.” — Rev. iii. 12. These writings are infinitely glorious and incomparably precious. Contemplate with me awhile these writings of the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity. “Your names are written in heaven.” These names written in heaven are the names of the church of the firstborn. (Heb. xii. 23.) Christ is the firstborn, as it is written: “I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.” — Psalms lxxxix. 27; Romans viii. 29; Col. i. 15, 18. Then as a farther insight into the divine mystery of our names being “written in heaven,” it is declared their names are “written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” — Rev. xiii. 8. And the book of life was opened, “and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” — Rev. xx. 15.

The names written in the book of life are the names of God’s elect.

“O wondrous grace and mystery profound,

In God’s eternal purpose I

was found;

*His sovereign love, his grace,
his deep decree,*

In some mysterious way included me.”

The eternal purpose which Jehovah purposed in Christ Jesus embraced this, the exaltation of his chosen one in immutable holiness, and to immortal happiness in union with his incarnate Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. But the subject is far better expressed in the language of inspiration: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” — Eph. i. 3-6.* As I muse upon the deeps of the doctrine of God I say in my soul, Did the Lord look through the ages and the generations of mankind and see me one of Adam’s race, and write me in the book of life? Was I, in the eternal purpose, given to Christ and accounted one with him, and in him promised (Titus i. 2,) and given (1 John v. 11,) and ordained unto eternal life? (Acts xiii. 48.) The date of all this writing is

eternal, before the world began. "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." God in his everlasting love wrote them there, and is there any power that can erase them? O, is it not

"Sweet to look back and see my name

*In life's fair book set down;
Sweet to look forward and behold*

Eternal joys my own"?

Then how full of consolation to us poor sinners is the revelation that the book of life in which God's elect are written is the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His goings forth in the everlasting covenant both as the Shepherd of his people, (Micah v. 2,) and as the Lamb, (1 Peter i. 19, 20,) show how from eternity the thoughts of our eternal God were set upon the exaltation, redemption and regeneration of his people. For our election in Christ Jesus, and being blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, our acceptance in his sight, our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, our adoption and predestination to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, are all declared to be embraced in and according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself. (Eph. i. 9.)

But the inquiry arises in my thoughts, How shall a poor sinner read his name written in the Lamb's book of life? It is only in the experience of the new covenant being writ-

ten in our hearts by the holy Spirit that we read our names written in heaven. This brings me, dear sister, to put down a few thoughts upon God writing in the fleshy tables of the heart. He gives to his chosen ones in his decreed times a new heart, and a new spirit. (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) *"I will put my fear in their hearts,"* saith the Lord. This is wonderful writing to be found in a sinner's heart, but the Lord, who hath loved his own with an everlasting love, and who wrote their names in the book of life, will have them fear him, love him, believe him, trust him and confess that he is their exceeding joy. The Spirit of God gives this new heart, and the favored sinner touched with this heart is no more dead in trespasses and sins; he is now alive in a divine life unto God, and the writing begins. If the writing were in tables of stone, the tables of stone might be broken; the ravages of time might at length obliterate what was written, and the very stones themselves crumble into dust; but the fleshy tables of the heart, in which the Spirit of the living God writes the ministration of life, is that new covenant heart (Jer. xxxi. 33,) that pulsates with spiritual, eternal life from God, and therefore forever this writing shall endure, and all the throbbings of this heart shall find its consciousness in the writings that are written therein by the Holy Ghost. Sacred, wonderful is the experience as the Lord is writing. He writes love there, love to him-

self, the just, the holy and gracious God. We find our hearts moved with longings after the Lord, to know him, to taste that he is good. As poor, sin-stricken, condemned transgressors we feel we must have his friendship or we must perish in our sins and grief beneath the curse of the law. We are led to think upon God's infinite greatness and majesty, and that he is just in all his ways, and then as we are led to contemplate that he is kind and gracious, rich in mercy, our heart pulsates with yearnings, and that language is no exaggeration which says, "*As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?*"— *Psalms xlii. 1, 2.* All this declares that God has written his fear and his love in our heart. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Spirit which is given unto us. "*I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.*" In the gracious fulfillment of this promise God's revealed will become dear to us, and our affection flows forth unto the doctrine of God our Savior, and we are described as believing with all the heart; for our faith in God, in our precious Redeemer and in the gospel worketh my love. The faith of God's elect is an affectionate faith. It is very wonderful that a sinner who in his natu-

ral estate is alienated from the life of God, and an enemy of the holy One, should be so turned to the Lord, to seek his face, to yearn with an aching heart for tokens of his compassion, and find also his delight is in the law of the Lord in the heart. The writing goes on; he is still writing, and will continue to write in the hearts of his chosen ones all the days of their pilgrimage. Would we see one in whom God has written his law? A very true likeness is found in that precious 119th Psalm. All through this Psalm one feels the throbbings of the heart in whose fleshy tables the Spirit of the living God has written. Although I am a poor, unworthy sinner I will tell this, that I have read this Psalm a number of times when my heart has panted, thirsted, longed and grieved, and delighted and throbbed in unison with this wonderful Psalm. "*I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.*" O, I must repeat it again, that the writings of the holy Spirit in the fleshy tables of the heart are wonderful. Not only wonderful, but so blessed, for when we are sin-stricken and tempted, and our hearts are bleeding and contrite, then he takes of the things of Christ, the blessings of the new covenant, and writes them in the heart. Mercy, forgiveness of sins, how sweet, how healing is this to the wounded heart.

This writing by a figure of speech may be said to be written upon the humble heart in the red ink of Jesus' precious blood. We have forgiveness of sins through his blood according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 7.)

"What stream is that which sweeps away

My sins, just like a flood,

Nor lets one guilty blemish stay?

'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

The holy Spirit writes the promises and the sworn mercies of God in the hearts of the elect, and the effect of such writings is that the heirs of promise have a strong consolation and a gracious sanctuary in the gospel of Christ. (Heb. vi. 1-20.) Thus writing in our hearts the things of Christ is called in the Scriptures, sealing us. The sealing of the Spirit, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Eph. i. 13; iv. 30.) My soul still holds its soliloquy, and I say, Has my heart in very truth felt the impress of the things of Christ? Is Christ himself graven upon my heart? Surely it must be so, for does not my heart cry out, "*Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm*"? — Solomon's Song viii. 6. And can I not say, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee"? Though I write this, a feeling comes over me of "*love and grief my heart dividing,*" and I am saying,

"Lord, it is my chief com-

plaint,

*That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee, and adore;*

*O for grace to love thee
more."*

O let my heart know more and more of thee, more of thy loving-kindness, which is better than life; O write deeper and deeper the acts of thy love, and thy mercy and grace in the fleshy tables of my heart, that wherever I go, and whatever my state, I may know thee and love thee and never forget thee, but ponder affectionately in my heart thine almighty and gracious acts in behalf of thy church in all the relations and characters that thou sustainest unto them.

What the Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is always in agreement with the Scriptures of truth, for it was as they were moved by the holy Ghost that holy men of old spake, and so they were inspired by God to write for the comfort and learning of the church of Christ. It is of no avail for me, or for you, or for any one to say, I have experienced this; I was taught it of the Lord in my experience; I love this doctrine; I find much comfort and pleasure in it; it is written in my heart, if that doctrine is contrary to and is not found in the holy Scriptures. No matter how logical it may appear, no matter how lovely and satisfying it may be, if it has not the "*thus saith the Lord*" for it in the Scriptures it is very vanity, a cunningly devised fable, a ly-

ing divinization, the deceit of that heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (Ezek. xi. 6; Jer. xiv. 14.) Let those who would pervert the gospel of Christ, (Gal. i. 7; Jer. xxiii. 36,) who corrupt the word of God, (2 Cor. ii. 17,) who wrest the Scriptures, (2 Peter iii. 16,) who make a lie, and love what they have made, (Rev. xxii. 15,) let them sport themselves with their own deceivings, (2 Peter ii. 13,) but may my heart and your heart only have affection for and delight in what is verily taught in the word of God. What the holy Spirit writes in the fleshy tables of the heart is never contrary to, but is ever in sacred agreement with the testimony of the holy Scriptures. Sometimes there are things written in our hearts by the Spirit, but we have not yet been able to read with understanding what is there written. Then it may be in the providence of our God we hear Christ's gospel preached, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance; then we read with understanding what God has taught us, and we say, I know that my heart has tasted these glorious, precious things of the covenant ordered in all things and sure. And at times also when we read the Scripture, in what grateful surprise and comfort we find what is written there is in sweet accord with what has been wrought by the Spirit of the living God in our hearts. The Scriptures therefore are for the comfort and learning of Christ's body, the church, and are

able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. iii. 15.) The redeemed of the Lord have the name of their heavenly Father written in their foreheads. (Rev. xiv. 1.) Christ says, "*I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.*" — Rev. iii. 12. This writing is sealing them as the children of God, it is giving them power to become the sons of God. (John i. 12.) It is sending forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father. (Gal. iv. 6.) The Lord writes and thus he speaks, "*Thou shalt call me, My Father; and shalt not turn away from me.*" — Jer. iii. 19. "*Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.*" Jesus said to his disciples, "*When we pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven.*" We cannot realizingly do so until Christ tells us to say, "*Our Father.*" But the gracious covenant work of the holy Spirit is to bring us into intimate relations with the dear Savior; he brings us to know him as ours, through whom we are forgiven, and justified and redeemed, and in whom we are predestinated unto the adoption of children unto God. And because God is our Father we love Jesus. (John viii. 42.) Christ is all our heart's desire, and our faith is all in

him. Being thus in intimacy with Jesus Christ we find his doctrine confesses to us the Father's name. *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* As it is written, *"I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee."* — Heb. ii. 12. We are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. (Rom. viii. 14-17.) The word also says I will write upon him the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem. This seals us as citizens of Zion, the city of God. Even now there are sacred seasons when the feet of our faith stand within her gates, but this is but the earnest of our inheritance. We are destined for the heavenly Jerusalem, and like the dear saints of olden times, we are looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. We are pilgrims on the earth, but upon our foreheads is (I hope) written the name of our God and the name of the city of our God.

*"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labors have
an end*

In joy, and peace, and thee?

*Reach down, O Lord, thine
arm of grace,*

*And cause me to ascend
Where congregations ne'er
break up,
And Sabbaths never end.*

*When wilt thou come to me,
O Lord?
O come, my Lord, most dear;
Come nearer, nearer, nearer
still,
I'm safe when thou art near."*

I had not intended writing you so long a letter, but I think I shall be safe in promising you that I will pen you a shorter one next time. Thousands of miles intervene between our earthly abodes, but the God of Israel is near to all that fear him wherever they may be. May the Lord comfort you and bless you, and lift up upon you the light of his countenance.

I am your brother in hope of eternal life,

Fred W. Keene

PSALM 4:1-3.

*Hear me when I call, O God
of my righteousness: thou hast
enlarged me when I was in dis-
tress; have mercy upon me, and
hear my prayer.*

*O ye sons of men, how long
will ye turn my glory into
shame? how long will ye love
vanity, and seek after leasing?
Selah.*

*But know that the Lord hath
set apart him that is godly for
himself: the Lord will hear when
I call unto him.*

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2006

Meta Miles, AR	5.00
Angie Cox, NC	5.00
Raymond Adams, VA	5.00
Larrie Bowler, VA	5.00
Buford Thompson, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER GRAYDON SMITH

We at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Spearsville, LA., feel a great loss in the passing of our dear Pastor, Elder Graydon Smith.

Elder Smith united with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church June 5, 1955 and was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes. He was ordained an Elder by New Hope Primitive Baptist Church March 6, 1976 and was blessed to serve a number of Churches through the years. He was serving three Churches when he passed away.

He loved the precious doctrine of Salvation by Grace and loved scriptural conversations and talking of the gracious, all wise, all powerful God. He was blessed to travel far and near among those of like precious faith and loved them dearly.

He was born May 22, 1919, the fourth child of Tom and Edna Smith, and departed this life May 2, 2006. He was preceeded in death by the wife, Kathleen Turnage Smith. He is survived by one son: Tommy and wife, Judy; one daughter: Jenny Wimberly and husband, Charles; five grandchildren and three great grandchildren and one sister: Dale Holloway and husband Roy. He is also survived by many friends and loved ones made manifest by all the kindness, floral arrangements and many memorial donations to his Church.

Funeral Services were conducted by Elder C.C. Morris May 5, 2006 at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church. Burial followed in the Spearsville Cemetery, awaiting the fulfillment of the sweet hope which was so precious to him.

Although he will be deeply missed, may we be given to bow in humble submission to the Will of God, giving thanks for the many years of love and fellowship we were blessed to share with him.

Submitted by one
who loved him,
Mary Barron

REVELATION 21:23

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

SISTER NELLIE JOBE KEY

In the early morning hours of July 17, 2006, as so beautifully stated at her funeral, the Lord, as He walked in His garden, gathered home one of his lilies, Sister Nellie Jobe Key. In the comfort of her earthly home, surrounded by her loving husband of 62 years and her family, she fell asleep in the arms of Christ, as the hymn writer expressed, *"a sleep from which none ever wake to weep."*



Sister Nellie was born in Guilford County on April 14, 1922 to the late Thurman and Ethel Stout Jobe. On January 29, 1944 she was married to Elder Kenneth R. Key Sr., and it was indeed a marriage made in heaven. To this union was born two sons, Kenneth R. Key, Jr. and Gary Van Key. They were blessed with five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, one of which Kennedi Mae Lineberry, was born after Sister Nellie's passing. She leaves also two sisters, Irene Sharpe and Annie Fomberg to mourn her.

On the third Sunday in March 1954, Sister Nellie asked for a home in the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church. She was received into the fellowship and baptized by her late pastor, Elder W.C. King, on the first Sunday in April 1954. Before the foundation of the world in the mind and purpose of God, it was appointed unto her that she must walk

the path of a minister's wife. As the hymn writer penned and was so beautifully quoted at her funeral, *"The steps that I tread, and the station I fill, My Father determined and wrote in his will."* The

Lord blessed her so bountifully with the fruit of the Spirit, particularly that of love, gentleness, and meekness. I've known her as a dear, precious Sister in Christ for the last thirty-four years and as my beloved pastor's wife for the last twenty-one years. There are

no words to express what a joy it has been to know her and to be blessed with the sweet fellowship experience when in her presence. She has been a blessing to my home church as well as to the others that Brother Kenneth serves. We deeply miss her loving smile, her warm embrace, and the kindness she showed in all that she did.

In the early years, on one Sunday she stayed behind with their two boys at their cabin on Baden Lake while Brother Kenneth went to the Association. When he returned, she said this has been the longest day of my life. They sold their cabin and rarely has she not been by his side as he served the little flock, traveling near and far, and entertaining many precious brethren and sisters in their home. As the scriptures state in *Proverbs 31:10*, *"Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies."* I feel certain

that there were times when she didn't feel physically able to go, but the Lord blessed her to press on in the station unto which He had appointed her. May He be praised.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder William Hale Terry and Elder Cleo Robertson at Forbis and Dick North Elm Chapel in Greensboro and her body was laid to rest in Lakeview Memorial Park to await that summons from on high "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May we all find comfort in the words of the dear old hymn "*Am I a Soldier of the Cross*":

"Thy saints in all this glorious war

Shall conquer though they die;

They see the triumph from afar,

And seize it with their eye.

When that illustrious day shall arise,

And all thy armies shine

In robes of victory through the skies,

The glory shall be thine."

May the Lord bless her family who've lost a dear companion, a loving mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and sister with the comfort that only He can give. And, most especially, may the gracious, heavenly Master be with our beloved

pastor, Brother Kenneth, strengthen him, and bless him to feel the "everlasting arms" underneath him that he might continue to be blessed to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" ever "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." In all things, may the Lord be praised and may He bless us all to witness with Job, "the Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Humbly submitted by one
who loved her dearly,
Mary Hawkins

JOHN 3:12-16.

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

PERFECT PEACE

*A mind at perfect peace with God,
Oh, what a word is this!
A sinner reconciled through blood;
This, this indeed is peace!*

*By nature and by practice far,
How very far from God;
Yet now, by grace, brought nigh to
Him,
Through faith in Jesus' blood.*

*So near, so very near to God,
I can not nearer be;
For in the person of His Son,
I am as near as He.*

*So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be;*

*The love wherewith He loves the
Son,
Such is his love to me.*

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Selected.

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 EDITORIAL

Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

And blesseds he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. (Math 11:4-5)



Elder R. H. Campbell

These are the words that Jesus told the two disciples of the prophet John the Baptist, whom he had sent to Jesus, to inquire if he was the one that should come, or should he look for another. John is the one that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight: the one who leaped in his mother's womb when she heard the salutation of Mary the mother of Jesus. John personally baptized Jesus, saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. He is the one who told his followers, (*Matt 3:11*) "*I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*" and yet now, in spite of all of this evidence and knowledge regarding Christ. John is in doubt. There is therefore, no mystery in the fact that others, who did not have all of this personal knowledge, and ex-

perience should question their own beliefs.

If there was ever an individual that should have confidence in their experience and knowledge of these things, it is John; and yet here he is, fearfully questioning the validity of his calling, and pleading for confirmation of the fact that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. God's ministers find themselves in much this same position very much of the time, in their travels in this time world. They have received a calling, sufficient to make them go forth and stand before the saints of God, telling them again and again to remember the way and manner in which these things were made known to them, and how it has been with them in former days as they were called out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel. They go forth declaring the message of the sovereign grace of God, and yet they go much of the time, lowing, even as the Kine pulling the cart with the Ark, when the Philistines were returning it to Israel, because it had been nothing but trouble for them, although it was a very great blessing unto Israel. They, as the Kine who could not turn back, even though their calves were at home in the stalls, they also cannot turn back even when it makes them fear that they are deserting their family and loved ones, and sometimes in very critical situations. It seems that the minister could be confident of his calling, if he does all of this,

but alas, this is not the case; he is constantly meditating on the fact, is it a true calling of God, or, as I once asked a fellow minister, do you ever wonder if you have a calling or is it just the vanity of the flesh?

I am sure that we have all, at one time or another, said unto ourselves, Oh, if I could just have had the evidence of the prophet John, or some of the other great men of God, then I would not have all of these doubts and fears that plague me so much of my time. I would feel secure in the knowledge that I was among the chosen people of God and that I had been placed there for a purpose known only unto God. It seems that if I had seen him, been with him in person, and saw the mighty miracles that he did, and especially experienced the scene where he baptized Jesus, and saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, and Lo a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, that I could never question my calling. You can see, by the subject scripture that this is not necessarily so, because even the prophet John is found doubting his experiences, and is sending two of his disciples to inquire of Jesus if he was actually the one who was to come.

The difference between these two positions is that he was in the Spirit on those occasions when he was with Jesus and talked with him, and now he is in prison, his prison being the dungeon in which he was

confined, and the prison in which the sheep are confined is in the prison of the natural mind. The apostle Paul described these seasons this way, (*Rom 7:21-22*) "*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.*" When in this state, of spiritual darkness, the spiritual experiences are clouded by the inability of the natural mind to comprehend spiritual truths, and is unable to remember them with the confidence and clarity that they did when they were in the Spirit.

The prayer of one, on these occasions is, Lord restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, let me feel once again the joy of my first love, the time when all was right with the world and I felt that I would never have doubts regarding my faith. Even so, it is hard to conceive of the fact that John who had all of this evidence, as to the fact that this was indeed the Son of God, but you must remember what Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians, (*I Cor 2:14*) "*But the natural man receiveth not the things of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" and John, when he sent his disciples to Jesus was in the bonds of the natural mind, and the natural spirit.

Knowing all of this, and where

John was at this particular time in his travels in nature, Jesus told John's disciples to go and show John again those things that he had seen before; this would be sufficient to restore his faith, if accompanied by the Spirit. Jesus did not tell them to tell John of a more perfect way, or of some greater and more impressive experiences, but rather, tell him again the same evidences upon which his faith was founded originally. The apostle Paul wrote, on one occasion, (*I Cor 3:11*) "*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.*" There is no foundation upon which the faith of the children is laid, and they will respond when they are reminded again of the power that first opened up their understanding of spiritual matters, and which will support them in all of their travels in this life.

The prophet John was a man in nature, even as all men are, who are born into this world of sin and corruption, and he was subject to the same weaknesses and fears that they are, and he was but experiencing the trials of his ministry which had been placed upon him, for that particular season, by God. It is God that gives the trials of faith unto his servants, and it is God that gives them deliverances from them, and he does it, that they may fear before him, and render praise, honor and glory unto him for his grace and mercy that he has blessed them with, as they run with patience the

race that is set before them. These seasons are needful unto them and are included among the all things that work together for their eternal salvation, although they may be very distressing to them at the time.

The burden that was placed upon John was the same burden that is placed upon all of the servants of God. It is that which is called, by the world, the great commission, which Jesus gave unto his disciples just before his ascension unto heaven. (*Matt. 27:19-20*) *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* He was telling them to go into all of the world, and teach all nations the things that he had taught them, and that is the mission that his ministers have been fulfilling, and will continue to do so as long as the world stands. The purpose in this is because his children will continue to stand in need of these constant reminders and assurances of the faith that they are being exercised by, as long as they are confined in these bodies of clay, and subject to the weaknesses and temptations of the flesh. They are to witness to these facts, and to let them all know that this is the way in which all pilgrims will travel, in this life. They direct their minds and hearts to the scrip-

tures, left on record by those who have gone before, that they may realize that they are not alone in these experiences

The apostle Paul's commission was to the Gentiles, (*Acts 26:16-18*) *"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."* The apostle Paul was made to be a witness of those things that he had seen, and in which the Spirit gave him understanding, and this he continued to do until relieved of his calling by death: there is no retirement age or pension plan in this work, it is done in love for the giver of this gift, and the calling is for their lifetime. This is the same message that Jesus gave to the prophet John by way of his followers, *"Go show John again,"* the same things that had made him believe in Christ originally and they would restore him to the quickened state upon hearing them again, and again, enabling him to press on to the mark. They are things that his children still come to-

gether to hear, each time that they attend services: they receive reminders of the truths upon which their faith was first founded. We do not come to hear some new doctrine, or theory, but to have our experiences brought to our minds afresh. I love to hear others tell of their experience and I even love to tell my own experience, over and over, because sometimes it brings me back to that point in time, and I am made to weep for joy, just remembering the sweetness of the season, and how precious it was in the beginning.

These remembrances are as new and moving unto the children of God, when the Spirit is present, as when they first experienced them. This is what the world does not understand, that his children come to be fed in church, they do not come together just the learn the bible by the repetition of the reading of the same wording over and over, and this is why it is foolishness to the world. To the saints of God, it is the same as their being fed the natural food that they may eat and live: they eat the same food over and over again, but it is just as nourishing and pleasing to the taste each time that they are fed. The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, (*Heb 1:21*) *“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”* He did not say foolish preaching, but the foolish-

ness of preaching, to the world it is foolish because they just do not understand and cannot unless they are born again, but to them that are saved, it is the power of God and the wisdom of God being made manifest in their lives. The preaching of the cross is to the sheep, the necessary food of the soul, and they are nourished and strengthened by it each time that they are given ears to hear, eyes to see and hearts to understand it. They are made again, to feel to have an earnest in the inheritance that is laid up for those who love the Lord.

The apostle Peter wrote, (*II Pet 3:3*) *“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior; knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”* Peter knew that the children of God, living in this world of nature become so engrossed in the things of the flesh: so caught up with living their natural lives and the stress of their every day life, that they tend to stray, and forget these most important of all

things. They tend to forget the spiritual values that are the basis of their faith, and so Peter says that he is writing to them to stir up their minds, and bring to their remembrance again these precious thoughts and memories, and then he says, (II Pet 3:17-18) "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things, before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen" This does not mean that Peter expected to restore them to the fold, but rather, knowing the nature of man, and having had these experiences of grace himself, he knew how weak that man is, in the flesh, and therefore desired to bring their pure minds back to the realities of their spiritual life, and to renew their minds again unto a lively hope.

This actually, is the calling of the minister; he is to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, not to make sheep out of goats, or to increase the flock, but rather to separate the sheep from the goats, as Jesus said, (*John 10:3-5*) "*To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from*

him: for they know not the voice of strangers." When his ministers speak, in the Spirit, they do as Jesus did in the previous verse of scripture; they are even as Elihu said that he was when he told Job, (*Job 33:6*) "*Behold I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed of the clay.*" The minister speaks from an unction that is given them of God and the Spirit also gives unto his children the remembrance of the things that are more precious to them than the world and all of its riches. When this occurs, communion is experienced by the speaker and the listener: communion in the knowledge that God is in their midst and blessing these sacred truths to both of their understanding. Their praise is not toward the minister, or the hearer, but both realize that it is God working in them both the will and the do of his good pleasure, according to the promises made to them in the scriptures, when he said that he would never leave nor forsake them

Yes, if John, with his experience and knowledge of these spiritual things, could have need to have them brought to his remembrance again, how much more will his children in future generations need repeated prompting in these matters. Jesus himself said unto his disciples, after John's disciples had gone back to report to him what Jesus had told them, (*Matt. 11:11*) "*Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women*

there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." If he, of whom this is written, is brought to this position, will not all that are made to call upon God have need of these new refreshings of their hope. I believe that this scripture means that, among them that are born of women, whose abode in this natural world in the flesh, there are none greater than John the Baptist, but he was still only a natural man. He is as Elihu said that he was, speaking to Job "*I am also of clay.*" John the Baptist was a natural man, under the influence of his natural mind, when he sent his disciples to Jesus; but was "*the new man*" when exercised in spiritual matters and under the influence of the spiritual mind, and then he is greater than any man in nature, for he is spiritual and as such, will inhabit the kingdom of heaven, by the grace of God, through faith.

When Jesus had begun to tell his disciples of his coming death, and the things that would follow, and what would be accomplished, he said, (John 14:16-17) "*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*" This comforter

which is the Holy Ghost establishes that line of communication that exists between God and his children. It is not a party line, nor is it available unto "*whosoever will*" but it is only to those that can hear his voice, as Jesus said above, and they will hear and they will follow him, for he said, "*all that my Father giveth unto me shall come unto me.*" This is the way whereby the saints of God are reminded, time and time again, of the things that they have seen and experienced, as God reveals them unto them again, through his angels, who are but ministers sent to minister unto them who are the heirs of salvation. It is a direct line which is open at all times, but, it can only be accessed from above. His children cannot originate it, in and of themselves, it is a direct and personal spiritual line of communication, and it is only between God and those whom he hath quickened into spiritual life, because the world, in general cannot receive it. (John 14:26) "*But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*" And Jesus was speaking unto the apostles when he made this statement, and it was regarding the way and manner in which these things would be regularly brought again unto the minds of all of the saints, in the future.

When God said by the mouth of

Isaiah, (*Isa 42:8*) ***"I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."*** I believe that the above is what he was talking about; he was saying. I am the God of thy salvation, and the glory of my work shall not be given, or assigned to another, for the salvation of the saints is my own particular pleasure, even as he said in, (*Psa 149:4*) ***"For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: and he will beautify the meek with salvation."*** and he is saying that it shall be done by him, and in his own way. (*Isa 9-11*) ***"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: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoke it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it I will also do it."*** There is no ambiguity in this statement, or in any of the other scriptures for that matter, it is as Elder W. D. Griffin used to say, the scriptures say what they mean, and mean what they say. There are no scriptures that I am aware of, that ascribe any part of the salvation of the saints of God to any other source than God, and this pertains to every detail of it.

May God, in the riches of his grace, continue to send these remembrances of their salvation unto his saints, that they may not faint and fall away, which they would do, if left in their own strength. This he will most certainly do, because their names are already written in the book of life, and this assures them a heavenly abode in that world that is to come, that place that Jesus told his disciples, (*John 14:2-3*) ***"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there may ye be also."*** This is the heritage that awaits all of the saints of God; it is incorruptible, undefiled, and fades not away, reserved in heaven for each one. This is based upon the word of Jesus and no more certain a foundation could be laid to support their hope of eternal life than this, so, rejoice each and every time that these remembrances are brought to your mind, and praise him from whom all blessings flow.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 139:10.

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

 ARTICLES

 "PRESERVE ME, O GOD:
 FOR IN THEE DO I PUT MY TRUST"

How amazing is our journey in this life when we are blessed to cry unto the Lord as was David in *Psalms 16:1*, "Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust." David continues in *Psalms 40:11*, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me." I believe this is the cry of every child of God.

The word preserve has been heavy on my mind for some time. It means to keep safe, protect and prevent from decaying. A child of God encounters many difficult ways in which he must travel in his sojourn here in this life. These most trying times are but blessings from the Lord for that is how a child of God is taught. The world would question how could afflictions and trials be blessings. They don't understand that *"we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."*

In the year 2005, I was given a dream, if not deceived, of seeing a

bed lifted down into water. The following week, I was given another dream. In the second dream, I was holding on to two posts of the bed that were in the water and the two posts came off from the bed. I thought the bed would surely decay because there was no way to get the bed up out of the water since the posts had been removed. Immediately, I sought the Lord for interpretation and the words were spoken to me: *"This is salt water. This bed will not decay but will be preserved."* I then walked on top of the water with the two posts that were removed from the bed.

I believe this was the bed of affliction in which I was to endure more suffering. Notice that the two posts were removed from the bed. I was blessed to endure the removal of the middle lobe of my right lung in February 2005. In September 2005, I began coughing up much blood and had to endure a second lung surgery which involved removal of the top portion of my left lung. Thinking of this dream in a natural perspective, the bed is my body and the two posts removed were the top portion of my left lung and the middle lobe of my right lung. The water was salt water which would preserve the body. Spiritual water is grace which the Lord gives to His little ones to carry them through each trial that is allotted them to endure. The amazing grace and strength I was given to endure the two surgeries lifted me up spiritually as I walked by faith

trusting in the Great Physician for all my help. He preserved me and kept my eyes fixed upon Him.

After the second lung surgery, my doctors informed me that I needed to take treatment for my lung to prevent any further damage to my lung; for if I had to have any more of my lung removed, my breathing would be greatly affected. I was told it was harsh treatment and there were many side effects. The possible side effect that was most disturbing was that of blindness; and if that happened, there was nothing that could be done. I prayed much about this matter. The night I was to begin the treatment, I sat alone at the table a long time around midnight looking at those three bottles of medication not knowing what the outcome might be after taking them. Since I had undergone chemo twice, my eyes had been affected and I didn't know if they being weaker, as a result of chemo, might make my eyes more susceptible to side effects. I prayed to the Great Physician and begged for mercy. When I finished praying, the words were spoken to me, if I am not deceived, "I will preserve thee." Many have been the trying times from the side effects of the medications but so far no damage to my eyes. The medication causes severe nausea, breathing problems, affects the neuropathy in my feet and legs and sleepless nights. Precious is the prayer recorded in *Psalm 57:1*, "*Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me:*

for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."

Almost nine months have passed since beginning the treatment for my lung. Physically, it has been a most trying time. The treatment is every other day and will last for a year or more. Spiritually, it is a blessed time. On September 16 while suffering much nausea from lung treatment the previous night, I was standing at the kitchen sink gazing out the window when a dove so graciously perched upon a post in the backyard. It seemed as though his eyes were fixed upon me as I gazed through the window at him. He never took his eyes off me except once to look up as though he was looking into the heavens and then again fixed his eyes upon me as words were spoken unto me, "*My peace I give unto thee. I have delivered thee.*" After receiving these comforting words, the dove flew away into the wilderness. What a beautiful sight to behold and feel the spirit of God within my heart, if I am not deceived.

The scripture found recorded in *Psalms 116: 1-8* has been very precious to me. "*I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me:*

I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou has delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." II Timothy 4:18.

Love in Christ
Jeannette Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRESENT YOUR BODIES

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." - Rom. 12:1.

The apostle, in the preceding part of this epistle set forth at large the leading features of the doctrine of God our Savior; such as our choice in him before the world was, and our predestination to the adop-

tion of children, our holy and effectual calling by the Spirit of God, and our justification through the righteous merits of Jesus Christ and our sure glorification in consequences of what Christ had done for us.

Here now comes to our duty to God as his children. A religion that is not practical is of but very little value to him that possesses it. A man who claims a change of heart, and yet there is no reform in his life, is but a "whited sepulcher," at best. And a religion that only asserts itself on Sunday, and only bears fruit while at church, is a stigma on Christianity, and shows the pretender to be a Galvanized Hypocrite at most. It occurs to me that from the method of Paul's writing here, as well as in other epistles written by him, many of our ministers might take a lesson on how to rightly divide the word of truth, and not press duty as entirely abstracted from privilege, nor privilege abstracted from duty entirely; but rather let both go together.

The particular exhortations of this chapter, it seems to me, are drawn from different heads of Christian duty. First, our duty to God; second, our duty to ourselves; third, our duty to our brethren. The grace of God teaches us in a general way to live godly, soberly and righteously in this world, and deny everything that is contrary thereto. And in this chapter we are taught what godliness, righteousness and sobriety are, though the apostle seems to have somewhat intermixed them.

Our duty to God is to yield up all that we have, and are, into his hands, feeling that he careth for us and will shield us from harm and give us that which is best for us, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear; but will with every temptation make a way for our escape. Therefore, we can well afford to lean upon him as our covert from the tempest, and rest upon his precious promises as a shadow of a Great Rock in a weary land.

The duty pressed upon us is to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God. As a matter of fact, in this the apostle refers to the sacrifice under the law, which were presented or sat before God at the altar; ready to be offered to him. Sacrifice is here taken for whatever God has determined, or decided them for. Under the Jewish law there were sacrifices of atonement, and there were sacrifices of acknowledgement; but in this our gospel day Christ is the only sacrifice of atonement we have. So we may know that our obedience rendered to our Lord is not to atone for sin, or to appease the wrath of God. But all our sacrifices to God that are rendered to God through Jesus Christ our Great High Priest, are only sacrifices of acknowledgement to the honor of God. And it occurs to us that we should esteem this more as a privilege than a duty.

Presenting here seems to us to denote a voluntary act. We are not ignorant that some of our brethren

object to the term voluntary act, and we would not be understood to convey the idea that this is something that the child of God can do independently of the Lord; but while God has given them his Spirit, and has thereby made them partakers of his divine nature, to these, and these only, gave he power to become the Sons of God. And we must confess that we are at a loss to know how they are to become Sons of God after they are born Sons of God, unless it is in a practical way; and should it be granted that this is what was meant, then it must be true that in the new birth God gave them that power; and now to perform that duty must be a voluntary act on their part, growing out of their love to God and his precious cause. It occurs to us that this act implies not only the avoiding of the sins that are committed with or against the body, but as the using of the body as a servant of the soul in the service of God. Of course bodily exercise alone profits little; in its place it is a proof and product of the work of God in us, and proves that we love God more than the world. The Savior once tried poor old Peter on this very point, when he said, "*Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these?*" having referred to the fishes caught. Peter said, "*Yea, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.*"

God requires a living sacrifice, not killed, as they were under the law, and there is no question but what a

soul renewed by divine grace, and governed by the Spirit in its obedience to God is a living sacrifice, and will always be accepted of the Lord.

And it is but reasonable that we should render this service to the Lord. He has a right to expect it of us, and it seems that it should be our delight to render it, and be all the while engaged in the service of the Master.

By doing thus we are refusing to conform to the world and its ways; but are being transformed and renewing our minds that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Oh! That we might see more of the zeal for the Master, and less of that jealous spirit, brethren striving to be called the greatest in the Kingdom of God. We have been sick and tired of brethren quarreling and fighting and trying to devour one another over questions that really amount to nothing in the end, simply questions on which the brethren can be divided and each man have his followers and prove by them that he is the leading preacher of the world. Paul says, *"For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."*

We feel confident that some little sober thought and measuring ourselves by the standard of God's

word for a short while and seeing thereby that we are *"nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity;"* we are inclined to think that such views as this would cause all to see that all we have, God has given us, and all we can expect God must give, therefore we have nothing whereof to boast save in the cross of Jesus, and let each one strictly adhere to the apostle's admonition in the text, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service."

If all would do this, love would flow from breast to breast, and joy from heart to heart; and we could meet as brethren of one common family and unite our voices in the praise of God, and feel when we meet a Baptist that we have met one of our Father's family, and with joy could stoop to his feet and wash them with our tears of joy and wipe them with the hairs of our head.

May God speed the time when these blessings shall be ours to enjoy, if it can be his holy will.

T.S. Dalton.

PROVERBS 1:7.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

GOD'S WAYS

"The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt." St. Matt. 11:13.

These are the words of St. Matthew concerning the childhood of our Savior. They call our mind back to the time when God's own time had been fulfilled and Christ, the Holy Son of God, was born into the world. All the events concerning his birth are such as would, of themselves, indicate the exercise of a power higher than that of mankind. Christ's birth into the world was as all other things which God alone directs, unchangeable. The circumstances of time, place, and even the name of the Savior, were fulfillment of prophecy. We sometimes attempt to foretell certain events over which we have partial influence, but how often our plans are diverted. The greatest success in forecasting that we can attain is concerning those things of God into whose mysteries he has allowed us to delve, and whose movements are sure. We may calculate the path of the earth, sun and moon, and determine eclipses of them in advance, but it is because their ways are set by the unalterable plans of God. God's ways are sure, his time is definite, his work is done according to his will.

We believe that the time for much of his work has already come

and gone, and it has been completed. *"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made."* Gen. 2:2. Where is one so foolish as to say that he has left the work of creation a partly finished task, depending upon the will, all the work which he has completed. Hear Jesus say, as he hung on the cross, *"It is finished."* What did he mean. I believe he meant his work here on earth was finished. And what was that? Hear again, *"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 6:39-40. The inspired writer gave us word in Genesis that the Lord's work of creation was done, and none dare claim a part in it. The Savior himself, with his last words, said his work was finished.

Yet there is a work of God that is now going on. We read that *"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."* St. John 5:25. This I believe to be the work of regeneration in the heart. God is caring for it by his Holy Spirit in the same sure, steadfast way that he ever moves to do his will. His work cannot be hastened or hindered by men or devils. It was by his permissive will that Christ was delivered into the hands of his enemies. They could not have taken him sooner. The old king

sought his life as a babe, but God protected him, warning Joseph to flee into the land of Egypt until after the death of Herod, the king. Furthermore, we know that Jesus was aware of the events that were soon to transpire, for he said, "*Behold the hour is at hand, and the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.*" *St. Matt. 26:45*. Inasmuch as there was no power to hasten or hinder God's work of creation, or his work in atoning for the sins of his people, there is no power that can help or hinder his work of regeneration in the hearts of his children, but whenever his time has been fulfilled the Holy Spirit will speak peace to the troubled soul, and the future which once looked like a troubled river of death becomes a beautiful river of life, upon whose mirrored surface the soul shall be wafted to eternal bliss in the new Jerusalem, in the ark of his redeeming love.

We have reason to believe that God has his work planned for the future. "*The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth.*" *St. John 5:28-29*. This surely must be the resurrection of the bodies. How shall we help God then? Shall it be by becoming willing and yielding ourselves to his proffer of resurrection? How much more reasonable is it to suggest that a soul, dead in trespasses and sin, yield to accept regeneration, than to suggest that a body, dead in the grave, yield to accept resurrec-

tion?

How much more consistent it is to claim no part in God's work, but to turn our attention to the abundance of labor he has delegated to us. Let us turn to Paul's exhortation, "*Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.*" *Rom. 12:9*. May we renew our determination to let our light, which God has given us, so shine that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father. Our feet should not be idle when there are messages of good news to carry; our hands should not be idle when there are kind deeds that may be done; and our tongue should not be idle when kind words may be spoken; but rather let us present ourselves as a living sacrifice to his glory and the good of ourselves and our fellowmen.

T.S. Dalton

NOT YET, BUT WE SHALL KNOW.

"*For we know in part, and we prophesy in part:*" *1 Cor., xiii, 9*.

It is evident that the text teaches that we can prophesy only as far as we know, and that we, knowing only in part, can prophesy only in part. The knowledge here referred to evidently means that which we receive by revelation, and we know in part because only knowledge in part is revealed unto us.

God in His infinite wisdom and great love for his dear people knows what is best for them, and has revealed a sufficiency for them while they are in this world. Perfect knowledge would not be in keeping with an imperfect state. There are some things that God had kept secret, and they belong unto him. We can not find them out by searching, for they are too wonderful for us. We can not attain unto such knowledge. The things that God has revealed unto us, and we have a right to claim them, and appropriate them to our use as far as we may be able according to our measure of faith.

“Now, we see through a glass darkly.” In this world Christ shows himself through the lattice unto his people. In the Scriptures, in our experience, in the preached gospel, he is presented unto us only in part; but we see enough of him to cause us to want to see more of him. The text is comforting to us, because we are conscious of our limited knowledge. In a good sermon we can only get a glimpse of Christ, however full of him the preaching may be, because we can know him only in part. How careful we should be, lest we be found trying to prophesy beyond our knowledge. We can not know all about election; for we can not tell why God has chosen some unto salvation and not others, yet we do know that he has done so, for he has revealed that fact unto us in the Bible. We can not understand how it is that God has always loved his people;

that it is part of his nature to love them; and that he will always love them; yet we know that such is the case, for he is love, and changes not, and as long as he has been God, he has been love and been loving.

We can not understand all about predestination, yet we know it is true, for the Bible teaches it. For instance, we can not understand how it was wicked in Joseph's brethren in selling him to the Ishmaelites, and yet God having a good purpose in their going so. Many such cases might be referred to, taught in the Scriptures, but it is not necessary to enlarge here. I will remark, however, before leaving the subject of predestination, that brethren in speaking and writing on this mysterious subject, should not forget that they know only in part concerning it; that they can not measure arms with Jehovah; for his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Instead of being restless and prying, trying to understand and even explain mysteries that God has never revealed unto us, and even falling out with our dear brethren because they will not agree with us in our many speculative notions, I see no reason why we should not rather be content with such things as God has been pleased to reveal unto us, and lovingly trust in him as little children. Let us not forget that at our very best in knowledge in this world we are but children, and have only

enough meted out to us as minors according to our necessities. In this world we can but speak as children, understand as children, think as children, for we are yet in our minority; but our God is our guardian, and has in store for us boundless stores of knowledge which he will show us at the proper time, when we become of age, so to speak, which will be when we leave this world and go home to heaven. It is then we shall know even as we are known. Then that which is perfect will have come, and that which is in part shall be done away.

Your brother in love,
T. J. Bazerore.

Monroe, La.
July 23rd, 1955

Elder E. J. Lambert
Winnsboro, Texas

Dear Brother Lambert (I trust in the Lord),

I have been wanting to write you since you finished your book and get you to send me a copy, and I believe the price is \$3.00, so will send a check for that amount plus 25 cents to cover postage.

Brother, the dream I wrote you about worried me quite a lot till after I wrote you about it, then later I was

relieved of it and am glad you had no comment.

I will soon be 61 years old, and it seems my vision on things is not as clear as it has been in the past, and I see more and more of the sins of this old man every day that I live and still don't know how to get away from any of them. Sure wish someone would tell me if they know, so that I may try in that way too, but at times I am made to thank Almighty God that He has led me through some very sweet and comforting experiences, which if the Lord will strengthen me to that end, I would like to mention a few of the very comforting and outstanding blessings that I know could come from no other source except through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is through His great love and mercy that I have been brought thus far, and shown the things that I believe I have seen.

The things I have in mind at this time are concerning my oldest son. I believe I will drop back to the time just before he was born into this world; that was when his mother had been in hard labor for some 12 to 18 hours and it seemed her strength was completely gone and she was gone too. The doctor and all our help had completely failed to accomplish anything. The doctor said he saw no other chance except a forced birth, so he began to sterilize his instruments. It seemed all this time my whole supplication had gone out for her, but on this wise

there seemed such a great load came down on me I could not bare it, so I walked out of the house, not knowing if I would see her alive again when I returned or not. I went behind the garden, sat down on the ground, buried my head in my lap, and if not deceived, uttered a prayer to God. I don't know what all I said, but on the completion was, "Lord let the child be born, that it be a normal child and that it might live and do well. If this be not possible with Thee, then save my wife and I will still trust in thee." Now as these words were finished I felt completely relieved. I felt light as a feather and I felt perfectly sure he would be born and that everything would be perfectly alright. So I got up, hurried back to the house through the kitchen where the doctor was. And when I entered the room where she was, she smiled at me very beautifully, and I saw new life in her, and the moment I touched her a son was born and a great alarm went up from the ones that were in the room. We called the doctor to come quick, but he did not need any tools. I could give a lot more details, but this is the main event that is so outstanding with me, though it may not be worth anything to anyone who may read it.

There are two other outstanding events I would like to mention while it seems to be fresh on my mind, and that is, while my boy was in the Army, what warning I felt and the experience he had of two very close calls. The first was on his way overseas

to Africa. Some of the ships were sunk and the Army announced 1000 of our boys were lost. The ship he was on was badly damaged, but managed to get into harbor. Now after he came home I never questioned him about the things he went through with over there, but just recently he sat down and told me of these events which linked in with all the things I had seen and felt, (I say that I saw and I believe that Porter you wrote so beautifully about in the July signs did open the door and Christ showed me these things,) one morning around nine or ten o'clock. I saw him in great danger, and this same load that I felt several times before came down over me and I was much in distress and grieved, so I was minded to pray for him, which I stole away to myself and did as the Lord enabled me to do. So after this I felt he was safe and that fear was gone, though we did not hear from him for a long time. But I had a feeling he was alright, even after the report came out. Of course I did not know positively but what he was lost in that 1000 of our boys. I never did know just what took place until some few months ago, but this feeling I had had remained the same with me, and when he told me of the event I knew it was at the same time I had received the warning, and it did make my very soul rejoice to know of the wonderful demonstration of His love and mercy.

Now I will try to mention one other very outstanding experience

that took place while he was in the jungles of India, which proves to me beyond any shadow of doubt that All Wise and Powerful God never makes a mistake and is never too early nor too late, but exactly on time and at the right place. Now this took place some 10 or 12 months later. He was in the Airborne Corp of Engineers, and it was their duty to build air bases for our planes to land and take off. They had just finished one base, and that morning there was a Jap plane spotted them, so they got orders to move everything off the field so many hundred yards back in the jungle, which they did as fast as they could, for they knew the Japs would be back to bomb them soon. They got everything off the base except one thing that was forgotten, and his commanding officer sent him back to get it. Before he got there, running as fast as he could, he heard the planes coming, but he got what he had went after and started back. The Japs spotted him and took after him. They were flying several abreast and all putting out a stream of exploding shells that were so thick a man could not pass between them. They were so close he knew there was no chance for him, so he fell to the ground with his face down. Just as he hit the ground he heard a clear voice speak to him, saying, Divine love has all power. Divine love will save. On hearing this voice he was perfectly calm and not afraid at all; and by now those shells were kicking dust in his face, so they came

within a few inches of him and all shut off at once. He lay there until they got out of sight, then got up thanking God for His love and mercy, took up what he was sent after and walked calmly on to where the others were; which they could hardly believe, for they felt sure he had been killed. So after this he was always very calm in everything that took place, always trusting in that one God that does all things well; and would take over at times the control of things when all the others in his bunch would get so frantic they could do nothing.

Now the part with me in this event was about six o'clock in the evening. There was such a heavy burden came over me it looked like I could not stand it. I was alone at the time, or there was no other person near me, and the tears did flow from my eyes, for I saw him in exceeding great danger. Of course I did not know what was taking place, but for about 30 minutes I feel that I prayed to God with groanings which words cannot utter. Now after this I felt perfectly at ease. This trouble was taken from me and I felt light as a feather as if I was floating around, and I could see him perfectly safe and not a hair of his head harmed, (which was not, for he went through the whole thing for two years and came home without a scratch.)

I did not know, as I said, just what took place till a short time ago when he told me about it; which all linked in with the exact time that I had

these experiences.

Both of my sons and my daughter were in the service at the same time. The younger son was in the Navy, and he had it pretty rough at times, and I did have similar experiences about him, but not so vivid and outstanding as the older one; neither were his calls nearly so close.

Now the wonderful and precious blessings of God our Savior toward me and mine are much too numerous to mention, for which I feel very unworthy, but so very, very thankful for all of them. These are some of the things that strengthen my very being and I truly hope they will never be taken from my memory, for these things are food for my soul; and when I am given to joy, I feel to join David and say, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His Holy name. Praise the Lord and forget not all His benefits.

I have written much more than may be of interest, but it will give you an idea of the things I live on.

Now I hope this finds you and yours enjoying good health which is God's blessings.

I surely enjoy all your articles in the Signs of the Times, and if you have a mind and can find the time, I would be glad to have a letter from you. When at the throne of grace, please remember me, a sinner.

Your unworthy Brother, if one at all,
J. H. Calk

EYESALVE

"Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."
Rev. 3:18.

This was addressed to the Laodician church. She did not know her real state, and could not see her true stand. She thought she was rich when she was poor, and mistook darkness for light, bitter for sweet, and the delusions of Satan for the teachings of God. They were to anoint their eyes with this eyesalve, that they might see their real condition and turn from following after Satan and become followers of God as dear children.

But where do we find this wonderful eyesalve that has such marvelous, miraculous, supernatural effects? Is it not the teachings of the blessed Spirit? This is the only thing that can open the eyes of our understanding that we may know our true condition. So the Lord counseled the Laodician church to anoint her eyes with eyesalve, that is, go to a throne of grace. He did not teach by this that they had the power as creatures to anoint their own eyes with this heavenly unction. If they could do this they could teach themselves, while it is written, *"They shall all be taught of the Lord."* But they were to go to the throne of grace, seeking for the teaching of the Spirit.

The question would arise as to why these church members should need this eyesalve. Because they

are still bearing about a body of death. Their flesh is still weak and leads them into such delusion. If they were all spiritual they would not be troubled with this weakness, but since the spirit is life because of righteousness and the body, or flesh, is dead because of sin when we follow after the flesh, we are blind to the things of the spirit. It would do no good to use eyesalve on the eyes of the dead. Sight could not be given before life, but the living may have the eyes of their understanding opened, which are often darkened by nature as the cataract covers the eye of the body. This often grows gradually over the sight.

This blessed eyesalve of grace can open such eyes and enable them to see again. Divine light in a man's conscience will teach him what he is and to know and see the truth. So we can only know ourselves, see others as the blessed of the Lord, see and feel the truth, and know our interest in our Savior's atoning blood, his justifying righteousness, or his dying love as far as the blessed Spirit anoints our eyes with this eyesalve that we may see.

J. Harvey Daily.

Romans 8:26.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit inself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

March 5.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." - REVELATION ii. 29.

THESE words extend the message beyond the church to which they were spoken, and address themselves to every one to whom the word comes, and to whom an ear is given to hear and receive it. Thus each message sent to the churches becomes a message sent personally to us. If we have a spiritually circumcised ear, if we are willing to listen to the voice of the Lord, he speaks to us in every message as personally and as distinctly as he spoke to each individual church. It is indeed an unspeakable blessing to have this ear given to us that we may receive in humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity what the Lord speaks in the word of his grace. It is by his word that he knocks at the door of our hearts; and what a blessing he has pronounced on the man who hears his voice and opens the door when he hears the knock, like a fond and affectionate wife when she hears the knock of her husband at the door of his house: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. iii. 20).

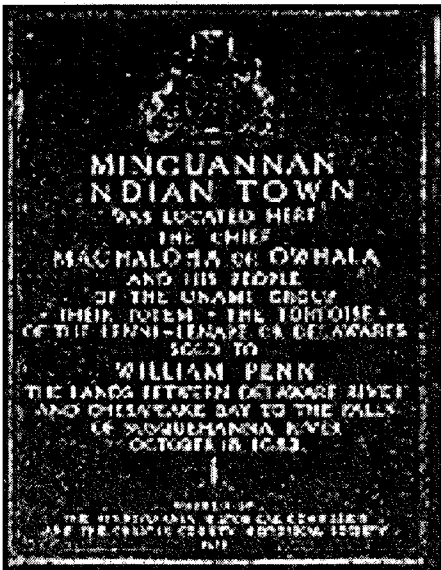
Elder J.C. Philpot

CHESTER COUNTY

MIGUANNAN INDIAN TOWN (Plaque #34):

On the 241st anniversary of the sale of a great tract of land by the Indians to William Penn, this tablet, placed on a shaft of native trap rock, was dedicated on October 18, 1924.

It is located at the Landmark Primitive Baptist Church, formerly London Tract Baptist Church, at LR 15016 (Yeatman Station Road) and LR 15155 (London Tract Road), 1 1/2 miles northeast of Strickersville.



CONTRIBUTIONS

DECEMBER 2006

- Algie Martin, VA 5.00
- Samuel Broach, NC 5.00
- Charles Jones, TN 5.00

- Carlton Sumner, VA 5.00
- Hattie Spencer, VA 5.00
- Carla Horton, VA 5.00
- Elder Wayman Chapell, TN 25.00
- Albert Davidson, LA 25.00
- Amy Lane, NC 5.00
- Norma Smith, VA 5.00
- J.B. Mitchell, VA 5.00
- Wright Arnn, GA 5.00
- Allen Carroll, NC 5.00
- Lena Duncan, VA 5.00
- William Lavinder, VA 5.00
- Billie Speir, LA 35.00
- Sarah Baker, VA 5.00
- Charles Alders, TX 25.00
- Eva Wyatt, NC 5.00
- Hazel Garland, MD 25.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER DORIS ROWLAND

It is with a sad heart that I try to write an obituary of our sister, Doris Rowland, 85 formerly of 156 Forest Dale, died Tuesday May 16, 2006, at Roman Eagle Memorial home. She had been in declining health since Dec. of 2005.

She was the daughter of the late Robert Lee Brumfield, and the late Maria Dalton Brumfield. She lived her entire life in Danville, Va. She retired after 40 years from Dan River Mills, where she worked in the no. 2 inspection room.

She joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church, June 24, 1952. She served as church secretary for many years.

She was first married to Robert D. Hamilton Sr. in 1938. He died in August of 1973. She married William Rowland in August of 1977, he died in April of 1992.

She is survived by one son, Robert D. Hamilton Jr. of Danville, Va. And one daughter, Betty Hamilton Leachman, of Biloxi, Miss. A Sister, Carry McDaniel of Danville, Va. Three grand children, and two great grandchildren. In addition to her husbands, she was predeceased by two brothers, Perrow Brumfield and Ollie Brumfield. And by three sisters, Minnie B. Willis, Sagasta Brumfield Hudgins and Mamie B. Brumfield.

There was a graveside service Sunday May 21 at Hiland Burial Park with Elder C.B. Davis officiating. Buried beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to wait the second coming of the Lord.

Written by one who loved her,
Sarah Barker

SISTER DOROTHY CONNER YATES

Sister Dorothy Conner Yates of Check, Virginia died October 20, 2006, making her stay here on earth 83 years.

Services were held at 11:00 a.m. Monday, October 23, 2006 at Salem Church with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry and Elder W.T. Conner officiating. She was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery.

Sister Dorothy was baptized September 13, 1959 and was a faithful member at Salem Church. She was married to Sherman Yates who preceded her in death. She is survived by three sons, Ralph, Barry and David Yates, and two daughters, Brenda and husband David Ramsey and Carolyn Mills. She had ten grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Sister Dorothy had one brother, Banks and wife Opal Conner, one brother-in-law, Alfred Ratliff, two sisters-in-law, Jean and Frank Link and Helen Link.

Sister Dorothy will be greatly missed at Salem Church, but we hope our loss is her eternal gain. She fought a good fight and is resting in Restvale Cemetery waiting for the coming of our Savior.

Done by order of Salem Church in conference, November 11, 2006. One copy of this memorial will be included in the church records, one will be given to the family and one will be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Submitted by,
Mary Poff, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
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EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

Elder Kenneth,

Read this poem and find how many of these pretty words and expressions have you experienced in you life. I see the depth of our experience in each verse.

Frances

FOREVER

*I learn as the years roll onward
And leave the past behind,
That much I have counted sorrow
But proves our God is kind;
That many a flower I have longed for
Had a hidden thorn of pain,
And many a rugged by-path
Led to fields of ripened grain.*

*The clouds but cover the sunshine,
They cannot banish the sun.
And the earth shines out the brighter
When the weary rain is done.
We must stand in the deepest sorrow
To see the clearest light,
And often from wrong's own darkness
Comes the very strength of right.*

(cont. next page)

*We must live through the weary winter
 If we could but value the spring,
 And the woods must be cold and silent
 Before the robins sing.
 The flowers must be buried in darkness
 Before they could bud and bloom
 And the sweetest and warmest sunshine
 Comes after the storm and gloom.*

*So the heart from the hardest trial
 Gains the purest joy of all,
 And from the lips that have tasted sadness
 The sweetest songs will fall.
 For as peace comes after suffering,
 And love is reward of pain,
 So after earth comes heaven
 And out of our loss the gain.*

Anon.

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 Bro. Floyd Thomas Oakley
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EDITORIAL

“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.” Psalm 25:14



Elder J.B. Farmer

Having been given a mind to attempt to write down a few things about the secret of the Lord and about His covenant, with much fear I begin. At the outset it must be said that it is my hope and desire to be delivered from all the pitfalls that attend such an endeavor. It is my sincere wish toward God to be delivered from pride, boasting in the flesh, any root of bitterness and also to be brought out of the darkness of a carnal mind. It is also my desire to be filled with love toward all and given an understanding of the truth as it is in Christ, to the comfort of the children of God, and to the praise of the God of heaven and earth.

I am made to believe the ones that the secret of the Lord is with, and the ones that fear Him in truth, and the ones to whom He promised that He will show them His covenant are the children of God. They are the same ones that God loved with an everlasting love and drew with His loving kindness. They are those that were chosen in Christ and the ones whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. They are those that God foreknew, predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son,

called, justified and glorified. They are those to whom He gave grace in Christ Jesus before the world began. They are the vessels of mercy and honor that God prepared unto glory. They are those that are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. They are those, like Jacob, that were found in a waste, howling wilderness and were led about and instructed and kept as the apple of His eye. They are those that were given a great and everlasting love for God and for His people. It is the little flock, the spiritual family of God, in which the Lord has dwelled throughout all generations. By the Spirit, some looked forward to His coming into the world, and by the same Spirit, some look back to it. The secret of the Lord surely has been with each one to sustain him through all his troubles and to bring him to the end of his journey in peace.

What is a secret? A secret, to me, is some knowledge that is committed to certain ones but that is kept hidden from all others. This particular secret of the Lord is unknowable in the natural, carnal mind because it is Spiritual. It is the secret of the Lord. The blessed apostle was given to say, *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."* He was also

blessed to say, *"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."* And Jesus said, *"I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."* And He also said, *"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."* So, God's children are taught to use wisdom when speaking of the secret that is within them.

The secret of the Lord is a secret shared among the Lord's people, although they cannot teach it to one another or to anyone else. The Holy Spirit said by the apostle, *"And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."* The world of carnal religion cannot understand this principle and is therefore constantly trying to persuade others to know their lord, which is not the Lord of Glory. They compass land and sea to make one proselyte and when they finish with him, he is two-fold more the child of hell than they are themselves, ac-

ording to the words of Christ. They are incessantly trying to build a larger congregation and are never satisfied. They are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. But the hidden truth is this according to the inspired word of God. *“Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”* The things of the spiritual kingdom must remain a mystery to the whole natural world.

What then is the secret of the Lord? I am made to believe that the secret of the Lord is the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is the continuing presence of the hidden Man of the Heart. David said by inspiration, *“Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man.”* It is knowledge of that spiritual kingdom life that abides within God’s little ones. Christ and His kingdom life are so hidden within you that we are told, *“You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.”* The life you live by faith in the Son of God is unseen by those in nature’s darkness. You have been killed to the world and the world has been killed unto you. No longer is your life bound up in serving sin and running after the pleasures of the world. You are made to know that the world is not your home and that you are a stranger and pilgrim here.

You are a foreigner to the world and are only passing through. You, like God’s children of old, have no certain dwelling place here to call home. Yes, we have natural houses and natural things, but we understand that they are just temporary and our futures are not tied to them or to any of the things of this world. As a foreigner, you are considered to be an untrustworthy spy by those whose home is in the world. After all, your language is not understood by them, neither are your principles of life. Your speech and your way of life is a hindrance to all those of contrary minds. It shines light into the dark places that they desire to keep hidden. It spoils their worldly pleasures. Therefore, they want you to be gone from their presence and they shun you, even as they did the prophets and the apostles in their day. Why is it so? It is because the secret of the Lord is with you. They hated Him and they shall hate you also because Christ Himself is with you.

The secret of the Lord is high and wide and broad and deep. The person of the Lord Jesus Christ was such a secret that no one could know who He really was, except by revelation from God. When Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus said to him, *“Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”* The Father and the Son

are hidden. Jesus said, "*All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*"

God and the Son and all things of the spiritual kingdom are hidden. But the Holy Spirit, which is Christ in you, teaches you the things of the spiritual kingdom that are a mystery to all others. He teaches you that God is sovereign, that He rules and reigns over all in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; that God does all His will and is not frustrated or changed by any; that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that God has a chosen people that he loved with an everlasting love, and that He, without fail will bring every one of them to glory; and that there are those that God hates with a perfect hatred, that were made to be destroyed by Him at the end of time. These and many other things of that spiritual kingdom, which comes not by observation, are all held in secret by the Lord's chosen few.

Those that have been filled with the secret of the Lord, rejoice in the kingdom of God as they are led about and instructed and kept in the things of it. They are taught precept upon precept and line upon line; here a little and there a little. They are blessed to talk freely to one another about it, and about their experience in it. The over-abounding love

that fills their hearts for God and His Son and for one another cannot be contained and God must be praised. "*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" The Holy Spirit said through the mouth of David, "*Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright.*" They seem to be the weakest of all people, but God's strength is made perfect in weakness. They are the fewest of all people, but they are the wisest, most contented, most honest and humbled people upon the face of the earth. Why is this so? I am made to believe it is because the secret of the Lord is with them. The secret of the Lord guides them, instructs them, comforts them and keeps them in the paths of righteousness.

God, Who cannot lie or fail in a promise, also said through David, "*He will shew them his covenant.*" God promised that He would show His people His covenant. The spiritual understanding of this holy, just and good covenant is kept secret from all who have not the Spirit of God. We understand that a covenant is an agreement between two or more parties. There was an old covenant that God made with Israel, which bound Israel to obey the law of God on penalty of death for disobedience. This covenant they broke because of the weakness of the flesh. They all found themselves to be guilty and condemned sinners before God without excuse or remedy. I am made to believe that all of

God's little ones have this covenant written in their hearts. It is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death to them. God makes them to understand the same things as the apostle did according to his experience. Paul said this by the Spirit. *"I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died."* When God writes this law in our mind and upon our hearts we are made to know without a doubt what it means to be a condemned sinner without hope in this world. We are also brought into company with the Publican, who could not even look up toward heaven, but smote his breast and confessed that he was a sinner and begged for mercy. We are killed to any thought of goodness in ourselves. This knowledge remains hidden to the world, but it is the Lord's secret with His people.

But God, in His great love and mercy for His people, sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ the Righteous, holy law of God and to make a way of escape for His people, through His suffering, death and resurrection from the dead. God has now revealed the new and everlasting covenant to the minds and hearts of His little ones, and has shown them that the old covenant has been fulfilled and put away. This new and everlasting covenant is the covenant of grace that God made with His Son on behalf of His

people. The prophet and the apostle said by the Spirit, *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."* Although this sure, everlasting covenant seems so plain to those who are given to know the secret, it is a mystery to all others.

This secret unconditional covenant manifests the love of God for His people. It shows that their sins were mercifully and gracefully forgiven and put away - never to appear against them again. By this one offering of Himself to God, Christ perfected forever them that are sancti-

fied. Jesus left the sins of God's little ones in the grave, as sure as He left His grave clothes there when He arose from the dead. And He now is sitting at the right hand of God where He ever lives to make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And He has promised to never leave you or forsake you, and that He would come again at the end of time, change you into His likeness and to receive you to Himself. This secret everlasting covenant secures all our hopes and desires, because it is God that has promised and God that is able to fulfill all that He has spoken. And He will do it. *"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

Sometimes I think I have tasted that God is gracious, but sometimes I think I am deceived. Sometimes I am persuaded with the apostle, that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day, although I know I am undeserving. I trust I have been made to know that I am nothing and altogether unworthy according to nature, but yet I must hope in His righteousness and in His mercy and goodness. It is my hope and trust that the God of heaven and earth shall continue His secret presence with you and His hidden mercy and goodness to you and to all His little ones now and forever, and that He may cause you to rejoice in that everlasting and sure covenant of grace in hope of eternal life. David said that he had one de-

sire above all others, which I am made to believe each one of the little flock also has been given, and I trust it is within me also. He said, *"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."*

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

Elder J. B. Farmer
12-21-2006

CORRESPONDENCE

This was written by Jamie E. Cooper some years ago. I found it and I am going to copy it word for word and share it with the readers of "The Signs" if you think it is worthy to print.

ONE DISOBEDIENCE

Dear Saints,

As this is my first time to write anything about my experience. I don't have any idea what it will amount to.

I want to tell you of first one of my disobediences of which I have many it seems. Several years back I remember a certain place that I always enjoyed going. But for some reason at this church I always seemed to feel more unworthy than

any place I went. This went on for several years and it seemed to get more heavy each year. Looking back now I believe it was all for my good, and to show me how frail and helpless I really am. As I said it got more severe each time. When I would be called on to serve in the communion, and I would go up to take the bread or wine it would seem that I was actually taking hold of Christ himself and it would almost take my breath away. I can't tell you how unworthy I would feel.

When the preaching was about half over I would begin to start having this awful feeling and yet I cannot say I did not want to serve. Now on this certain occasion just before the preaching was over. I as much believe that God gave me over to Satan for a few moments as he did Peter when he denied Him. I told myself that I just cannot do this, this time without making a scene in public, so the best thing for you to do is get on the back bench and they may not call on you. I don't think I had ever been there that I was not called on to serve. So you know what I did. Yes I got on the back bench and went all the way back to the end of the bench and sat down and I guess I even had my head down so no one would see me even. About this time I was feeling pretty well satisfied with what I had done.

So when they called for the ones to serve the bread, they did not call me. Now about this time is when I started to receive the heavy rod.

Even then I would have been glad to have been called, but do you know, oh yes when they chose the ones for the wine they passed me by. Now dear fellow Deacons, I hope I can tell you of the awful weight that was upon me. I don't think if the whole roof had come down it would have been any heavier. As I said before I believe that old satan had tempted me, but now I had someone else to deal with. I have never before nor since had Christ to speak any more plainer or direct to me than at this time. Do you have any idea what He said to me.

He never talked harsh or rebuked me, or accused me but He was just as gentle as He could be. But oh how deep the stripes did cut.

He said to me so plain it almost seems to me the one next to me could have heard it.

He said, *"you are some deacon, you never cease to ask me day and night to do something for you, and now you have been in the position to do this one simple thing for me and you have refused."*

Now I will have to just let each one of you imagine what an awful condition I was in because I cannot tell you. As I said about Peter being tempted, yes I was like him I went out and I wept bitterly. Now my Brethren I am still wearing those stripes and I think I always will. But I would not have it any other way, because this is one of my experiences and I have come to the place that I had rather

have Christ to visit me in His chastisement than to not visit me at all.

Oh yes you want to know what I have learned is this, I have never since and I don't believe I will ever get on the back seat any more.

Being a deacon is something hard to explain. Sometime you may think well why be, but there is something about it I could not give up. Just being able in some small way to feel you have done just a little to glorify His Blessed and Holy Name.

Your brother in hope and love!

Jamie E. Cooper

Sunday, October 2006
Tarboro, North Carolina

On September 30th and October 1st this past year, I feel that a few vessels of God's mercy assembled themselves together in bond of God's great love in an Association gathering. This wonderful gathering was held on St. James street in the beautiful town of Tarboro, North Carolina.

How these preaching brethren were elevated from the pits of darkness of nature, and set forth that great Gospel! They were blessed to remind us of God's great love, to feast on at His appointed time. How beautiful it is when one is blessed with an ear to hear and to feast from the rations from the Master's table food for the hungry soul. Surely, we that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

All the preaching brethren came forth showing that great love and harmony, setting forth a ruling and sovereign God who controls everything after the counsel of his precious will. We truly rejoiced that He is the author and finisher of this great faith that sustains the believing family of God in this land of sin and sorrow, if not deceived. Oh how those present seemed favored to feast on that Good News, food and consolation from that far country, channeled through God's bountiful grace.

Elder Joe Sawyers opened with remarks and we sang hymn 196. With a gracious prayer, the meeting began in a warm and graceful way. Elder Alan Terry was the second appointed to the stand.

I feel Elder Terry is a very able vessel of God's mercy. The text delivered to Elder Terry's heart came from Corinthians 15: 12-24. We were all blessed with a very moving message from that text.

Elder W. T. Conner was third appointed to the stand. Elder Conner was highly favored to bring forth a beautiful message of comfort to God's household of believers through faith. Elder Conner was given Ephesians 2: 1-10 as his text.

Elder Junior Conner, W. T. Conner's fleshly brother, and I believe Gospel brother was next appointed to the stand. Elder Conner's text came from Corinthians 1:1-31. The second Elder Conner's message was a beautiful spiritual dis-

course that was well and warmly received.

I believe these two brothers are gifted individuals. This concluded preaching before lunch on Saturday.

The ladies of the church outdid themselves with a truly delicious lunch, that was enjoyed by all. Every time I have one of the amazing dinners on the ground, I am humbled to think about when Christ blessed the bread loaves and indeed, fed multitudes. This has always been a very beautiful expression of God's power for me.

Saturday afternoon preaching began with Elder C. B. Davis. Elder Davis was given Psalms 85:7-11. The highly worded message delivered through Elder Davis was great comfort to the recipients of God's great love.

Those gathered being fully fed, Elder Hale Terry dismissed the crowd on Saturday afternoon with Hymn 73 and prayer. I think that all who were present received and were well fed from God's great Gospel that was set forth.

Sunday morning services were opened with hymn 372 followed by prayer delivered through Elder Marvin Brumfield.

Elder Raymond Goad was the first appointed to preach on Sunday morning. He was given for his text St. John 1:3-7. Elder Goad was blessed to bring forward graceful words of great comfort.

Elder Hale Terry was the second appointed to preach on Sunday

morning. Elder Terry was given for his text, Romans 8:28-39. Elder Terry was blessed to bring forth a very graceful message from that given text.

Elder Cleo Robertson was the third appointed to preach on Sunday morning. Elder Robertson was given for his text, John 3: 13-14. Elder Robertson was blessed to bring forth a very moving message for those blessed to be recipients of God's love. I have often enjoyed Elder Robertson's thoughtful writing, as well as knowing him as being highly favored to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, whom I esteem very highly was the fourth Elder appointed to the stand. He was given as his text from Corinthians 17:1-2. Elder Brumfield's message from that text was highly favored from that good land, bringing further words of grace and comfort to those gathered there.

Elder Joe Sawyer was the fifth elder appointed to the stand. Elder Sawyer was given verse from Deuteronomy, and was further given moving remarks from chapter 32. Elder Sawyer is a highly gifted individual.

Looking over the crowd, I was very moved seeing tears of joy flowing down cheeks of those feasting from the rations from the master. I understood clearly the wonder of those of our faith who travel so far often, to be so warmly and beautifully blessed. The long journey to

Tarboro seemed short at that moment.

The preaching brethren were from all up and down the east coast. Coming forth in love and advocating the predestination of all things, they all gave praise to this high and sovereign God. The experiences of our old Baptist Brethren, so steady across the centuries now, in seeking the affirmation of a sovereign God across the miles is very grounding and humbling. How wonderful that this hopeful journey continues, and what peace that anchored mooring gives.

I would like to close these remarks with a personal note, thanking everyone in the Tarboro area for the great and further humbling love and hospitality shown these travelers from the West Virginia during a wonderful and blessed weekend. Indeed, I was most saddened that the wonderful fellowship came to an end. These wonderful blessings will be cherished greatly for a very long time.

Riley Justice
POB 272
War, WV 24892
304-875-2960

PSALMS 98:1

O Sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

Elder William Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Signs of the Times

1/2/2007

Dear Elder Terry,

Please renew my subscription for the "Signs of The Times" for the coming year. I am enclosing a check for \$30.00- \$15.00 for the subscription and \$15.00 for a contribution.

I thank God for blessing us with those individuals, both past and present, whom I believe, have been given the desire, ability, effort, and dedication that is required to continue the publishing of the Signs. I believe that is through this means of communication that we are made to realize that the experiences of the authors, their beliefs, and their discussions are those that we can relate to since some of our own experiences are similar to theirs.

Time has not changed the doctrine that we contend for and nothing has changed with God. As I continue to read the Signs I am made to realize that it does not matter when the editorials and articles were written in time, whether it be one hundred years or just a month ago, we can read, relate to, and enjoy them regardless of when they were written.

A brother in hope
George W. Hyslip

VOICES OF THE PAST

Harbourton, N.J., June 27, 1903

Elder F. A. Chick – Dear Brother In The Lord: - By your request, and that of others, I will try to pen my experience in passing from nature's darkness to the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. I tremble at the attempt, fearing that it will crowd out much richer and better pasture than has grown in me, but if God has planted his word in my heart, and I am made to feed upon it, and to be nourished by it, why should I be ashamed of his workmanship? I hope that I never shall, although at times it seems but a dream and almost gone, yet I cannot forget that wonderful change which I was made to feel most thankful for. It was plainly shown to me that I had no part in this work, and it could not be taught by human knowledge, but it is given from above, and it of the free mercy of God. Words spoken by the apostle long ago suited my case, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."* It is the gift of God, free and complete, and I saw that I could do nothing but gladly accept his mercy, and walk in humble submission to his will.

It might be well for me to go back to the time of my birth of Adam's race. I was born at Yardville, N. J., April 5th,

1873, and spent my childhood days with my twin brother and three sisters there on my father's farm. I seldom went anywhere to church, as my father was not a member of any church, and my mother was a member at Hopewell, twenty-one miles distant. She could go but a few times in a year, and the most of the time we children were left at home, to keep house when we were old enough. Sunday afternoons Sunday School was held at our district schoolhouse, and against our mother's wishes we children would sometimes go. I was not interested in the Sunday school lesson, but went to see my schoolmates. I well remember one of the teachers telling me about little children in heathen lands without the gospel, and that they without it would be lost, and she said that I with others should bring some money the next time with which they would send a preacher to save them. I did not know what being saved meant, and so did not take the money the next time.

Mother would quite often talk to me about Jesus, who died to save his people from their sins, and of how sinful we all were, and I would get much interested in her talk, and thought it would be dreadful to be destroyed, and in burnings forever, yet I would soon forget all about it.

At the age of ten years I had a strange dream: I thought the world was coming to an end; I was going to school it seemed, and I could

plainly see the devil, as I thought it was, gathering up the wicked and throwing them into a large furnace on wheels, red with the heat, and I was greatly alarmed, and feared that he would take me, and longed for my mother's presence. Instantly she was by my side, and I told her what I was afraid of, and asked her that I might hide under her shawl, and then it seemed that we both crept under the fence out of sight as the devil passed by. This childhood's dream left such an impression on my mind that I never forgot it entirely, and today I can go to the very spot where it seemed that we hid. But soon again my mind was upon fun, and a good time, as I then called it. I can well see myself as I look back, rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, loving the world and its vanities, laughing at other people's calamities, until the Lord spoke and said, "*Thus far shalt thou go and no further.*" And truly I was ripe for a fall, for sin was my all. I had now reached the age of fifteen years, and was slender and very tall. I remember well thinking what a man I was becoming, far ahead of my twin brother and others of my age. Now my fall came; trouble knocked at my door and walked in upon me. That summer my father had a large hay crop, and some of it we sold right from the field. One day I drove a load of hay to market, and while I was waiting for my father to come and unload it, there came a very heavy shower, and fearing the hay would

spoil I went at it in great earnest, unloading it alone. That was the last of my work for the summer, I had suffered a strain, and for two long years I was able to do but little work. I now realized that pleasure and health were taken from me, and this worried me greatly, and so at last I thought it would be best for me to starve myself to death. My oldest sister coaxed me hard to eat, but I told her that I would not, for I wished to die, and she left me out of patience. When my mother heard all this she told me that I must not think of such a thing, and that in time I would outgrow this weakness and be all right again. I obeyed my mother, but was discouraged in getting well, as the doctors said it would take a long time. Thinking over my condition, and of what would become of me if I did die, I spent many, many nights crying, desiring no sleep.

At that time I cannot tell just how my past life would come up before me; thoughts like this would come, What an evil, wrong, wicked, sinful, vile life I have led, and soon I would forget my bodily affliction, and began to grieve over my sins, which had now become my chief trouble; I knew not what to do nor where to go; I spent my time in sore distress, crying and weeping week after week, and month after month, until I was compelled to seek the Lord for forgiveness and pardon. My poor heart prayed earnestly and constantly that my sins might be blotted out in his sight, but instead of any relief I grew

worse and worse. While in this miserable state, one day I picked up one of mother's papers, the Signs of the Times, and I became interested in the reading, as it told of things which I had passed through. I was amazed, and did not know how to believe it, for I thought my case was an outside one, and that none could be half so vile as I. From that time until this I have been greatly comforted by the rich things contained in that paper.

About this time sister Lawshe and other Old School Baptists arranged to have meetings at their homes in Trenton, and would send us word, and sometimes mother would ask me to take her, and the preaching did me much good. The Elders spoke of the Lord's people being poor and afflicted, vile and sinful, so that they hated their own nature. This was the very way that I felt, yet I did not want it known by any one. I felt a great desire to know the truth, and resolved to read the Bible, but the more I read, the more it seemed to condemn my wicked ways, and my feelings became such that I can never describe them, for I saw again that I was lost, and that I could not help myself, and what to do I did not know, yet I was begging God for mercy all the time, but as yet no relief came; sorrow, grief and afflictions seemed my only friends, for they were with me day and night. Truly I longed for a ray of light.

One morning while caring for the horses, the words came to my mind clearly and forcibly, "*How firm a*

foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word," and there came a smile on my face, for they seemed to take me in. O, how sweet to my soul these words were; I never can forget them. For days I seemed to live upon their richness. But joy brings sorrow, and sorrow brings joy, and soon I sank more deeply than ever in gloom and distress, and doubted all that I had passed through. About this time we received a card saying that Elder Vail would preach in Trenton, and father, mother and I went. I do not remember the text, but every word went to my heart and condemned my whole life, and my wicked ways. So weeping was all that I could reap from it, and this was what I needed, though then I could not see it so. When we reached our gate on our way home I told my parents that I would open the gate and walk down the lane. As soon as they had passed through I lay down on the ground and cried bitterly, because I felt so badly and so condemned. When I arose my eyes were fixed upon the sky, and it seemed that walking among the stars down towards me I saw the form of a man with large white wings, and in his hand he carried a sword. Speaking to me by my name he said, "*Willie, you are my child,*" and disappeared. It was most wonderful to me, but I said nothing about it.

The friends in Trenton were so kind as to let us know about the appointments there, and we got to

them quite often. My excuse was to take mother. Several times that we went there was no preaching, but this did not discourage either of us. I dearly loved the doctrine which they proclaimed, but thought such mercies could not be for me. These thoughts would bring fresh tears down my cheeks, and then I would seek the Lord in prayer, but while praying such thoughts as this would come into my mind, You know that you do not deserve what you are asking for; be still, and bear what belongs to you; do not place your wrong upon the innocent. This I could not deny, and I would get up and leave the place. O, how I feared the Lord because of my sins. I felt that I was lost, and lost forever, yet I begged the Lord that he would save me from hell and destruction, which path I had all my life been walking in. But the way of God is in himself, and what he does is ever best.

Now the meetings and the Signs had become a great comfort to me, they never failed to bring a sense of peace to my troubled mind when bowed down in distress. As I look back over those then dark, sad days, I now count them the best and happiest days of my life, and can see that they were good for me, turning my thoughts toward Christ Jesus, setting my feet upon the Rock, established my goings, and putting a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. At the age of twenty-one years, and through the kind providence of an allwise God, we moved

to my mother's old home at Ewing. How glad I was that we were nearer Hopewell, yet I thought, What can I do with my sins? For they have grown like mountains before my eyes. I seemed to sink deeper and deeper into the miry clay. Many, many times I wished that I was dead, and several times I dreamed of my own funeral, but would awaken disappointed.

I tried to get relief from my burden and sin, and I went into young company, but soon found it a task to enjoy myself; the things they cared for I did not, and so instead of relief, it but added sorrow to my heart.

One Sunday night Elder Wm. L. Beebe preached at sister Lawshe's, in Trenton. It being a stormy night, I went down alone, and after meeting sister Lawshe spoke to the Elder about me as one interested in the word, and asked him to talk with me about it. He spoke many lovely and comforting words to my mind, but I felt afraid to open my mouth. At last I expressed my feeling as being in the hymn 1022: "I am so vile, so full of sin, I fear that I'm not born again." He took the book and read the hymn, and turning to me said, "If these words express your feeling you should make it known to the church, for in that hymn there is a rich experience of a child of God." This was in the winter of 1895, and this winter had brought more sorrow to my poor soul than any time before. Truly I had come to hate myself,

and felt that I was not fit to sit at the table and eat with the rest of the family. I asked constantly that the Lord would take away my sins, and guide my wayward feet in the paths of righteousness. I do not think that I could get into a much worse hell than my ownself seemed to me to be. I slept but few nights that winter without my pillow being wet with tears. One night I slept but little, and had a wonderful dream, in which I saw the end of time, with the heavens on fire, and above the sky I saw a great white throne made of white marble. It was long and narrow. In the center Jesus stood, and his twelve disciples around him, and at one end was a door, which was also of white marble, and I could plainly see his people going in. I was so happy walking on the clouds in heaven, and I soon came to the door, then the thought came, You are not fit, you are that wicked one. I cannot describe the feeling. I started as it seemed, to everlasting punishment. Going down I seemed to meet my father and mother, and they told me that was the only way to enter in, at the door, and I broke out weeping. At this moment these words were spoken to me in a loud voice, which awoke me from my sleep, *"Thou shalt be made willing in the day of my power."* I wondered and felt to praise God for such a token, for it made me so happy, and relieved my sorrow.

At different times that spring these words out of the Bible, that I

never remembered reading, or of having heard read, would come upon my mind, as though I had known them by heart: *"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."* *"How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"* *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* *"The world by wisdom knows not God."* It was in the school of Christ that I was taught these things. I now began to feel and know that the Lord was shining round about me, and had become merciful to my unrighteousness. O, how happy I felt because of his love. One morning at the table my sister Lizzie about her work was singing a gospel hymn; the words touched my heart, and I left the table crying. My father followed me into the shop and inquired what was the matter. I asked for my mother, and begged him to forgive me all my wrongs. As soon as I could I told my mother all the trouble of heart that had been mine so long. My mother broke down crying with me, but said she was glad the Lord had led me thus, because it was a true Christian experience, as she believed. She said if I felt like telling it to the church, it would be right for me to do so. I felt to ask all the family to forgive me all the wrong that I had ever done them. My love for the people of God grew stronger and stronger, until I asked my parents if they would not ask you down to see me the next time you

came to Hopewell, for as you know they were without a pastor at that time. I thought I would like to talk with you when you came. You spent the night at our home, and quite a number came in, and in a weak way I told them what I have here written. You deemed it a good experience through grace, and that it was not mixed with creature goodness or self-righteousness. Some of the hymns that were sweet to me were sung, and they seemed very sweet that evening. I will mention the numbers of a few in Beebe's collection: 751, 464, 1022, 671, 881. The next morning I took you to the train feeling much better. When I bade you good bye I hoped that I would be able to come to the church before long, and I told you to arrange a time, for I longed to be with them, and the second Saturday in June I came and related what I trusted had been the dealings of God with me, and that I had been made to trust in him alone for salvation, that Jesus was the only way given under heaven and among men, whereby we must be saved. I was received as you know. But while I was so glad to be numbered among them, I do not think that I ever felt so broken up, and unworthy, and out of place, as I did standing there asking favor from so good a people. This Saturday was a clear, beautiful, balmy day in nature, but the next was cold, and it rained in torrents, nevertheless three others as well as myself were baptized. I shall never forget the hymn that was sung before

we went down into the water: 1129, "*Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?*" Also the words that you spoke to me when you gave me the hand of fellowship; they sank deep into my heart. It all seemed too good for me, but I was happy, and I could not help it.

Happiness is like the wind, it comes and goes without our control. Before dawn the next day the devil seemed to take possession of me, and doubts and fears and blind unbelief filled my mind. When I got home it was a very dark, sad night spiritually to me, and I prayed earnestly that I might know if I had done wrong in uniting with the church, for I thought that perhaps I had deceived the people of the true and living God. Some time the next day the Scripture came sweetly to my soul, "*This is the way, walk ye in it.*" Instantly my fear was gone.

Dear brother, I have been trying ever since to walk in the way in a becoming manner, but I am so blind to spiritual things that I go stumbling, falling, fearing, and am so faint and weak that at times I am almost persuaded that I am not a saint at all. Then the word comes as an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast, holding me up to praise his great name, through faith, hope and love, which are the foundation of any experience of grace.

Now in closing, I wish to say that I feel that the dear Lord has been very merciful to me all the days

of my life; I have nothing with which to repay him, but desire to be thankful and submissive to his will. Since I have been in the fold I have seen many brought into the banqueting-house of God, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Two of them are very near to me by natural ties: one my twin brother, and the other the wife of my bosom, for which I feel very thankful indeed.

I give this to your hands imperfect; after reading it and correcting it, if anything is left that you think would comfort one of the dear children of God, you are at liberty to put it in print, not to the honor of my name, but alone to the glory of God.

Wm. T. Yard

STRONG IMPRESSIONS.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother in the Lord: I wish to write an article on dreams, and incidents of my ministerial life, not that I believe that every thing we dream is of the Lord. I know that I have dreamed things that came to pass, and it is such dreams that I wish to write about in this article. Some five or six years ago I was requested to preach at a certain place in Gonzales county, Texas; after preaching there a few times arrangements were made to offer an opportunity for members. On Thursday night two

brethren came to my house to go the next day to the above place of worship. Thursday night I dreamed that myself and others were walking along a road. I thought I found a pile of money in the road, and could see at the same time one Bland dollar after another scattered down the road. I thought I picked up the money that was in the pile, while the crowd that was with me picked up the money that was scattered down the road. When we got our money all picked up I thought some officers came running up and said, "*A bank was robbed last night in town.*" I thought the officers made the parties that run around me give up their money, but said nothing to me. When I awoke the interpretation was plain. The money that I picked up was all in a pile. When we offered an opportunity for members eight joined. There was my pile of money just as it was interpreted in my dream. The money scattered down the road was God's people that the Arminian bank robbers had picked up. A church was soon constituted at the above place and increased to thirty-five or forty members in a short while; nearly all were from the Missionary Baptists and among them one Missionary preacher.

Elder P.M. Lancaster was once on a preaching tour in my section of country and I was with him. One night I dreamed that I was walking along by myself and saw a beautiful bright dollar in the edge of some drift wood. When I awoke the thought oc-

curred to me, that just one would join Ephesus church. When we got there (Ephesus church is where my dream above related was fulfilled) I told Brother Lancaster my dream and the interpretation. We had several churches to pass before reaching Ephesus church. Sister Sallie Lowry joined on Friday night, and was the only one to join during the meeting.

Some time after this the Missionary Baptists sent special word for me to visit one of their churches some twenty miles east of me. I went and preached the best I could for them. By their request I left another appointment. After filling my second appointment I told them on Sunday that I believed they had some of the Lord's people in their Arminian pen, and that I would offer them an opportunity to come out at my next meeting if they had no objections. They said they had none. Before the next meeting I dreamed that I was working with a hoe in a very dirty and filthy looking piece of land, and while working I found two pieces of metal. I picked them up, but did not know what they were, only that they were metal of some kind. I commenced rubbing them and soon found them to be two five dollar gold pieces. I thought I rubbed them until they were perfectly bright. The interpretation thereof was plain; four or five are going to join at your next meeting at South Union at the Missionary church mentioned above. They were covered in Arminianism, but you have it all rubbed off. Arminianism is

similar to the kid skin on Jacob's neck and hands, all on the outside. So I told the dream to a brother while we were going over to my next appointment. After preaching on Saturday, the wife of one of the deacons joined the church. After she told her experience and was received, I asked her when she wanted to be baptized. She said, "*I believe there are others that want to join the church.*" I told the audience we would come to definite conclusions relative to baptism before the meeting was over. We met at the church that night and three more joined, all from that church. So I found my pure gold. The Missionaries soon put a stop to me preaching in their house. One of their preachers not long since told me that I had about all the good material there was in their church at that place. I told him that we had about all we wanted.

After this I dreamed that I was fishing and that I caught two fish, one was easily gotten out of the water, while the other was a flying fish. The dream was interpreted to mean, that two are going to join the church; one is coming up quietly and the other is coming shouting. So at my home church shortly after, at our regular meeting, and opportunity was offered for members, an aged sister got up and quietly gave me her hand. Presently a young sister arose in the rear end of the house and came shouting down the aisle where I was. I said to myself, There is my flying fish. One more and I will close

on the subject of dreams. About two years ago I was from home on a preaching tour and I dreamed one night that a telegraph operator brought me a telegram. I thought its contents were in parallel columns, and that one column was black and the other was bright. I thought the operator read the message to me from the dark column. I thought that all I could get out of it was for me to come home. After the operator was gone I thought I would try to read the telegram, but could make nothing out of it. When I woke up I felt sure that I would be telegraphed home, but I went on to my next appointment which was at Killeen in Bell county, Texas. I told no one about my dream. The church was near the telegraph office, and when I say that I but faintly express my feelings. On Sunday night we had service at a private house in town, and by request I went forward, and when we went to prayer I noticed from some cause that I had singled out my oldest son, and was praying for him, something I had never done before. Little did I know that my son at that very time, who was over two hundred miles from me, was suffering in the very throes of death. Next morning I went to a store to have some money changed and the telegraph operator, who was a stranger to me, came in the store and said to the merchant, "*Where is Mr. Newman or Mr. Downing.*" The merchant said, pointing to me, "*That's Mr. Newman.*" The operator turned and

read the message to me just as the man did in my dream. When he read it he gave it to me and I said, "*My dream has come to pass,*" and a brother preacher that was standing near wanted to know about my dream. I told it to the crowd that had gathered around me, and Brother Baker said, "*your son will be all right when you get home.*" The telegram read, "*Come home at once. Walter is seriously hurt.*" My son did not drink, go to dances, or keep bad company, and did not have an enemy any where that I knew of. While I was going home I would read the telegram, but the very thing I wanted to know was dark to me, hence the dark column. When I got home my wife met me at the yard gate and said to me, "*Joe, we should be the most thankful people on earth.*" When I got so I could speak I said, "*What is the matter with Walter?*" She said, "*A wild bull gored him Sunday evening. Sunday evening while he was agonizing apparently in the throes of death, and the family around him broken hearted, thinking he would be dead before I could get home, I was on my knees praying for him. He soon got well.*"

I will now make mention of a few incidents connected with my ministerial life. Soon after I commenced preaching Brother B. Greenwood of N.C., was in Texas on a preaching tour, and had an appointment at my home church. While I was anxious for him to come, still I did not have a

cent of money to give him. The time came for me to meet him at the depot. I went feeling very sad because I had nothing to give him. When I got to Cuero I hitched my team, and started down the street, and as I was walking along feeling sadly, I passed a store a few steps, and some one in the store said, "*Stop Mr. Newman.*" I did so and to my surprise the man said, "*I have been wanting to make you a present for some time and now is as good a time as I will ever have,*" and he handed me a five dollar gold piece. I said to myself, "*Thank the Lord, come on, Brother Greenwood.*"

Again I was in the same town and had some appointments, and had not money to pay my fare to them, and did not know what to do. I walked by a saddle shop and one of my former associates, a cowboy, stopped me and gave me a ten dollar bill. After this I was from home filling appointments, and had filled the last one, and had failed to get enough money to get back home, and pay back what I had borrowed to start on. I went home with a cowboy friend for dinner, as he had agreed to take me to the depot that evening. Just as we were fixing to start he handed me a ten dollar gold piece and when we got to the depot a brother had bought me a ticket home. Only a short time ago I made some appointments and had to borrow money to get to them. I filled

them and got enough money to get back home, but not enough to pay what I had borrowed. I started to the depot and called at a barber shop. The barber asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to the depot to go home. He said, "*I will go down to the depot with you.*" The barber said to the ticket agent, "*Give me a ticket to Cuero.*" He turned to me and said, "this is yours." When the train stopped at the next station I saw a brother and sister drive up. I got out and spoke to them, and when I told them good-by, the brother gave me five dollars. A few year ago I was from home on a preaching tour. Elder J.B. Downing and myself were crossing a river, and while our team was drinking I saw quite a crowd of people about two hundred yards below me on the bank of the river. The thought occurred to me that I would baptize some one there in the morning. I said to Brother Downing, "*I will baptize some one down yonder in the morning.*" He said, "*I hope so; that's where they baptize.*" A young sister joined that night and said she wanted me to baptize her in the morning. So we met there and I baptized her. This is the first I have ever written on this subject.

Pray for me,
J.S. Newman
Cuero, Tex.

(Sent in by Keith Hiatt)

"In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."- Ephesians i, 13, 14.

HEAVEN is a prepared place for a prepared people. Holy are its inhabitants, holy its employments, holy its enjoyments. Therefore unless we know something of the teaching, the work, and witness of the Holy Spirit here, and are made partakers of a new, holy, spiritual, and heavenly nature we have no pledge or earnest of our interest in the inheritance of the saints in bliss. A carnal, unsanctified, unholy, unrenewed heart is utterly incapable of understanding, entering into, longing after, and loving an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But every holy desire, heavenly affection, gracious longing, spiritual enjoyment, and believing, hoping, loving, looking unto and cleaving to the Lord of life and glory by the power of the Holy Spirit, are all so many pledges and earnest of an interest in the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. The love, the joy, the peace, the calm tranquillity, and holy acquiescence in the will of God; the ravishing views of the glory of Christ which change the soul into the same image, from glory to glory; the delight felt in him, and the whole surrender of the heart and affections to the blessed Lord as the chiefest of ten thousand and the altogether lovely, are all so many earnest of the inheritance above, as being heaven begun below.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

NEW DAN RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia, purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on April 28, 2007. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30 am and preaching at 10:00 am. The church is located on State Road 636 (State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

SPECIAL MEETING

Lord willing there will be a special meeting held at Republican Primitive Baptist Church on March 17 , 2007, singing to start at 10:00 AM.

There are three churches in and around Asheboro, North Carolina that are standing as independent churches. These churches are Gaines Grove, Rock Hill and Toms Creek. Their pastors, Elder Ralph

Gaines and Elder James Moody along with the members have humbly made their desire known to be affiliated with our association churches and those of our affiliation. They have been invited to come and hold a meeting at said time and place.

We plan to bring out lunch and after lunch have our regular Republican Church meeting. We urge our associated and affiliated churches and invite all believers in Christ to come and meet with us.

Directions: Those traveling 220 north come past Martinsville several miles until you come to a flashing caution light at a big curve, turn left onto Route 605 go approximately seven or eight miles, at the bottom of a hill, turn right at Republican Church Road, church approximately three miles on the right.

Those traveling 220 south take 40 west at Rocky Mount, go to Ferrum, turn left on Fieldcrest Road just before passing the Minute Market, bear left at railroad crossing, then take Ingramville Road approximately three miles, turn left on Republican Church Road, church one mile on the left.

Isaiah 4:2.

In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2007

Mary Hawkins, NC	5.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	10.00
Eld. Richard Campbell, TN ..	100.00
Dora Vick, NC	5.00
George Hyslip, TN	15.00
L. C. Hornsby, GA	5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA	5.00
Francis Knight, VA.....	5.00
Ruth Surratt, NC	5.00

OBITUARIES

**BROTHER FLOYD
THOMAS OAKLEY**

Brother Oakley was born Nov. 20, 1903 and departed this life on Dec. 26, 2006 at the age of 103 years. He was a member of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church at Fordyce, Ark.

He is survived by a son Rayburn Oakley Fordyce, Ar; two daughters Sarah Stankevitz, Little Rock, Ar. And Reba Jones, Soughhaven, Ms.; brother Dillard Oakley, Pine Bluff, Ar., and brother Clyde Oakley, Little Rock, Ar., four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, one step-great-grandchild.

Preceded in death by his wife Thelma Clay Scoggins Oakley, father, Thomas Ruffin Oakley and mother Harriett Leona Bryant Oakley.

Brother Oakley was laid to rest at McDonald Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection. The funeral services were conducted by the writer.

*"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."
(Psalms 116:15)*

Brother Oakley's favorite song was no. 16 in the Lloyd's hymn book. The theme of this song is No matter how many trials and tribulations you are faced with in this life, the grace of God will bring you through all of them. This song is often sung in his memory by the brethren of Pilgrim Rest Church.

Elder Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

BESSIE RILEY

Sister Bessie Riley, age 90, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 28, 2006. She was a retired employee of Burlington Industries.

On May 19, 1946, she was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. She loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, election and predestination and attended her meetings as long as she was able to drive. She was blessed with a humble and generous spirit and was faithful to help with needed maintenance expenses for our building.

Sister Riley and her husband, Olivus Riley, lovingly reared a large family. At her funeral some of her neighbors told of her kindness to them when they needed a friend.

Surviving her are: twin sister Essie W. Pendergraft; daughter Judith R. Fisher; four sons, Harold P. Riley, James T. Riley, Charles R. Riley and Kenneth S. Riley; 23 grandchildren and 40 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Olivus Riley; her mother, Sister Roxie Stone, who was also a member of the Durham Primitive Baptist Church; two sons, Bernice Daniel Riley and Olivus Bobby Riley.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 1, 2006, in the Clements Funeral Chapel in Durham, NC, followed by interment in Maplewood Cemetery when I think of Sister Bessie, I am reminded of the scripture in Malachi 3: 16- 17, *"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name."* And they shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. " We truly feel that Sister Riley was-and is-one of these jewels.

Durham Primitive Baptist Church,
Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

*Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.*

*Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.*

*Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without fears within,
I come to thee for rest.*

*Be thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.*

*O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.*

*"Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.*

Newton.

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EDITORIAL

“A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN PICTURES OF SILVER.”

Proverbs 25:11



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

O how beautiful a picture we see when a minister is blessed to preach the gospel and it so wonderfully fits our experience and our feelings at that time. It is a word fitly spoken. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. We see the fruit of the Spirit manifested in the person that stands be-

fore us. We don't see the frailties and faults of the earthly man; but, rather we see the beauty of the Lord as it shines forth in the word fitly spoken. Proverbs 12:25 reads, *“Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it to stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.”* Proverbs 14:23 continues, *“A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!”* Only the Lord could present such a beautiful picture of His love, mercy and grace and bless us to behold it. May His name be praised above every name.

Whenever one is blessed to set forth Christ, it is a word fitly spoken to someone. For that heavenly manna is never wasted and is never sent in vain. Isaiah 55:11 reads: *“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.”* It is food for someone's hungry soul. A word fitly spoken is both comforting and edifying to the one that the Lord has brought hungering and thirsting after His righteousness. To hear one tell of the suffering, the humiliation, the shame, the death, the burial and the resurrection of Christ touches our heart and brings tears to our eyes. For we *“look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set*

down at the right hand of the throne of God." He was *"despised and rejected of men"* and was *"a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."* O, *our sufferings and sorrows are nothing compared to His. But, He has promised His little ones tribulations as well as His peace; for in John 16:33, He said "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."* A word fitly spoken. In our cast-down condition and feeling so alone and forsaken, we hear of the love, mercy, and grace of our heavenly friend and feel the warmth of the word in our heart. A word fitly spoken. The comforting and edifying word may be from a gospel sermon or from one of our precious brethren.

As the Lord told Moses when He sent him to the children of Israel when they were in Egypt after the death of Joseph, *"I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows."* The Lord knows your condition; He has heard your cry; He knows where you are; He knows just what you need; and He shall supply all your need. For the Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:19, *"But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."*

All your need is Christ. A word fitly spoken.

A word fitly spoken sets forth that salvation is by grace and not of works lest any man should boast. This is the pure word of God that fits your experience and understanding. A word fitly spoken is the truth as it is in Christ; for Christ said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life."* A word fitly spoken is praise unto God, the giver of every good and every perfect gift.

By a word fitly spoken, we know that one has been sent by God because we behold the apples of gold. Christ said in Matthew 7:17-20: *"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."* Apples are plural, but it is one particular fruit. It sets forth the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 reads, *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."* *"The fruit of the Spirit"* is in the singular, meaning that there is only one fruit, but several manifestations. Gold sets forth that the fruit is righteous, holy and very precious. It is of the Spirit which is

Christ in you, the Hope of glory. The Spirit of God produces the fruit in all its manifestations. Gold is always tried by fire; so, with the fruit of the Spirit comes tribulations, and the apples of gold shine forth ever brighter. The more gold is tried, the brighter it shines. Recorded in Zechariah 13:9 are the words, *"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."* I Peter 4:12-13 reads: *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."* When one is blessed with a word fitly spoken, we behold the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance manifested. We see the beauty of holiness shine forth and the image of Christ presented to our view.

These apples of gold are in pictures of silver. The pictures of silver are these earthen vessels from which the apples are manifested and framed. The spiritual man dwells within this body of flesh as the kingdom of God is within you where

Christ reigns as King of kings. Silver is refined in the fining pot to strip the dross away, but gold is tried in the fiery furnace of affliction. Proverbs 17:3 reads: *"The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord tried the hearts."* Proverbs 25:4 says: *"Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer."* The fleshly or natural man is beset with the dross of this world: the lust of the flesh, the following after the vain and perishable things of the world, the love of the things of the world that satisfies the flesh. The fleshly man is weak; and unless kept by the power of God in His love and mercy, will do anything that those of the world will do. But, thanks be unto our heavenly Father who quickened you and made you alive in Christ who is your life. As the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 2:1-3: *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*

Also, when Christ speaks directly to your heart a word of comfort and peace, it is a word fitly spo-

ken and the apples of gold (fruit of the Spirit) are produced. You feel such love for Him and His people, you are given faith to believe in Him, feel such joy and peace unspeakable, and brought down in humbleness. You cannot see the beauty of the apples of gold in pictures of silver in yourself, but others can. As the beautiful bloom of the lily, your head is bowed toward the blackness of the earth from which your flesh came. You don't feel worthy to even lift up your eyes unto heaven. But, praise to God from whom all blessings flow seems to fill all of your being.

May the love of God that is shed abroad in the hearts of His people continue to bind us together as one in Christ is my prayer.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

ROMANS CH. 8:1-3.

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.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

CORRESPONDENCE

Feb. 10. 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

How wonderful it is to be writing to you today. Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies. And at the same time very strange, as I had not signed up for the "Times" myself, but received it as a gift subscription from someone whom I don't know.

As no one has stepped forward after asking several members, I would love to thank my benefactor for they have given me many hours of comfort, sometimes in my hour of need.

May the Lord continue to bless you and the other writers and contributors to the "Signs" and may it continue to give comfort to "His little ones" is my prayer.

Humbly submitted.
Kathy Lewis,
Grayson, Ky.

1 JOHN CH. 5:1

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

ARTICLES

JONAH'S GOOD INTENTIONS

Some time ago, it came on my mind to explore the travels of Jonah, and his natural born good intentions. These thoughts reflect my look at Jonah, and his encounter with God's infallible will.

We find here that the power of the flesh versus the power of this most sovereign God, that God is steady and does not falter, regardless of our willfulness. While it feels that Jonah was very sincere in his fleshly thinking, the end result shows that God not only was really directing Jonah's journey, but seeing this journey through to the destination.

Jonah would have very much liked to have succeeded in going to Jopa and purchasing a ticket to Tarsus, fleeing from the presence of the Lord. Jonah seemed to show nothing but single minded intentions as he boarded the ship for his chosen destination.

The beautifully mysterious change of transportation that Jonah was to encounter, was shared in a matter of fact way, even in the equally dramatic storm upon the sea that was to sink the ship he was using to flee God. The irony of images, that he should be sleeping deeply in the belly of the ship escapes us somewhat as well. The story continues though.

When the ship's master awakened Jonah and asked him, "*what meanest though oh sleeper. Arise, and call upon thy God*", the ship's crew and mariners were already terribly afraid the ship would sink, drowning them all. This fear brought Jonah to think more deeply about why the storm had overtaken the ship.

After casting lots, and the lot falling upon Jonah, he was pressed as to what caused this evil to come upon them, and what was his occupation, and where he came from and finally who his people were.

Jonah answered by telling them he was a Hebrew, and feared the Lord God of heaven, he who made the Heaven and Sea. This magnified the fear among the others on the ship greatly. They then asked why he had done this.

Jonah shared his mission, and told them to take him topside and cast him overboard, and the sea would become calm. It seems Jonah was in so much misery, that he welcomed death at this point, thinking that being cast overboard would further this reprieve quickly.

Jonah even at this point was very much using his willfulness, soon to be cast into one of the great mysteries of Christian faith. That a whale would swallow Jonah and carry him towards God's *intended* destination holds so many meanings.

Jonah was destined to create the symbol of Grace for all Christian-

ity, using the belly of the whale as an image. Eventually through Jonah's experiences he would be hinting the mysteries of the free pardon of sin, and the great salvation which is the deliverance of God's goodness in the hearts of the believing family at God's discretion according to His precious will.

The understanding that came to his mind concerning the imperfections of the flesh were telling: *"By reasons of my afflictions, I say that I vow that salvation is of the Lord"*. After three days and nights in the belly of the whale, Jonah was cast upon dry land to fulfill the will of the Lord, a journey which the Lord had prepared for him.

"Now the Lord told Jonah to go to that great city of Nineveh and preach what I bode thee to preach". The Lord wasn't finished with Jonah.

Jonah was learning fully, lessons of God's great sovereignty, and another lesson was unfolded. Jonah expected great things to happen in Nineveh after such a dramatic lesson. These things did not occur and Jonah's suffering increased even more. Jonah welcomed death. Even still, the Lord was not finished with Jonah. Eventually Jonah would come to realize fully, the weakness of our flesh.

More importantly, Jonah would come to understand God's sovereignty is complete, and that our flesh is helpless to be a partaker in

these heavenly events. The nature of Grace was being expressed through Jonah.

At God's appointed time, and not before, we find that now the population of Nineveh had repented of their sins through the channels of God's Grace. This was beyond Jonah's understanding in his fleshly mind. This was true in Jonah's time and example, as it is today.

Those called to preach today are called by the same God that directed Jonah's journey. He is the same God, a God that changes not. Those who have been called from the darkness of nature and qualified through the channels of God's Grace to preach the incredible riches of the Kingdom, would have a great love for Jonah it would seem.

They who have labored in the Gospel field through God's calling, many times have found themselves in the wildness of confusion when preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. Paul clarified this experience: *"Not I but sin that dwells in the flesh"* Paul too, would take Jonah's journey.

Paul could not make the above statement before he saw that great light that shines in the darkness and the darkness comprehends it not. Paul's Jonah-like journey to Damascus, gave the moment when he was brought from the darkness of nature, through the channels of God's amazing Grace.

Brought from the pits of darkness and made to see through an

eye of faith forever more walking in that heavenly light, Paul was made a vessel of God's mercy on his journey. Previously Paul was completely dead to the knowledge of the great love which is hidden in Christ. A love revealed to Christ's servants at His appointed time, was made more pertinent in Paul's experience it seems, as would be expressed in the volumes of travels and letters that followed.

It seems all preachers find themselves helpless fleshly when it comes to preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. Again as Paul would say: I never learned of man or taught of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is as true for the preaching brethren today as it was then I think. Those imprisoned of God's calling to preach the Gospel, relive first Jonah's then Paul's journeys.

Primitive Baptists are among the few who advocate a truly sovereign God and predestination of all things pertaining to the great salvation that is meted out through God's sovereign grace at His appointed time. God's intercession in Jonah's then Paul's journeys are not words, or ideas, but the testimony of God's infallible will, and the foundation for our faithful existence.

This reliance on God's grace rather than the flesh to give this great salvation we know comes through the goodness of the Lord by his sovereign Grace, and nothing more. While our fleshly journeys are

often convoluted and confused, this understanding of God's grace and intercession on our behalf is indeed the hope of those quiet moments we are led to assemble in God's house of faith. For those led to believe, indeed it feels as if we begin with Jonah, and continue with Paul as we gather to feast in the bond of God's great love and made to nourish ourselves on rations from the Master's table. The beautiful irony that God leads us to feast, is the blessed journey of Jonah, Paul, our brethren, and we the believers ourselves. If not deceived, in the bonds of His precious Love.

Riley Justice
POB 272
War, WV
304-875-2960

When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked and sinned against the Lord. *"We have all sinned and come short of the glory of the Lord."*

When they sewed fig leaves together this is a type of the righteousness of man. *"Our righteousness are as filthy rags in the sight of the Lord."*

"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."(Gen. 3:21) As we think of the coats of skins, we think of the sacrifice of

Christ. *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world (all the Children of God) unto himself."* (2 Cor. 5:19)

"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decked himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorned herself with jewels." (Isaiah 61:10) God clothed His people.

The commentary in my Bible says: *"The word Skins presupposes the death of an animal and therefore the idea of blood sacrifice is clearly implied."* *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* (Heb. 9:12)

All the sacrifices mentions in the old testament are a type of Jesus Christ who satisfied Divine Justice.

W.W. Hudson, Jr.

Colossians Ch. 1 V.16

For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Lord, my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, for his loving-kindness endureth forever. O, what a fountain of joy and bliss for the poor in spirit! Here they may feast upon the rich bounties of his unwasting fulness, and drink of the streams that make glad the city of our God. It matters not how unworthy we feel to be, how dejected and deserted, how intolerable our anguish of soul, the love of God spread abroad in the heart is a solace for every fear, a balm for every wound, completely alleviating all doubts and fears, and we are made to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; and, if necessary, to also glory in tribulation. We should also remember that this love, like its author, never changes, but is ever the same through all the perplexing difficulties of this tempestuous life. When we can feel its genial rays, beaming forth in all the warmth of God's love to poor, erring and sinful mortals, it thrills our bosoms with emotions of praise, and with wondrous admiration we exclaim, *"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"* Having received of his divine fulness, the notes of solemn praise are sounded forth with deep emotions of gratitude from a heart filled with the love of God. It was from his undiminished fulness that the

Apostle Paul was enabled to say, *"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace, which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."*

The child of God feels the great need of his glorious presence to support and sustain him, amid foes and fears, trials and disappointments, anguish of soul and distress of mind. It is he, and he only, that conducts us safely through the otherwise insurmountable difficulties that obstruct the uneven journey of our pilgrimage state, turning darkness into day, making the rough places smooth by extending peace to us like a river, and thereby causing the well-springs of gladness to break forth from our inmost soul. From this glorious fountain all our needs are supplied, for it is of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace. And O, with what anxiety the poor, thirsty, fainting pilgrim looks to him, from whom proceeds all blessings, for every good and perfect gift, trusting in him that he will lead him forth by the right way, to a city of habitation. Shall we not then sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare his works with rejoicing, for he turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs, and there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that he may bring them out of all their troubles. He is a present help in time of tribulation, succoring them that are tempted, upholding the weak and encouraging the doubting.

"How binding the obligation that calls forth the deepest emotions of thanksgiving to God from those who have been blessed with the privilege of beholding untold joys from his presence. Often the child of God inquires with deep solicitude, Do I feel thankful to him for his blessings so freely bestowed upon me? Do I render unto him, in return for his mercies, that praise and adoration that I should?" It is the love of God that leads us in obedience to him, and his ways are ways of pleasantness and all his paths are peace, and a halo of light from his blessed presence attends the discharge of every duty, there by making his yoke easy and his burden light. It is in the mighty power of God that we desire to put our trust, feeling confident that he will hold only that which shall redound to his honor and glory.

"With the ability that the Lord is pleased to bestow, on us, we hope to be able to make the Monitor a welcome visitor to the household of faith, as it goes forth laden with the rich fruits of gospel truth from the many able contributors to its columns. We only ask that it be received so far as it is sustained by the Scriptures of divine truth. It is our desire that all who feel interested in the success of the MONITOR, will send in their contributions for its columns, and otherwise assist in making it a

success; and may the Lord bless it to the good of his people, according to his will."

E. J. Harris

Article from Primitive Monitor

By E. J. Harris

GUTHRIE, OKLA. Ter., May 18, 1903.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON: — I send you the experience of brother W. S. Speer, written at my request. I would be pleased to see it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES if it meets with your approbation. I love to read of the Lord's dealings with his people. It was said to one of old, Go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
ELIZABETH HUTCHISON.

THE EXPERIENCE.

SISTER:-Your request reading: "*I desire your experience, written for publication in the SIGNS,*" is an incentive to "*Great searchings of heart,*". *Judges v. 16*, and I try to comply, with mixed emotions of gladness, fear and trembling, and awful reverence for God, whose I am, and who put into the heart of one of his children the desire to know something of his dealings with me. I use these words, for it has been given me at

times to view my history in that light not at all times, for clouds of sin and "*conscience of guilt*" have often darkened the heavenly vision, and made me to wonder could the divine mercy reach my case. Then unspeakable agony would grievously torment my soul. I have always thought that the hardest thing in Scripture to believe is that God sent his Son down from heaven to save sinners; to fetch home again his banished; that his banished be not expelled from him, (2 Sam. xiv. 13, 14.; Gen. iii. 23, 24,) the more especially if they are or were as great sinners as the record in my conscience reports of me. The Bible is and always has been easy of belief with me, the story of creation, of the flood, of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Exodus, the Jews and the history of Jesus our Lord, all is easy reading until I come to his laying down his life and taking it again to save ungodly sinners, unspeakably vile as I know mankind to be. Well, yes, it may be so, I assent, the Scripture says *it is* that way; perhaps he wanted to save people not for what they are as worth saving, but for the educational possibilities in them as vessels of mercy. Yes, I could follow that far, but there came a time when discussions of the extent of the atonement, and of the mercy of God, ceased to charm me in sermon, book or sweet conversation, and a new question startled me, Was I embraced in the plan of salvation? Did Christ love me and give himself for me? That was

Paul's limitation of the atonement. The audacity of the man's faith, as I thought of it, and spoke of it. There was another me that I was carrying about with me. This me, to me the most important me in all the world and the most hateful, for in me there was no good thing, not one, only sin. I saw no door of hope, no way of escape for this me, nor from this me. It would exhaust the plan of salvation to save me. Anybody else might in mercy be reached, but mine was an outside case. But this train of reflection was not so appalling when I was young, a lad, a youth, for in those bright, halcyon days I was taught and believed unquestioningly that sincere people could join the church by complying with certain conditions that entitled them to claim the promise. "*Do your part and God will do his,*" was the formula. I accepted the contract when I was nearly seventeen years old, and tried to believe I had the remission of my past sins. There was something akin to comfort in that frame of mind, but what the readers of this experience understand by "the joy of salvation," "*joy unspeakable and full of glory,*" I had no conception until forty-seven years later, when it pleased God to show me his salvation, (there is but one,) and call me by his grace out of marvelous darkness into his marvelous light. For which I hope to thank and praise him ten thousand years from now.

As I was saying, the time came after forty years wandering in the

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

I do not know what you will think of me sister, there comes times when that same prayer wells up in my heart, bubbles from my lips and

streams from my eyes. Yet tears of contrition, but not of despair, fill my eyes as I write.

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

no safety there for me, this me, the only me, of all the me's in the world, that I was especially concerned for, what is to become of me?

You asked for my experience, sister. I am not writing another's. My concern about myself came of certain events prearranged in the providence, and as I now have the happiness to think of them as the predestination of God, who works all things together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose in Christ Jesus, before the sun begin to shine, or ever the world was. In those dateless depths there was a book written containing the names of the future citizens of Messiah's kingdom and given to him and called most significantly *“the Lamb's book of life,”* because he, as a condition of his inheriting the headship over them, collectively called *“the city of God,”* must wash them from their sins in his own blood and purify them for himself a peculiar people, the word *“peculiar”* meaning a purchased possession. Happy are they whose names were, written in that book. Whatever may betide them in *“this time world,”* as brethren speak, they shall never perish. Alleluia and Amen, world without end, they shall never perish! O, in those dark days of my trouble of which I have told you, my dread and fear and horror was that I should, without doubt perish forever.

My father and mother of God's own choosing, joined the Old Bap-

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

One morning when I was about ten years old I stood before my mother; she was sitting on the lower step of the stairway, and I told her that last night I dreamed of seeing the Savior. I had jumped off the hill back of our house and lit in an open

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

"Now, Sheppard, be a better boy." That was my authoritative conviction of sin, to be followed by conviction of righteousness, and then of judgment. But I did not become a better boy. I was a bad boy; conscience smote me day and night. *"Conscience of sin"* followed Sheppard, always at his heels, giving him no rest except such as Arminian opiates afford, and they, you know, only make the case worse, as our Savior pointed out in the case

of a certain woman who spent her all paying physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. There is only one physician for a sin-sick soul, and by his knowledge he justifies and cures, "for he bears their iniquities."

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

The next time I saw him, the same Jesus, was in vision 9 o'clock Tuesday morning, Sept. 28th, 1886, in an upper room in a young banker's house, Fort Valley, Ga. There deploring my woeful condition, reading Romans six, a chapter or two in Galatians and Philippians, all of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, from feeling that I was the greatest sinner in the world, I was made to feel that I was no sinner at all. Christ whom I saw in the vision, the scene was as plain as was the original reality. He was there dead on his cross, having borne all my sins away 1789 years before I was born. From being the most miserable of all born of woman, I was given to feel the happiest man that ever lived. That very hour, as many a time since, I called on the angels to help me praise God for sending his Son to save sinners. I wanted to fill the vaulted dome of the eternal mansions with hallelujahs. At last my burden was gone,

and conscience was free from guilt. Christ had died for me, I saw him there that hour seeming to hold himself on the cross. You know he had to lay down his life. "*No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself.*" All that scene is as plain to me now as it was that Tuesday, 28th of September, 1886, seventeen years ago. But it was with me as in the call of the chief of sinners on his way to Damascus; there was a light above the brightness of the sun laid down upon the bright light of that morning, and it was all over the face of the world eight hours, whichever way I looked. Whether that light was in the body or out of the body, I have never felt to inquire; one thing I do know, that light was there, a soft, benevolent, heavenly, restful light, and it was spread over a vast plane. On that plane there was nothing to break the level seemingly ninety miles in its sweep, saving the projection of a large rock, mostly buried in the ground, like the church I was destined to join, most of its members in the dust of the earth, waiting for the "*better resurrection.*" Only a small portion of this church visible now. And I was to live alone on his wide plane. So it has so far turned out, only now and then finding rest in "*the shadow of the great Rock in a weary land.*" I have not known how otherwise to interpret this part of the vision. O, I was so glad that day, so happy, so full of joy, words fail me to describe it to you.

Next thing in order I knew I must be baptized by somebody that knew how it was done, and what for. I had, as I thought, been baptized already not once nor twice before. There must be no mistake about the matter this time. The oldest church without a historical founder was the Old Baptist; they were the humblest of religious folk; they were sweet-hearted, no big I's nor little u's among them. I was on all sides descended of Old Baptist stock. I always venerated the Old Baptist church and people. The next spring after the marvelous light into which I was delivered, out of the marvelous darkness, at Fort Valley, as above narrated, I went before the tribunal of God at Butler, Ga., was received and baptized by order of the church, by Elder John Rowe, lately deceased, and I was again as happy as a soul overwhelmed with the love of God could be. O, I was so happy. Soon after this I had to endure the trial of permitting a brother to wash my feet in church: I submitted with what grace I could, but when I got down on my knees to wash his feet, I was in heavenly places in Christ then; I felt like a big lump of nothing. When you want to get close to God, sister, you must descend the depths of humility, as indeed you had to go when you joined the Old Baptist church. Whatever you may think of them, there is no people like them on the face of the earth. They are the only people I know of that believe their own religion. They worship in spirit, and live

by the faith of the Son of God, who loves them now, and loved them before all time, and to the ages of the ages. The Spirit of God in their hearts enables them low at his feet to lay hold of the robe of the eternal Majesty, look up into his face, and with the feeling of little children cry, "*Abba, Father,*" confident that he knows what they want. Their only fear is that they do not behave themselves as prettily as his children ought. What a joy it is to me to be one in the unity of the Spirit with them; to be recognized by even one of them.

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

to the charge of God's elect. See Romans viii. 32-39. O, let me rejoice in hope of the grace to be brought to his people at the coming of the Lord in that day.

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

I feel thankful to our heavenly Father that I am enabled to give, to one of his daughters this account of his mercies to me. If you find it in your heart to recognize me in fellowship, after what you have seen of my awkwardness in church and in this letter, I shall feel strengthened and more joyful in this pilgrimage.

Yours in hope of a better life,
WM. S. SPEER.
BENTON, Ark., June 8, 1903.

1 PETER V. 7.

"CASTING all your care upon him, for he careth for you."

(The children of God often find themselves utterly at a loss to understand or comprehend the ways of divine providence and grace, and can only say as one of old, His ways are past finding out. It is he himself that teaches that he ruleth 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? They confess this, and at times are thankful it is so, for is there not comfort and security in such a doctrine. In it we see that not a dog can move his tongue, or a devil either, unless it be subject to the will and purpose of him that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Men are also subject to him, even the rulers of this world, for when Pilate said to Jesus, "*Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.*" He is before all things and by him all things consist. An understanding of such a doctrine, imparted to us by God himself, is of great comfort to the soul, but few are able to travel long in the path of life, reconciled, with a calm and thankful heart, from every murmur free. God has or-

dained a furnace of affliction, and if he gives faith that believes that he who has promised is able to perform, he will try that faith; and just so, when we, as we hope, by his Spirit, have been taught to trust in his name and to rejoice in the truth that not a single shaft can hit, until he, the God of love, sees fit, we find the question asked, Do you believe God had anything to do with the sinking of that vessel, or the burning of that family and home? How has God anything, to do with the sickness of this man, or with the death of his wife at such time as this, when he needed her so much Thus we ask ourselves many questions, and are asked many such questions by others, and often such questions, when asked in the face of terrible trials, and what men call accidents, are almost staggering, especially if we are ourselves affected by the trial. If a terrible bereavement comes upon us we find it not so easy to live the doctrine, yet Job, sorely afflicted, did, when he said, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."*- Job xiii. 15. He has said, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. ***Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."* Again, he saith, *"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of*

these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith!" It is the trial of faith that will show to us how little faith we have, and how little we truly believe the doctrine to which we have subscribed. There is not one of us but has his, or her, trials; some hard to be borne, and we do well to consider that *"Whatever cross lies at thy door, It cometh from the Lord."*

It is a crook of the Lord's making, and so long as he sees fit for it to be, none can straighten it. It may be to bring down our pride, to hide pride from man, or to show us wherein our strength lies, or to make us of comfort to the Saints, or to prove to men and devils, as in the case of Job, that our religion is not a fair weather religion, but that it can stand fire and flood; and in all these trials, and many others too numerous to mention, the presence of Christ is seen, as he was in the furnace of old, thereby proving that he careth for us. In all the ages the Lord has proven his care for his people in the furnace of affliction; such a way is needful or it would not be. He riled up a wicked Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, and he set over Israel taskmasters, to afflict Israel with burdens, but the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew. The Egyptians made their lives bitter with hard bondage, yet the Lord

still cared for them. Moses was born, and was hidden three months by his mother, who feared not the wrath of the king, and when she could no longer hide him she took for him an ark of bulrushes and laid it in the flags by the river's brink, the very river where the wicked Pharaoh had commanded them to drown their sons, yet God cared for him there. He was taken by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother in the house of Pharaoh, the very man who wished to destroy all the male children of Hebrew origin. From this we can take this lesson: that the church of God nurses her children in the furnace of affliction. They are strengthened in the doctrine; the more they are afflicted the more they are trained up in the nurture and admonitions of the Lord. In the word of God there are many instances that seem just happen so, mere chance, yet when we trace the chain of circumstances connected with the particular case we find a wonder-working Providence governing all things: as, for instance, the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid. Who can describe the terror and abject loneliness of that little maid? Think of the parents, her mother, if mother she had, wringing her hands, sighing and pining for her little daughter. Many would there be in Israel then who would say, Tell us, did the Lord have anything to do with that. Thank God there were some then, and dou-

bly thankful we ought to be, there are some now, who unhesitatingly would declare, It is the Lord. Some who by faith could see the companies of Syria going, just so far and doing just whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. The child must leave the arms of the parents, must go into a strange and foreign land, and must go into Naaman's house. God cared for that little captive maid; he had a purpose. In Naaman's house she witnesses to the truth, and her testimony was for one whom God cared for, though in God's purpose he was held by a more relentless foe than even the captive maid. He was none other than Naaman, the captain of the host, but he was a leper. Yes, he cared for Naaman. He cared for Saul of Tarsus, even while he went about breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. Saul did not understand, he had no eye to see, the Lord using his persecution for the furtherance of the gospel. It is written, "*As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women, committed them to prison.*" The following verse declares the result in the purpose of God. It says, "*Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word.*" Thus a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, in the purpose of God, did more then, than all the missionary boards can do today, although they claim to be on the Lord's side, for

there has never been a preacher of the word sent by man, anywhere. Why is it that Saul of Tarsus, Naaman and his companies, Pharaoh and his host, or the devil himself, can do nothing other than God's hand and his counsel determined before to be done? The simple reason is, "*He careth for you.*" For God's dear saints there is a covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and in this covenant

*"Jesus is engaged to save
The meanest of his sheep,
All that the heavenly Father
gave*

His hands securely keep.

*Nor death, nor hell can e'er
remove*

*His favorites from his
breast."*

They are loved with an everlasting love. God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. As this is his purpose he will care for us along the line that we must travel. I might predestinate my trunk to go from here to New York City by railroad. To bring that about, the track must be there, the sleepers in their place, the station, the signal boxes, the men, the engine, coal, steam, and all other requirements must be there or ever my trunk can safely be delivered to its destination. Thus we believe Pharaoh was in the purpose of God, fore-

ordained to that very condemnation, as was the devil himself, and as were the companies of Syria, and if the word be true, that God has created the waster to destroy, and these wasters of Israel were in Israel's life of old, in the life of the captive maid, yes, and in the life of our blessed Lord, who shall say they will not be in our lives, Peter tells the scattered saints of old of a fiery trial that was to try them, and it is true today. God's dear scattered saints are a poor and afflicted people, having fiery trials; yet Peter by inspiration says, "*Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*" There comes before our mind one dear sister, over eighty years of age, whom we once saw lying on her couch under terrible distress. Trouble had come upon her in her advanced age and was crushing her to earth: we said, Why should these things be? Faith answered, "*He careth for you.*"

*"Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan God's world in
vain."*

*He is a very present help in
time of trouble.*

*"The flame shall not hurt
thee, I only design*

*Thy dross to consume, and
thy gold to refine."*

We have seen another, younger in years, afflicted in body so that she could hardly move a limb, given up by earthly physicians, having little to look forward to but death and that which is beyond, and to the honor

of his name we have seen that he careth for her. Is he not the helper of the helpless? We visited such a one one day, and while there she said, *"Sing Rock of Ages."* We sang that and "Father, we'll rest in thy love," and we got in our car we heard the afflicted one singing by herself in the house, and all we could think of was, *"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God."* Later we asked why she sang when we left her a few nights before, and the reply was, *"Because I was happy."* It is because *"he careth for you"* that the theme of Jesus and his love makes the captive's portion sweet. It is his care that made David say, *"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."* His care for Israel of old was wonderful. He brought them from under Pharaoh's yoke with a high hand and an outstretched arm and led them through the sea, gave them bread from heaven, water from the rock, a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, their shoes did not wear out, nor their clothing decay, all because *"He careth for you,"* for were they not a type of Israel today? They rebelled and we rebel too. There is nothing that brings out the spirit of rebellion more than trouble. *"The trial of your faith."* It is easy to say, Thy will be done," but his will is a cross, and under the trial he sends we kick like a bullock unac-

customed to the yoke. It is galling and so humiliating, especially if it affects our personal reputation, we feel ashamed to be seen among the brethren, we ask the reason why. Pride must be abased. He made himself of no reputation; we would be his, yea, be like him, but it is unpleasant to die daily, to take buffetings. Oh the strugglings and strivings we have to be freed from the yoke!

Paul prayed very regularly to be delivered from a thorn in the flesh, but his request was not granted, and there is not a doubt in our mind the reason for it was that *"He careth for you."* All these trials, crosses, losses, thorns and snares we must and shall endure in this life are for the lifting of Jesus on high. They are to show us, as we are exercised thereby, how base and vile, unworthy and helpless we are, and like Paul, we are taught of him to know that when we are weak, then are we strong, and we glory in our infirmities (that are made plain to us in the furnace) that the power of God might rest upon us. Thus his care is such towards us that we shall at last confess, as did Israel of old, that the Lord delivered us and that *"there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."* - *Joshua xxi. 45.*

“He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.”-John iii. 33.

WE can only set to our seal that God is true in any one point of doctrine, experience, or precept when we feel an inward witness that God indeed has declared it. Thus, upon every manifestation of God’s goodness to the soul, every application of Christ’s blood to the conscience, and every revelation of God’s distinguishing grace, it is only as we receive Christ’s testimony, experience the inward approbation of it, and feel its sweetness and blessedness that we can set to our seal that God is true. This, we may be well assured, is the only way to know the power and reality of true religion. To understand the Scriptures, and enjoy a convincing testimony that God is our God, Christ our Saviour, the Holy Ghost our Teacher, heaven our eternal home, and that our soul is saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation.

And with what divine certainty can such a soul sometimes speak. Sometimes, indeed, we cannot believe anything; it seems as if there were nothing in God’s word that we could set our seal to. All seems a mass of confusion, and our ignorance appears so great that we cannot set our seal to any vital truth. But when the blessed Spirit is pleased to testify of the things of God, and

we, receiving the testimony of Jesus Christ, walk in the light of that testimony, then there is a holy certainty of and heavenly acquiescence with God’s truth. This divine faith will bring us through all our trials and sorrows, and though we may be dragged through a very hell of temptation, yet shall we know God is true.

Here, then, is the grand trial of faith; first to receive Christ’s testimony, and then to hang upon that testimony, in spite of all opposition from within and without, from feeling its weight, power, and sweetness.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS V. 21.

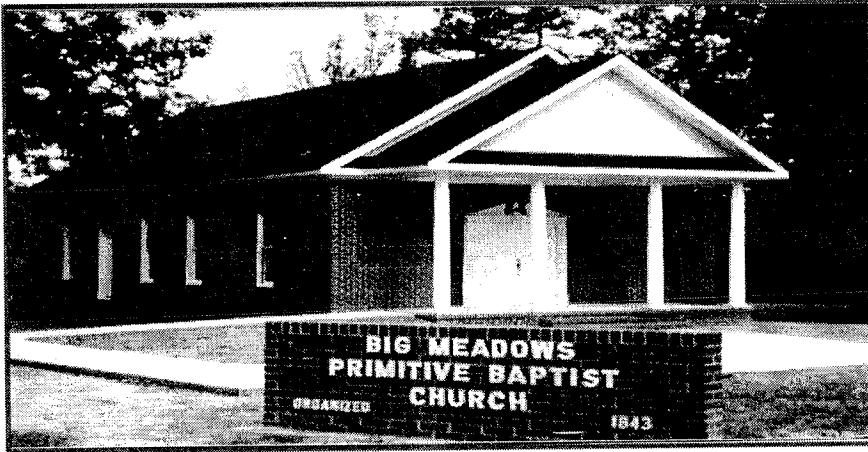
“That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2007

- Edwin Dyer, VA 5.00
- Polly & Frank Sizemore, WVA.10.00
- Phyllis Stroud, VA 5.00
- Tim Barron, TX 5.00
- Betty Nutter, MD 5.00

MEETINGS


ELDER J.B. FARMER COMING TO BIG MEADOWS

Elder J.B. Farmer of Grayson, Ky., the Lord willing, will be with us on the fifth Sunday in April.

Elder Farmer is also an associate editor of the Signs of the Times.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, N.C. Those traveling I-85 take the Pittsboro/Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing the Cane

Creek Bridge take first road to right at top of hill – go 4 miles to a cross-road and turn left – go 1 mile then to church.

We invite all lovers of the Truth to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Sister JoAnn Self, Clerk

**LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING**

The Lower Mayo Association fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 29th, 2007. We hope to start singing at 10:30 a.m. and preaching at 11:00. Russell Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell Creek Meeting House.

The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina border on Moorefield Store Road# 631.

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

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

PROCEEDINGS OF A PRESBYTERY

1. Presbytery was called together consisting of all ministers and deacons of our faith and order by Bordeaux Church, in Nashville, Tn. - Elder R. H. Campbell pastor.
2. Elder Campbell was chosen to serve as moderator and Elder W. G. Chapell was asked to serve as Clerk.
3. The candidate, Brother Tracy Jacks was called and Brother Hyslip was called as spokesman for the Church.
4. Elder Howard opened the presbytery with prayer.
5. The articles of faith were read and Elder Allen Terry questioned the candidate.
6. Members of the presbytery questioned the candidate and was satisfied as to his qualifications.
7. Elder Chapell was chosen to deliver ordination prayer as hands were layed on.
8. The presbytery was asked if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery and they answered in the affirmative.
9. Elder Hale Terry was appointed to give charge to the candidate.
10. The presbytery was asked to give the right hand of fellowship to Bro. Jacks.
11. Brother Jacks was then given back to the church, an ordained deacon
12. The members of the church were then asked to extend the right hand of fellowship to Brother Jacks.
13. The minutes of the presbytery were read and accepted .
14. All members of the presbytery were asked to and signed the minutes.
15. The clerk was asked to write the certificate of credentials and have it signed by each member of the Presbytery before they left.

Elders Present:

Wm. Hale Terry
 Alan Terry and James T. Howard
 Richard Campbell
 Wayman G. Chapell

Deacons Present:

Gladston Newman
 Charles Fox
 Kenneth Evans
 Charles Moon
 George Hyslip
 Roy G. Howard
 Richard Landeu
 Wayne Barnes

Signs of the Times

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

KNEEL AND PRAY

*At the close of the day, I kneel
down to pray,
Repenting for all my sins,
But I know that tomorrow will
bring me sorrow,
For I'll do them all over again.
I know that I shouldn't and really I
wouldn't,
If sin wasn't planted in me.
If I am one selected, can be one
corrected,
How gloriously happy I'd be.
I search every where with no place
to spare,
My Lord and my master to find,
I search day and night, I'd know
Him on sight,
For His countenance would so
gloriously shine.
I know that His grace will shine in
my face,
When He enters my heart with
love,
I'll praise Him forever, He'll leave
me no never,
When He gives me sweet rest from
above!*

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EDITORIAL



Elder R. H. Campbell

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied. 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.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old

ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 1:1-4)

At the time that the above scripture was written, it was within a very few years of the death of Christ, and one would think that the doctrine would not have been polluted by the personal opinions of man, and that there would be very little, or no opposition to the truth, as it was originally delivered unto the apostles; and yet here Jude is warning the brethren to beware of the false teachers that were already being made manifest among them. He is advising the apostles to give all diligence to remember the way and manner in which the truth was first made known unto them, and to follow in the footsteps and teachings of Jesus, for they were personal witnesses of his life, death, burial and resurrection, and that this is not a subject that is open to any private interpretation. Their calling must bear a true witness to the doctrine that they received from Jesus, while he was with them, and how these things were revealed unto them, as the way of truth, and how these things are made known unto the sons of men. They are revealed unto them by the Holy Ghost, and bear witness to the teachings of Jesus. Jude is addressing only those who have been sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. He is not preaching to

the world in general, nor is he endeavoring to persuade them to receive his personal opinions, but rather, that they earnestly contend for the faith that they have received. He is admonishing them, in all soberness and sincerity, in the same manner that the apostle Paul did unto Timothy, (*II Tim 2:15-16*) ***“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.”*** They are to especially beware of any strange new doctrine that may appear in their midst, and to cling fast to the faith as originally delivered to the saints. They are to give all diligence to continue in the way of truth, and the common salvation that they have received. Jude is aware of the old adage that when you once depart from the truth, as believed in the beginning, the further you go, the further from the truth you will get. It is as Jesus told his disciples, (*Luke 23:31*) ***“For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry.”*** If the flesh begins to creep into the doctrine, especially at this early stage, it will destroy the church, for as Jesus said, (*Mark 3:24-25*) ***“And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”***

All things that were to be used in the service of the Lord, under the law, were to be sanctified, for a specific purpose, and were considered holy unto the Lord. It is in this sense that Jude refers to those to whom he is writing, as being sanctified by God the Father. Those things, under the law, were anointed with a holy oil, unto the service in the temple, but under the new covenant, which is a spiritual covenant, the saints are anointed with the Holy Ghost unto the service of God, and it is an eternal commitment unto the service in the temple. (*II Cor 1:21-22*) ***“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”*** Under the law, those things were anointed to serve in this time world only, but those whom God hath anointed with the Holy Ghost will serve, and worship, him here, and in the world to come.

This sanctification was determined, before the foundation of the world, and is an everlasting charge, and there was nothing that remains to be done later, to insure the completion of this work. It was done in the same manner that God made known his sanctification of Jeremiah. (*Jer 1:4-5*) ***“Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth from the womb I sanctified thee, and I or-***

daind thee a prophet unto the nations.” This same type of setting apart or sanctification is applied to all of the saints of God, and it is effective, although as it is recorded, Jeremiah said, he could not perform his work because he was just a child, but this did not change the calling that was required of him. God does not call the qualified, he qualifies the called, and the calling includes the God given ability to fulfill the calling. It was true that Jeremiah could not have done this in his own strength, but it is recorded (*Jer1:9-10*) “*Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth, and said, behold I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, to build, and to plant.*” Then Jeremiah could do nothing less than what was required of him, and therefore he did go forth and did prophecy unto the nations, as God instructed him. This same absolute is true in the sanctification of every child of God, and they too go forth and perform the work that God has decreed in their life.

In the above scripture, Jude refers to those to whom he is writing, as their being preserved in Christ Jesus, and this too, even as the sanctification, is the work of God the Father. There is nothing that is involved in the salvation of sinners that is not as absolute and certain as the work of God the Father, through Christ Jesus. Jesus said, in

his prayer unto his Father just before his crucifixion, (*John 17:4*) “*I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*” And this was referring to the atonement for the sins of every heir of promise. Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and this he did, without the loss of one. (*John 6:37-39*) “*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no way cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*” There is nothing that is more certain and secure, than the salvation of the saints of God, because it is based, solely based, upon the promises which God had made to Abraham, and to his seed. It was not, in any way, contingent upon any other series of events or circumstances, than the fact that it was the Father’s good pleasure to give unto them the kingdom. It is as Paul stated, very emphatically, (*Eph 1:3-5*) “*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." I think, with these scriptures before us, we can say without hesitation, that if we have learned anything from our experiences, we are most assuredly blessed above anything that this world has to offer, and are indeed preserved in Christ Jesus, for time and eternity.

Jude is writing to a people who have been called, out of nature's darkness, into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, and this too is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father. The Apostle Paul's experience is a classic example of this heavenly calling, as he states, *(I Tim 1:12-13) "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."* This is where all men are, in ignorance and unbelief, until they are called out of the world of trespasses and sin, and made aware of the spiritual realm which is all around them, they too are in ignorance and unbelief. They are born in this condition, from their mother's womb, because of the sin inherent in them, which was received from their federal head Adam, and they would have died in this state, but by the grace of God, which through faith,

delivered them from the law of sin and death into the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Man, as he is born into the world of nature is flesh, and as such he is not even aware of the spiritual realm; which is the one to which Jesus was referring when he said, my kingdom is not of this world, he was referring to the kingdom of heaven into which man can see only after he is born again. *(John 3:6) "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."* And this calling, which they all must receive to worship God, is made manifest when they are born of the Spirit, as Jesus told Nicodemus, *(John 3:4) "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."* Since God is a Spirit, they that worship him must be spiritual also, to be reconciled to, and understand the ways of the Spirit, when man is born of the Spirit, he becomes a new creature in Christ, a new man as described by the apostle Paul, *(II Cor 5:17) "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."* By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.

All of the above are characteris-

tics of the people to whom Jude is writing, and are blessings which God hath sovereignly bestowed upon them, and they are all things to which the creature could not attain of his own efforts, so, when one tells me that he accepted Christ, based on his own personal decision to become a Christian, then my thoughts are, that you are mistaken, for you do not show forth evidence of a spiritual work of grace in your heart, a work that has been performed on you, and not by you. It is, as Paul wrote, (*I 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."* This, to me, is saying that the man with the utmost intelligence, in the things of nature, cannot fathom the things of the Spirit, so then, how could they accept, or reject, things about which they have no personal knowledge or intelligent understanding.

Jude is exhibiting his holy calling, by his desire to remind his brethren, even as Peter did, that they give all diligence to remain constant in the faith, and share their mutual experiences and revelations with their brethren, not to teach them something that they did not already know, but to bring things that they already know to their remembrance again. Paul, in writing to the churches, told them to share their letters with other churches, because

any correspondence, on the scriptures, is an open letter to all believers, even as the epistles written by Paul, by all of the other writers. In his epistle to the church at Ephesus, he began, (*Eph 1:1*) *"Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."* To me, this means that the epistle is to the faithful in Christ Jesus, whether they live in Ephesus, Memphis, Nashville, Greensboro or anywhere else, and in all ages of time, whether then or now. "The faithful in Christ Jesus" I can remember, in my earlier years, that in my Mother's home I did not hesitate to pick up and read the letters written to her from other brethren, a thing that I would never have done with letters from my immediate family, without first asking my Mother. These things are precious to the saints, and their constant desire is to hear the experiences of others, or to share with others the experiences which they have had, for comparison, even though they may have never have met in the flesh. They are bonded together into a fellowship that will endure the trials and afflictions of their lifetime here on earth and culminate in that New Jerusalem, to which they all aspire.

This communication between brethren is surely in that pure language that Zephaniah referred to, which was given unto the saints that they may all call upon the Lord, to serve him with one consent. This is

not the common language that is spoken, or understood, by the world, because it requires a discerning spirit, and this is the gift of God, and only to those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is a language which is not taught in any of the schools, or seminaries, of the world in which we live now. The people in Athens said, of the apostle Paul, what will this babbler say, because they could not begin to understand his message, because it was in this pure language which is not known by those who worship, the UNKNOWN GOD. This they freely admitted among themselves by their building an altar unto him.

Jude was referring to men, such as those in Athens, when he said, (*Jude vs 4*) "*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Paul said of the Athenians, (*Acts 17:21*) "*For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or hear some new thing.* (*vs, 32*) *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and other said, we will hear thee again of this matter.*" They were looking at it as an intellectual endeavor, with no spiritual connotation, or import. Jude

said, virtually the same of those ungodly men of whom he was speaking, (*Jude vs 10*) "*But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.*" And in (*vs 19*) "*These be those who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.*" Don't you see a lot of this in the religionists of today: they have so many schisms in the religious world, that you can see, is the results of man's wanting to develop a doctrine, that is compatible with the natural mind, and which they can support, and in reality, isn't this the same as the, UNKNOWN GOD, that the Athenians, and the men who Jude was writing about, who have crept into the church unawares, were doing.

May God, in the riches of his grace, deliver us from following after the idols of this world, but rather enable us to believe, and earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints. It is still ridiculed by the world, as it was then, but isn't that what the apostle Paul wrote, (*II Tim 4:3-4*) "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they will turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables.*" Sound familiar? Aren't you glad, that true doctrine is still as firm as it was in that day, that day

when the apostle Paul wrote one of the most precious scripture to be found in the bible, (*Eph 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.*"

There may be doctrines that come, and doctrines that go, but, the truth will stand forever, as it was in the day that it was first declared, (*II Tim 2:19*) "*Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.*" And again, (*I Cor 3:11*) "*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*" This is the foundation upon which the faith of all of the children of God is based, and as stated above having the seal of the Lord, as its surety.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Sunday March 18, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

Enclosed find a check for renewal of the Signs for 2 years plus the remainder for the fund.

Bill and I saw you at Rep. Church yesterday but did not get to speak to you. It was a wonderful feeling to see these people accepted for fellowship. We have known many of

them for several years. They do stand for the "Truth."

Our hearts were saddened to hear of your health problem. But we trust the "God of all Grace" will lift you up and provide a way for healing. If it is in His will, it will surely come to pass. You will be much in our thoughts and prayers along with your family.

Lovers of the truth, we hope,
Bill & Arlene Hole

7003 Flagstaff Ln., 102
Richmond, Va. 23228-3938
March 16, 2007

My dear Elder Terry,

It is time to renew the Signs and I hope to be thankful I can read it and believe the writers speak of the One God.

Thirty nine years ago I was baptized into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. It is very sad to me to think I am a sinner but I know I am. Of the many things in my life I think of the Lord as being my helper, a most wonderful one is the love of the brethren to me. How could you love me except the God of mercy cover my sins. This is my hope.

I love to hear or read the words of those blessed to speak in a reverent manner, who tell of His power, glory, wisdom and His control of all things.

My dear Brother, I understand pain has come upon your body. I am

very sorry and hope the dear Lord shall be pleased to give you moments of peace, peace to you and your loved ones. The God we hope to love is capable of performing all his pleasure. He is our all and all.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickeral

ST. JOHN, 15:1-7.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MRS. SUSIE RORRER GILBERT

Dear Brother Branscome : *By* the request of *my* mother and with the help of the Lord- I will attempt to write my experience.

When only a child, eleven years old. I became sick and my health ran down till I gave up all hope of ever getting well; and I began to wonder what would become of me after death. I became greatly troubled about my condition; and being shown that I was a vile sinner in the sight of God, I went mourning day and night over my condition. I would try to pray, but all I could say was: "*Lord have mercy on me, a sinner.*" I seemed to be such a sinner that, if I should die, torment would be my doom. I well remember creeping from my bed, while sick, to seek a secret place to pray for the forgiveness of my sins. But my prayer seemed not to be heard. My short prayer was, "*Lord have mercy on me.*" I went back into the house feeling worse than ever. I went back to my bed and cried myself to sleep. My burden seemed almost more than I could bear, yet in some way managed my burden for a long time. When a few years older, my troubles seemed to be getting worse; and, in the evening, when the sun began to sink in the west, I bade it farewell, saying, to myself, "*I shall never*

live to see you rise in the morning.” Before I went to bed, I looked out, through the window, saying, to myself, “I shall never see this world anymore.” After I had gone to bed, I could hear the water in the river, in front of the house, rushing over the rock! and, O, how lonely it did sound to me, a poor sinner in the sight of God. And I was made to wonder if that water was in trouble like me. The world seemed to be sinking, sinking down with me, and it seemed that I was bound to die. I wondered what my people would think in the morning when they should awake and find me dead. I awoke next morning in the same trouble. I went to my room one night—no mortal tongue can tell my feelings. But, after I had been asleep for sometime, I awoke and all of my troubles seemed to be gone. I could not go back to sleep, fearing I would awake in trouble. The next morning I felt so happy. I loved everybody and felt like I would never see any more trouble. I wanted to do better myself, and wished that everybody else would do better, too. I seemed to love everybody.

But in less than a year my troubles rose again, worse than ever. This was in the fall of 1910, while I was going to school. My burden was so heavy that it made my life a misery to me. I wondered why it was that I was in so much trouble and could not be relieved. I mourned day and night over my lost soul. It seemed that everybody could see that I was in trouble, and I tried to be merry with

the other young people, but could not. When at church I would go up near the pulpit and sit with the church members and old people: for I had no desire to be with the young people. The young people seemed too jolly for me. While I was in so much trouble, I would leave the room where my people were and go into a room where I could be all me. I wanted to be alone to keep them from knowing my troubles. One night I dreamed of joining the church and being baptized by a preacher whom I had never met. But, since I had that dream, I met that dearly beloved Brother, Elder J. M. Dickerson. I dreamed, in the dream of being baptized, that they sang: “*O, how happy are they, who their Savior obey!*” When I awoke and, O how happy I was! I awoke singing, and something seemed to say: Your many sins are forgiven; go home to your friends and tell them what the Lord has done for your soul.” I could hardly keep from shouting in my happiness. There was a bright light that seemed to shine around me.

That was in December, 1910; and, ever since, I have loved the good Old Baptist people. All of my hope and trust was in the Lord, and my desire was to go and be with them as one in that happy little flock. When away from them I could see them in a mental vision and hear them, as little Christians, singing God’s praise; and, O how I longed to go and be with them. But I felt too unworthy to offer myself to the

church. I prayed one night to know whether I was fit for the church or not and, again, I dreamed of the church and of being baptized, of seeing the daisies on the river bank; and of seeing the people gathered together, with the sweetest singing, that sounded to me like music in the air.

After that, March 2, I went to Doby's schoolhouse to preaching, and they sung, "*Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched.*" The fourth verse being :

*"Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Lost and ruined in the fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all:
Not the righteous, not the righteous;
Sinners Jesus came to call."*

It seemed to me that I could no longer stay away. I watched to see if anyone would go up to join. One lady went up and joined, Then I went and talked to the church and was received into their sweet fellowship. My sister joined after and that was a happy day with us.

On May 5, 1912, I, with several others, was baptized by Elder J. M. Dickerson. The happiness of that day can never be expressed.

Brother Branscome, I am send-

ing you my experience. If it is worthy of your attention, you may publish it in the "Messenger of Truth." But if it is not worthy of publication cast it aside, and remember,

Your little sister in hope,
Miss Susie Rorer

Stuart, Virginia.

REMARKS.

My daughter, Miss Susie Rorer, since writing her experience, was married to Mr. Johny Gilbert, of Stuart, Virginia, May 12, 1912.

Mrs. D. C. Rorer.

TO MY BRETHREN AND SISTERS.

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother: As I have to send money to renew my subscription, I will write to my brethren and sisters; and, also, to them that I think are heirs of grace divine that have never come to their Master's kin. Dear kindred in Christ, I claim this kinship with fear, and yet I must claim it, if any of you are as weak and dark as I am, I will tell you how Elder Daniel Conner strengthened me: While preaching, he asked this question, "*Can you manage your hope?*" He answered it himself, saying, "*If it is yours, you can; but, if it is God's, you cannot. Faith acts the creature, but the creature can-*

not act faith." He then asked, "Can you make your hope as bright as you want it?" "No," said I, "Can you lay it off and have no more to do with it?" And, again, I said "No." Some change had been made in me that I could never forget; and, right there, my heart was filled with hopefulness, humbleness and thankfulness. A blessed feeling, while it lasts.

Dear brethren and sisters, may I guess at your condition? You must go through a storm, caused by the light of grace. But it makes you feel dark. The light of grace shining in your heart shows you the depth of your sinful heart, that was the first time you ever felt condemned, arrested for your sins. "*You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins,*" but the calm will come; the captive will be set free. The heart is filled with hope and thankfulness; the storm is past, and there is a great calm. But this calm will be clouded with what? With a view of unworthiness, a view of our own vanities. This is shown to us by the light of grace. Carnal nature never works on that line. When we view our sins and vanities, we are made to mourn. Carnal nature loves its own. We pray that God's children, who are out, may come in; and, to them that are in the church, we say, "*Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as*

ye see the day approaching." - *Heb. 24, 25.* Let us come together and love one another. Let us encourage our pastor by meeting him. James showed his faith by works. So let us show our love by our acts. How cold, and how far from duty we live! We can think of many good preachers, who spent half of their time from home, by the call of the people to attend churches, to visit the sick and the dead, who received but little from the people to lessen their burdens. Yet, they went on in humbleness, like the ox under the yoke. The church should relieve the pastor of the discipline and government of the church.

We think the church should act carefully and prayerfully in setting apart its members as deacons and preachers. The prophet Samuel would have made a mistake, when he called the sons of Jesse before him, if the Lord had not signified his choice. So, dear brethren, let us attend our church meetings as promptly and prayerfully as we can. The Lord has promised to be with us when we meet in his name. Do not stay away because you cannot understand all that the preacher says. The Lord will give us all the light which is necessary that we should have.

Some writers try to tell what God created the devil to do. Some try to explain all of the purposes and predestination of God. If these things could be fully explained, it would, it seems to me, make the

mystery of godliness a blank. If God purposed all of the wicked acts of the devil, prayer, it seems to me, would be made a blank. The Savior said, "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*" We believe this. Well, then, he has power to restrain the devil. How much God restrains him we do not know; but we do know that the predestination of God and the existence of the devil is the greatest mystery that enters our minds. We believe in, the doctrine of election and predestination of God. Some call us Predestinarian Baptists, and we do not deny the name. We think that some could profit by reading what the Presbyterians put into their Articles of Faith, one hundred years ago. In speaking of election and predestination they said: "*these things should be handled with care.*" Seemingly, some handle them carelessly. If one stands and talks himself hoarse, trying to explain these deep things, has he done what Christ told Peter to do? Christ said to Peter, "*Feed my sheep.*" And, maybe, he could not say what Peter said, when Christ asked, saying: "*Lovest thou me more than these?*" Peter answered, "*Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.*" They might, at the time, be loving the display they are making more than the Lord. The flesh has a great deal to do with men.

I heard a good preacher say, there is one thing in my way and I cannot get rid of it to save my life,

that is, when I get up to preach I feel a desire to make a display." I loved that preacher before; but, now, as I thought, I saw the pureness of the inner man: for, in that, he had seen the vain glory in the outer man, and did not fellowship it. It renewed my confidence in the man.

While looking over this writing I am made to feel that, perhaps, I had better put my hand on my mouth, instead of mailing it. Now, dear brother, if you see anything hurtful in this, please put it in the stove and pray the Lord to pity the weakness of my flesh and to pardon the sin of the same. I beg my brethren and sisters to take no offense. I am in *my* eighty-fifth year, childish dotage.

R. J. Wood.

R. 5, Floyd, Virginia.

Sent in by Bro. Keith Hiatt

CHAPTER 11:2-5.

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

COMMUNICATION
BY ELDER F. P. STONE

Elder F. P. Branscome, Dear Brother and readers of the Messenger of Truth: Yesterday and today were our regular meeting days at my home church, Albion, and I were not able to attend. I have been suffering for several years from indigestion and have had several acute attacks, and have been made to feel that my time on earth is short. I am just a few years passed the meridian of the average life. But when I stand before the mirror, I see the silver streaks coming in my hair. I realize that it means, something, that, if I am permitted to live out the time allotted to man, it will not be long. And, today, not being allowed the privilege of meeting with the brethren and sisters, to speak of the goodness and mercies of God to them, I have been reading the Messenger of Truth and a borrowed copy of the Spiritual Law Counsel. I find the manifestation of contention among some brethren, which made me feel sad; and, again, I found others pleading for peace; and I was made to exclaim, "*Why strive ye, one with another? are we not brethren?*" Christ told Peter once to feed his lambs and twice to feed his sheep. He also said that new-born babes (lambs) desire the sincere milk of the word. What does he mean by that? What did he tell John's disciples? John, spiritually, was just where all of the saints of God get, that is, shut up in prison, in

the castle of despondency, where the inquiry is, Have I ever met the Christ of God? Was that boy, the carpenter's son, the promised seed? Surely not. John had at one time exclaimed, Behold (that is; look on him the Lamb (Son) of God that taketh away the Sin of the world. Have you not, my brethren and sisters, been spiritually able to exclaim the same? And John had the witness by which he might know that he had baptized the Christ. He saw the Spirit descending and lighting upon him, and heard the voice that said; "This-is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Yet he doubted and sent his messenger, enquiring: "*Art thou the Christ, or shalt we still look for another?*" *He did not say, "Yes, I am that promised seed, the Star of Bethlehem."* Go show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Was that just for John? No; but for you and for me. "*Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me.*" Is John's experience yours? I say yes: for his is the experience of every child of grace. It is Christ that is formed in us the hope of glory; and when we went down into the watery grave, being buried with him in baptism, and was raised up again to walk in newness of life, did we not feel that spirit of meek-

ness, humbleness and thankfulness? Yes, dear child of God, you felt this, and that was the spirit of Christ, the Comforter with you, which spake to your inmost soul, saying this is my beloved son or daughter, in whom I am well pleased. But does this last always? No; we go just where John did and need deliverance again. Now, what was the commandment to Peter? It was to go feed his lambs and his sheep. Some may say, How are we to feed them? By giving them the sincere milk of the word. The sheep can stand strong meat; but they love to be shown the thing which we do see and hear. We are not commanded to experiment with the sheep to see what they can digest, but just to come forth with the plain truth, the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. It is not to bring something new, or old, in disguise to bring forth old things? Yes, but they are new when compared by the Spirit of God. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. And, when the servant of God comes along, telling of the dealings of the Lord with poor sinners, how he finds them in a waste howling wilderness and how he leads them about and instructs them in wisdom's ways, carrying them to God's banqueting house, where the banner of love is spread over us, and we are enabled to see that it is not only the old prophet's experience, or preacher's experience but ours also. Then we feel like Christ has again taken our feet out of the

mire and clay, placing them upon a rock (himself), putting a new song in our mouth, and enabling us to say, "*My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.*" John, who was the recipient of a special revelation, said, "*I saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach.*"

I will say to the young preachers, my brother yoke fellows, if I am worthy to call you such, that the old pioneers and soldiers of that Cross, who have endured the chilly winds of many winters and have felt the rain and scorching rays of the sun for many summers, while striving to meet with and to comfort the dear children of God, have passed over the River of Death; and are we commendable to take their places? Are we preaching at all times and on all occasions that same everlasting gospel, that will stand as a lasting monument to our memory, when we shall leave our footprints on the sands of time, and go on to explore the great beyond?

Brethren, let us take heed to ourselves as well as to the doctrine, for sheep are naturally very particular about the kind or vessels they eat and drink from. God's sheep, the children of God, are just as particular as natural sheep. Past experience has taught me that some of our greatest troubles have started *in the pulpit*. But I am frank to say that I do not believe that a word of unsound doctrine has ever been preached while

the preacher was overshadowed by the spirit of God. So let us contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. And let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, contending for the "*old paths.*" There is no progress in the Christian religion. O, that we may leave behind us the same good report that our *old* fathers, who have already laid their armor by, left behind them. This is my message for today. Brethren and sisters, will you accept it from your unworthy servant?

F. P. Stone
 Francisco, N.C.

IN COMFORT OF THE SCRIPTURES IN THE TRIAL OF FAITH.

Dear children of God: - The holy Scriptures are a divine store-house of heavenly treasures and a pure fountain of spiritual health and peace, but the Prince of the house of David has the keys, and he must set before us an open door. But he first prepares the souls of his saints for the things which God hath prepared for them that love him and then he opens to them the sealed fountain of his love. The Lord does this in the way that nature would not choose, and that man's wisdom would refuse as impossible. For the way of the Lord of life and peace is through fiery trials and great tribulations. His word to us is, "*I have chosen thee in the furnace of af-*

fliction." In this furnace of suffering he purifies and refines his chosen ones, whom he loves, that they may know the power and preciousness of his perfect love and worship him in the beauty of holiness. This love casteth out the fear which hath torment, and it uplifts the children of God's love above the rage of their enemies, who reproach and persecute them. Through such tribulations and afflictions, unto which God has appointed us, as Paul affirms, he ministers to us patience, experience and hope, which maketh not ashamed, because he sheds abroad his love in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Thus the sufferings of Christ are fulfilled in his members, his brethren, who are baptized with him into his death, and also quickened and raised up together with him, made partakers of his divine nature, saved by his life, and serve God in newness of spirit.

The carnal and legal religionist would condemn all who are thus exercised, afflicted and tried as suffering the displeasure of God, as the legal and false friends of Job condemned him, and would say, If you will live as you should, and be obedient to the commandments of God, you may be at peace with him and enjoy his smiles. All worldly wisdom and legal religion says, Serve God, and he will then reward you with salvation. This way that seemeth right unto man, passes by the poor and suffering, the needy and helpless,

the sick and lame, who are without goodness and strength, and who bemoan their leanness; but it flatters and pleases him who thanks God that he is keeping his commandments, doing much good, and so receiving the rewards for his obedience. This one is without chastisement. He is a stranger to the truth that the true child of God, who in heart both fears and obeys him, yet is called to walk in darkness and have no light, and that the loving voice of the Father bids this tried child to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. It is a strange doctrine to the self-righteous religionist, who pleases himself, to be told that the only way of perfection and obedience is through suffering and loss of all things, and the only way of life is through death. In this way the holy Son of God himself learned obedience and entered into the perfection and power of endless life and eternal glory. Thus, too, must we follow him in his steps, die his death, and rise up with him in his holy life.

Now, my dear brethren, in him and in his righteous life is all true obedience, righteousness and salvation; nothing else is salvation; nothing else will God accept. This, this only fulfills the holy law of the holy God. We must be in Christ, and he in us, and his suffering obedience for our sins unto death, and resurrection unto life for our justification unto righteousness, must we be wrought in us and be ours, or else we have no obedience, no righteousness, no

salvation, no life; nothing but sin and death.

To be brought into this oneness with Christ and fullness in him, we must suffer with him and bear his reproaches; we must drink of his cup of sorrow and woe, and be baptized with his baptism of death. There is no other way into the perfection of God in Christ Jesus. God has ordained this way, and predestinated his chosen people to be conformed to the image of his suffering and dying Son, that he might be the Firstborn among many brethren. *"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."* The Spirit's witnessing evidence with our spirit that we are the children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, is, *"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 be revealed in us."* *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* *"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."* To every one of us, my dear brethren in Christ, God gives to believe on him, and also to suffer for

his sake, for the trial of our faith, that it may be found unto the praise and glory of God. Through such revilings and persecutions for the sake of Christ and his doctrine, which many brethren, with myself, have been called to suffer in these latter times, Christ has been made exceedingly precious to me, and he has thus prepared me to understand and with deeper comfort than ever before enter into the precious Scriptures, which faithfully record the reproaches and persecutions which the dear Son of God and his devoted followers were called to endure for the truth's sake. With new and warm interest have I just read the Acts of the apostles, and my heart is more tenderly united with them in their persecutions and sufferings, doctrine and fellowship in the gospel of Christ. And with sorrowing love and clinging faith I have followed in the sacred footsteps of Jesus from the manger to the cross. In all this life, and in all the lives of his true disciples, there came continual reproaches, false accusations and deadly persecutions, for the purpose of destroying them. All this was brought against them, not because they were dangerous or bad men, but for the doctrine they taught—the truth of God. For they were all men of God, whom he sent, and they spoke the words of God, and he was with them. To God they ascribed the kingdom, the power and the glory.

The one startling and most prominent fact in the fearful perse-

cutions against the Son of God and his church, as plainly shown in the Scriptures, is legal religionists were their persecutors. Never before had this fact so deeply impressed me as now. Persecutions against me from the same legal spirit made me go and tell Jesus, and turn to the sacred oracles for comfort, and he opened my eyes to see that I am brought into the fellowship of his sufferings for the truth's sake, and he tells me to *“Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”*

In spirit I have been drawn near to Jesus when he was falsely accused in the temple, and in Pilate's hall, and on the cross, and legal religion incited and led to it all. With deep emotion have I heard the dying sermon of the faithful Stephen before the priestly council, who gnashed on him in their legal rage and stoned him to death. I have followed Peter and John, when brought before their persecutors, and heard the charges and threatenings against them. At Antioch I have witnessed the controversy between Paul and the legal preachers, and in Jerusalem have I rejoicingly heard the final decision of the apostles and church upon the doctrine in dispute. With deep sympathy and intense anxiety I have journeyed with Paul in his gospel ministry, persecutions and perils, until he was dragged out of the

temple, fearfully abused, and forced to appeal to Caesar to escape death. And to my amazement, it was shown me that all this raging and death-dealing persecution against Christ and his brethren arose from the self-sufficient spirit of legal religion, and was relentlessly waged by the most strict and zealous religious people, who were the professed moral worshipers of God. They expected to obtain salvation by their obedience and good works. But the doctrine of Christ and the apostles was, that salvation is by the mercy and grace of God alone. This greatly offended the legal and self-righteous worshipers of God. They expected to obtain salvation by their obedience and good works. But the doctrine of Christ and the apostles was, that salvation is by the mercy and grace of God alone. This greatly offended the legal and self-righteous worshipers, and for this doctrine of God's sufficient and sovereign grace (not of works) in salvation, the legal religionists hated and persecuted Christ and his church, as we have seen.

As it was then, so it is now. Principles never change. There are only the two principles: law and gospel, works and grace. Salvation is of one, to the exclusion of the other. My beloved Lord gives me the comforting assurance that I am made to suffer persecution and be spoken against for his sake. If I could have fallen from grace into conditional rewards for works, and so divided

salvation into parts, and held that it is both by grace and of works, and so divided salvation into parts, and held that it is both by grace and of works, as all do who hold to conditional salvation in part, then I would have been approved and spoken well of by them. But the reproaches of Christ are far more precious to me, and my choice is to suffer for his sake. Paul says, "*But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.*" All persecution against the children of God arises from the legal religion of the flesh, for all fleshly religion is legal; it is based upon rewards and punishments; the love of God is not in it; the exaltation of Christ and the glory of God is not its purpose; but its highest aim and supreme end is the self-happiness and self-glory of the religious man. Take this away and he would not worship or be religious, for there would be no active incentive or prompting motive to his morality and religion. His is strictly a religion of works and rewards. His religious works are all performed to obtain salvation. "*Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.*" This the legal religionist accepts; to him this only seems rational and good; his religion consigns the grace of God in salvation to eternity, and sets up instead the works of man for salvation in time. Works honor and glorify man, and this is quite suitable

and self-pleasing. It is therefore very popular, for it comes near to man's strong love of self, and present to him a powerful motive to join the so-called church and be religious. It will pay him to do this, he will be happier, more respected and honored, and so multitudes embrace this religion. There is no offense in it, but the world esteems it and is pleased with it, for it is the pride and glory of man.

The gospel of the grace of God is not so; in it man is cut down and abased as less than nothing, but the Lord alone is exalted, and his is all the power and glory. Salvation by free grace only is therefore a religion of suffering, of cross-bearing and of the loss of life. Here man is nothing, that Christ may be all in all. The cross of Christ is an offense therefore, and the legal religionist can never love it nor embrace it, and so the religion of grace is very unpopular, has but few friends, "a small remnant," a "little flock," "a sect everywhere spoken against." They are called "Antinomians," "Extremists," "Fatalists," "Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound," and many other hard speeches, by legal religionists. So the prime object of all legal and flesh-pleasing religion is, that the offense of the cross might cease, and ceased it has among all conditional religionists; for conditional salvation, salvation by works, has ever been a popular religion in the world, both among the Jews and Gentiles; therefore if Christ and his apostles had taught this doctrine,

the Jews would not have crucified him, neither would they have persecuted his suffering followers. And so at this present time it is solely because the remnant according to the election of grace ascribe all dominion and power, salvation and glory, to God and his grace, to Christ and his death and life, that we are falsely accused, reproached and persecuted, and our names are cast out as evil.

It is in this way that our God sifts and tries his people, and separates his own elect from false and carnal religionists, who are of the world, brings his dear children through suffering into a peculiar and blessed nearness to himself in the risen Christ, and keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation, that they should show forth his praise. *"Trials make the promise sweet."* Therefore, *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."* O how precious true this is! We bless and glorify God for his eternal power and Godhead, his sovereign purpose

and grace, but for this he is evil spoken of on their part, his sacred truth is slandered, and his reverend and holy name is reproached by them. *“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?”*

In the deepest trials and sufferings of the obedient Son of God in the wilderness, and in the garden, God sent his angels to minister to him. So when Stephen was cruelly abused and being killed for the testimony of Jesus, his face shone as an angel's, and the Lord opened the door of heaven to his tortured servant, and he saw Jesus in his glory standing on the right hand of his Father. So it is in all the evil that men think to do against the Lord's Christ and his church. And Joseph's words to his humbled brethren are the divine key to open and reveal the holy purpose of God in all the afflictions, trials and persecutions that shall come against the children of his love: *“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good.”* Nothing great or small can escape his notice. *“Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?”* *“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.”* In this, God reveals his power and love to his chosen, *“to the*

praise of the glory of his grace.”
Bless his holy name.

In the fellowship of Christ's sufferings,

Yours, D. Bartley.
April 12, 1904

April 15.

“And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.” – *Esther iv. 16.*

When we are in darkness, under distress of conscience, or when guilt lies hard and heavy upon the soul, these things do, and must until removed, keep us back from the Lord. But are we ever to give heed to these enemies of our soul's peace? Are we never to press through the crowd? How was it with the man who was paralyzed for so many years? He might forever have lain helpless upon his bed, had he not been brought into the presence of Jesus. So with the woman with the issue of blood? She might for ever have tarried on the skirts of the crowd, a poor, polluted, self-condemned wretch. But she pressed through the crowd, and go to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. So with us. Shall we ever dwell in the outskirts – in the outer court of the temple? Shall we merely walk round Zion's bulwarks and tarry at her doors, or shall we venture into the holiest itself? Shall we, driven out by

fear, act like Cain, and go out from the presence of the Lord? Or shall we, with all our sins and discouragements, still draw near? The Apostle encourages us to come with holy boldness to the throne of grace, and to venture into the presence of the King of kings. Esther would have ruined herself and all her nation had she given way to the weakness of the flesh; but she said, "I will go in unto the king; and if I perish, I perish." She went in with that resolution. The king held forth the sceptre; Esther touched it, and she and the people were saved. So in grace. Shall we ever keep away through guilt, and sin, and shame? Now the Holy Ghost not only in the word of truth encourages, but he himself from time to time enables us to draw near. And when we draw near under his divine operations, we feel the blessedness of so doing. Liberty is operations, we feel the blessedness of so doing. Liberty is given, access, holy freedom, a spirit of prayer, power to take hold of God, to wrestle for the blessing, and sometimes to agonize with earnest sighs and groans and the energy of one of old: *"I will not let thee go except thou bless me."*

Elder J.C. Philpot

Job 37:24.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

April 16.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." – Hebrews xiii. 8.

The eye of our faith must be ever fixed on Jesus, for the Person of Christ is the grand object of faith, and to lose sight of him is to lose sight of the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Is he not the same Jesus now that he was on earth? He is exalted, it is true, to an inconceivable height of glory, so that when John saw him, even as if in some measure veiled, he fell at his feet as dead. But he is the same Jesus now as when he was the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as he wears the same human body, so he has the same tender, compassionate heart. All that he was upon earth as Jesus, he is in heaven still. All that tenderness and gentleness, all that pity to poor sensible sinners, all that compassion on the ignorant and on those that are out of the way, all that grace and truth which came by him and were manifest in him, all that bleeding, dying love, all that sympathy with the afflicted and tempted, all that power to heal by a word all manner of sickness and disease, all that surpassing beauty and blessedness whereby he is to those who have seen him the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, he not only retains in the highest heavens, but is, so to speak, endowed with greater capacity to use

them, for all power is given to him in heaven and earth, and all things are put under his feet, and that not only for his own sake, but that he might be the Head over all things to the Church.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MATTHEW 13:11-15.

He answered and said unto them, Because it is give unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

RECIPE FOR COMMUNION BREAD

A bout one-half cup of Plain (not self rising) flour. Sift into a small bowl, and add only just enough cold water to barely moisten the flour. The dough needs to be stiff. At first it will hardly cling together but, after kneading, the dough gets smoother, and almost "Shiny."

Knead until perfectly smooth, sometimes until you hear the dough begin to "crack", (too much kneading will cause the dough to "blister")

Make out in four small biscuits and roll about as thin as ordinary pie crust, turning round and round to keep it shapely.

Check off with wheel pastry cutter or a dull knife into 3/4 inch squares, which makes it easier for breaking; prick rather closely with fork and bake in Not too quick an oven. I usually sit right by oven to watch. The bread is nicest when baked to a deep cream shade.

The cakes may be cut square or in banquet cracker shape, if you prefer, but I have liked to make the little round cakes as my mother used to do.

If it should be necessary to make the bread a day or so ahead, by putting it in oven a moment till hot, it will be as fresh and crisp as if freshly baked.

Laura Reed Gooch,
Stem, N.C.

MEETINGS

March 17, 2007

A special meeting was called so the brethren of Pigg River, Smith River, Staunton River and our correspondents, could hear the Elders preach from Gaines Grove, Rock Hill, and Toms Creek churches.

This meeting was held on Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at Republican Church on March 17, 2007.

Services were open with song and prayer by Elder Ralph Gaines. Preaching by Elders Jim Moody and Ralph Gaines. The preaching service was dismissed with prayer by Elder Jim Moody.

After hearing Elders Ralph Gains and Jim Moody, a business meeting was held after preaching was over. Motion made and second, and carried that Elder Hale Terry serve as Moderator in this meeting. The moderator appointed Elder Thomas Solomon to serve as Clerk. The business part was opened with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

The brethren from Gaines Grove, Rock Hill, and Toms Creek Churches, were given the opportunity to speak. The brethren ask that they be received into full fellowship with us. After giving the brethren from our Associations and Correspondents, the opportunity to ask questions, No questions were asked.

After this, motion was made and second & carried that we receive them into full fellowship with us.

Dismissed with prayer by Elder Kenneth Key.

Moderator: Hale Terry
Clerk: Thomas Solomon

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2007

Connie Franco –TX	2.00
Livie Thompson –VA	5.00
David Dodd – NC	25.00
Herbert Dodson – VA	5.00
Katherine Mathews – LA	10.00
John Smith – FL	5.00
Edrie Clifton –VA	5.00
Reidy Pickral –VA	25.00
Arlene Hole –NC	5.00

St. John 1:4-8.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

*ZION'S a city God hath blessed
With peace and everlasting rest;
A glorious city, strong and fair;
And Jesus dwells forever there.*

*Her ancient walls appear to be
The workmanship of Deity;
Founded in grace, they still appear
Without a flaw or chasm there.*

*Oft has this city's strength been tried,
By mighty foes on every side ;
But all in vain it yet has been,
She baffles Satan, hell, and sin.*

*Count ye her towers, how high they
rise,
Her golden spires, they pierce the skies!
Her golden streets are fair to view;
Her palaces and bulwarks, too.*

*Then round her walk, her turrets ten;
Mark all her brazen bulwarks well;
Spread far and wide her deathless
fame,
Her pearly gates and walls of flame.*

*Her founder's love has ever proved
Like Salem's mount, which ne'er was
moved;
'Tis fixed on this eternal base,
The grace of God, and gift by grace.*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

Kent.

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 EDITORIAL

“Enter ye at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:13-14.



Elder J.B. Farmer

I must confess my ignorance before I can begin to write or to speak in the name of our God. I fear that I would appear to boast as if I knew anything of my-

self, if I didn't make it plain about my inability. The flesh is strengthless, even contrary, to the things of the Spirit. And God must receive all praise and honor and glory, not man. God has made the knowledge of His great salvation impossible to man, but with Him all things are possible.

For some time I have been given a desire to write something about the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life, and the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction. But I don't know how or where to begin, so I must beg for mercy and wisdom and understanding, hoping the Lord will come to my aid.

It appears that all the things of God are in a mystery, and past finding out apart from revelation. Therefore so also must be the strait gate and the narrow way that leads to life, and the wide gate and the broad way that leads to destruction. The strait gate is the entrance into the narrow way. And that gate is so strait or confining, that no one may press through it. Jesus said, *“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”* His disciples said, *“Who then can be saved?”* But Jesus beheld them and said unto them, *“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”* We know that it is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. And it is just as impossible for a man to go through

the strait gate. It is not just hard to do, but is entirely unachievable for men. It takes no less than a miracle for anyone to pass through that gate which leads into the narrow way. First, he must be killed to the flesh and to the world. Then, he must be made alive to God and to His kingdom. Man cannot accomplish this, it is altogether the work of God. *"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and he bringeth up."* He kills His own with the letter of the law, and then He makes them alive by His Spirit. Jesus said, *"No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him."* And when the Father draws one, he miraculously is brought through the strait gate and comes to Jesus in the narrow way. And Jesus also said, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my 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 in the last day."* I am made to believe that Jesus is the door or the strait gate, and He is the narrow way. And He is the truth and the life. In Him we live and move and have our being. And Jesus shall not lose one of His own, but shall bring each one safely to the end of his pilgrimage here upon

earth. And He shall raise them all up in the last day, and bring them to glory, where they shall ever be with the Lord.

The one finding himself in the narrow way is amazed to think that he should be brought into such a fearful and glorious place. And he is given the understanding that it is impossible to walk in this way by himself - just as impossible as it is to press through the strait gate. One must be miraculously protected on either side and be led forward step by step to the end of his journey. There is no turning around and no going back. *"For he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."* The children of Israel found themselves in the narrow way when they were brought out of Egypt and led through the Red Sea on dry ground. There was a destructive wall of water on either side with seeming desolation following hard behind. But only God's children were given to pass safely through. When the Egyptians followed them into that way, they found it to be total destruction and they were all drowned. *"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the*

redeemed of the Lord 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."

On the one side of this narrow way of faith is the so called "free will of man", and on the other side is the presumption of the carnal mind. Both are piled high as menacing walls of water, and they threaten to fall in upon the little ones and overwhelm them. But miraculously the walls do not fall, rather, they are held at bay. The "free will doctrine" is restrained as the children of God are taught that *"All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"* God's children are delivered from thinking they are in control of things, and are made to understand that only God actually does according to His will. And they are taught by experience that man is continuously frustrated at every turn by the vanity of the flesh. And man's so called "free will" is shown to be powerless in the presence of God. On the other hand, His little ones are kept from being swallowed up by presumption. Since the truth is that one is already predestinated to heaven or to hell, the devil tempts

God's children to think that it doesn't really matter what they do here on earth. He whispers to them if they are God's children, they are safe no matter what; and if they are not His there is nothing they can do about it. So the devil tempts them to presumptuously eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow they shall die. But the Lord is merciful to His own as He causes them to walk in the fear and reverence of God as they are chastened and corrected for their fleshly thoughts, words, and deeds. They are blessed to walk by faith and not by sight. Only those who are blessed with faith to know God and to obey the gospel shall ever walk in that narrow way and see heaven and immortal glory. The inspired apostle said, *"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."*

As God's little ones travel along the narrow way, they are made to discern between good and evil. By grace they are enabled to *"try the*

spirits whether they are of God.” On the one side, there is the minister of Satan transformed into the angel of light, bringing in damnable heresies of the works of the flesh. He teaches that you can gain acceptance by the works of the flesh - that if your good works outweigh the bad ones, all will be well. He teaches to touch not, taste not, and handle not. He would make self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees of all if he could. On the other side is the devil with the temptations of the pleasures of the flesh. He teaches that under grace, all things are lawful, so you may take your fill of pleasures according to your desires. He would make presumptuous libertines of them all if it were possible. He would entrap and destroy them on either side of the way if he could. But Jesus said to Peter, *“Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith fail not.”* The Good Shepherd protects them from Satan’s deceptions, and gives them faith to travel safely on. *“And the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.”* They are kept in the narrow way of faith that leads to life. By mercy, the little ones are taught that the only truly good works are those which God has wrought. They are made to trust in His righteousness alone. And they are made to know that, under

grace all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient. Thus the children of God *“are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”*

On one side of the way there are enticements for them to be overly involved or entangled with the world and all its cares. If left to ourselves we would stray from the path of life and be overcome by the daily concerns of this life. If we were not kept, we would be pursuing fame and fortune and pleasure with the whole world. On the other side of the narrow way there is the temptation to totally separate from the world, and to become monk-like hermits. But that would be cowardly. There would be no battles to fight, nor races to run, and no victory or defeat. And God would not be glorified in His continual deliverance of His people from the evil of this world. Jesus prayed to the Father, *“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”* And this is what He has done for them. He is keeping us, if we are His, in the narrow way, as strangers and pilgrims passing through the evil world, and He is blessing us to *“run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”* And in mercy and power, and to His praise and glory, He will bring us to the end of the race, victorious.

On the one side of the way God's children are tempted to speak flatteries, or false praises to men, respecting men's persons and hoping to gain their favor. On the other side they are tempted to fall into bitterness, hatred and evil speaking toward men, in order to exalt themselves. But God, in His mercy is continually delivering His people even from these kinds of pitfalls. They are made to say in truth with Elihu, "*Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away.*" And you are made to "love your enemies," and to "love your neighbor as yourself." The little ones, by grace, are delivered from speaking with both flattery and hatred. And to the praise of God and His grace, they are made to speak the truth in love one to another and to the world.

On one side of the narrow way is the false peace of compromise. Many in the worldly religions boast of their numbers and of the unity of their faith and of their peace. But they have compromised the truth in order to achieve their goals. They allow all kinds of false doctrine, disorder and confusion in their midst that they may maintain some kind of stability which they call unity and peace. On the other side of the way are those who continuously war with words to try to defeat those who see

things differently from themselves. And they seek to arrive at some kind of truce, which they call peace. They think that they are exalted and victorious if they can humiliate and destroy another person. But the children of God are kept from compromising to achieve a false unity and peace, and also are kept from warring with words to try to gain victory. Rather, they are made to patiently and kindly seek peace and ensue it by gently reproving and rebuking and exhorting one another and others in the way of truth. They are found walking in the narrow way, by grace, "*Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*"

On one side of the narrow way is the religion of false hope. Many hope in the riches of wealth, or in learning, or in positions of honor in the world. Some hope in their own presumed goodness or righteousness. Others hope in their religious practices, believing that duty or ritual will save them. All who hope in such things must be altogether disappointed in the end, when the Lord shall separate the sheep from the goats. On the other side of the narrow way is the religion of hopelessness. Many are without faith and without hope in the world. They think that this world is all there is, and that there is no heaven or no hell. They imagine that the world made itself and that there is no Creator, God. They shall be most surprised at the resurrection of the

dead. But in the narrow way, the little ones are killed to the false hope of riches, and of self-righteousness, and of false religion. And they are given a pure and sure hope of eternal life in Jesus, Who is their only hope of salvation. Their hope is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which is cast within the veil. Their hope is Christ in you the Hope of glory. They are made to believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Those who have been made to cast all their cares upon the Lord Jesus Christ shall never be disappointed, world without end, for it is impossible for Him to fail in bringing His own to glory.

The wide gate is so wide that it allows any one of any persuasion to enter the broad way. Everyone is welcome. The self-willed and presumptuous are very much at ease passing through that wide gate. Those who trust in riches and who are full of pride and arrogance are their leaders. In the broad way, false doctrine is no shame to them, for they each have their own understanding, and that is fine with them. They have an agreement to disagree, and to cover it all with a cloak of "charity or love" - which appears to be actually the confusion of darkness. But truly, God is not the author of confusion. Walking there in the broad way are the self-righteous, and those that pursue every pleasure. There are those who are at home in the world with all its cares,

along with religious monks who have denounced the world and have fled from the persecutions of it. There are flatterers and hateful speakers. There are those who desire a false peace at any cost, and who will readily compromise the truth in order to have a crowd. And there are those who never know peace but continually war about words to no profit. Those with a false hope are at home with those of no hope. Having passed through the wide gate, and traveling in this broad way, the whole world is happily and confidently, but unknowingly, heading for certain destruction.

In the narrow way that leads to life, that must be entered only by the strait gate, are found the children of God. All others are excluded. The elect, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world was, are found walking together there in holy love and peace. They are following Jesus, trusting Him to keep them in the way of life and to deliver them from evil. These have been killed to the world and made alive to God - their love of riches, their pride, arrogance, self-will, and presumption have been stripped away. Their love of worldly pleasures and their entanglements have been removed. They are no longer afraid of the persecutions of the world, but gladly suffer them, in the name of Christ. Their mouths have

been stopped from flatteries and hateful speaking. Their desire is for the true doctrine to be spoken. They pursue true peace with honor. And their greatest desire is that God must be glorified in all things. This strait gate and the narrow way are found only by the precious few to whom God has revealed it - the same ones that He loved in the beginning with an everlasting love. And they are on their way to life eternal, to the praise and honor of the God of heaven and earth, and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. Jesus is the strait gate and He is the narrow way. He is all in all to God's children. *"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."* May God be praised forever. This was written, I trust, in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer 3-29-2007

PSALM 100:1-4.

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

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

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

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Salem, Va.
6-19-06

Dear Brother Hale,

Enclosed is a check for 1 years subscription to the "Signs". I thoroughly enjoyed the articles by Elder May and Elder Ashburn. Thanks to the Editors for articles that reinforce the doctrine of absolute predestination and salvation by grace. It is good when we can relate with the writer in our travels through life and that the Spirit works in the lives of all of God's Elect. May God continue his blessings on this paper.

In bonds of love,
James L. Shelor

April 8, 2007

Dear Elder Terry,

For so many years of my life I was searching, finding little in my search, but always hoping to find that place that would be so special to me. There were times when I was given some special things, but those times were given to me and came when unexpected. I did not find them by the labor of my search. (But I do believe that my search was a part of those good works that we are ordained to walk in). Many years ago it was impressed upon me that I was very unhappy living the Armenian

dream. I had been reading about the doctrines of the various denominations, but had already discovered that none of the ones that I had read about understood that the Saving Power of Christ is His alone, not subject to the whims, desires, or free will of mere man. I knew about the Primitive Baptist, because my mother was and is one, but I did not know what the doctrine was. I asked her for some "Signs" to read. She was so happy to oblige. As I was reading I came upon one of Gilbert Beebe's writings concerning the Shepherd, His sheep, and the fact that the door would only open to the Porter. I knew then that this was a part of what I had been searching for. This is my doctrine, the same doctrine that the "Signs" contends for.

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now.

May it please the Lord to continue to bless each of us each day that we are here in this low ground is my prayer.

Humbly submitted,
Charles Mathews
Baton Rouge, La 70874-4181
(225) 775-8078

JAMES 3:18.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am sending you \$10.00 for help in the cost of your work for this purpose. I look forward each month for this little book. So much comfort as some of us depend greatly on this book.

Also I found many poems as I was looking through the old trunk that I wrote many years ago as I was traveling through some bad times, some good times and some mighty rocky roads. So I decided to send some to you, I have sent some times ago. If you can use them O.K. If not just throw away.

Thank you,
Katherine Mathews

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513

April 24, 2007

Dear Elder Key,

One of our precious brethren, Brother Carroll Williams, has shared a wonderful experience of the dealings of the Lord with him as he was shown that he is a sinner and brought into the knowledge of the truth. I feel many will be blessed with the reading of this beautiful experience as the Lord is glorified in His marvelous workings in His children. Therefore, I would like to request it be published in The Signs of The Times. I asked Brother Carroll's permission to do so.

I hope you are doing well and that the Lord will bless you and guide you in the way He would have you to go.

Love in Christ,
Jeannette Robertson

ARTICLES

EXPERIENCE OF BROTHER J. CARROLL WILLIAMS

Sister Jeannette, you told me yesterday you would like to hear me tell my experience and I explained truthfully how it is with me. However, you did say one thing about your experience that certainly did parallel mine. You spoke about all of your sins (if I remember correctly) being on a scroll I guess it was a week or two maybe before I offered to the church that I saw the enormity of my sins stacked up before me. It was as though I was sitting in a chair and I was thinking I had not been a terrible fellow in my growing up and young adult life and with each thought of the good that I thought I had done, something was placed beside my chair. I kept talking about the good in me and the stack beside me grew and grew until it was as high as the chair arm. It was made known to me that was a representation of my sins and that I had never done anything good. It made me feel so small and unworthy. I just needed to go crawl in the closet or someplace. When I awoke

in the morning, all I could see with my natural eye was that stack of sins placed beside me. I can't tell you just how I did feel for a couple of days... but then, for some reason, my burden began to feel lighter; and as I went about my daily duties (a big part of which was done driving a car), I could not do anything but sing "*Farewell vain world I'm going home, My Jesus smiles and bids me come.*" I thought then that maybe I had heard those words in a song. I got the hymn book and looked and looked but could not find them. I visited a dear and highly respected brother "Rossie Williams" one night during that time and I asked him and his wife if those words were in a song in our hymn book. They did not have to think twice. They knew the exact number of the song and I told them how those words had been ringing over and over in my soul. Then I thought they tried to make me feel they saw the workings of the Lord in all that, but I became fearful that my time on earth was about up. I just felt frustrated and did not know what it meant, if anything.

On the following fourth Sunday, something moved me when they were singing the closing hymn. I felt like my body floated down to the front of the church. I had no control of it. Elder Bunn motioned to the congregation to stop singing and there I was, so empty handed. He asked me if I wanted to talk to the church. Well, I did not know what I would say if I tried to talk to the

church, but felt I had to do something. So, I told him I loved the church and wanted to live with the folks I loved. I was readily received into the church; and as the brethren extended the right hand of fellowship, they looked like angels coming down to shake my hand and I felt so unworthy. But I do want to say that was the sweetest and dearest group of people that day that I had ever seen or have seen since. It was just a special day and now I feel so unworthy to have had those many brethren and sisters to enjoy for so many years. It has been joy unspeakable along with the heartaches and burdens that go along with all the upsets we experience.

I've had a hope that the vain world I was singing about was the worldly place of our abode and the going home was to live with the brethren we adore. I could not see that until after I was baptized and was beginning to settle down a bit. Not to say that I don't find myself all entangled in worldly things today, I do; and I'm not always happy with it at the time, but I hope I know where my home here on earth is.....with the brethren. And I have a hope there is a better place in the hereafter. I can't believe it, but I've held membership at Pleasant Hill Church for 50 years this year.

I did not mean to be this lengthy. God bless you. We do love you both.

Carroll Williams

VOICES OF THE PAST

EPHESIANS I. 3-6.

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

This letter of Paul's is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." All those saints at Ephesus which Paul had in mind have long since been removed from time, but the letter and its words are still in effect, and to a people even today, for there are yet some "faithful in Christ Jesus," who love this doctrine as did our eminent apostle Paul, who so earnestly contended for the truth as he had been taught it, giving God pre-eminence in all things. Man of himself has never believed the truth, never will. The vital truth of God and the fundamental principle on which it is founded have ever been distaste-

ful to man, for one prime reason: it robs man of any glory and places the invisible God preeminent in all things.

Of all creatures and things in existence man has the least right to boast or array himself in any way as prominent in the least things, or capable of even thinking a thought, much less putting one into execution, for man was the last manifestation in creation. Even the beasts of the field, grass and herbs, were brought into a manifest existence before man was, and man after being formed of earth, was an inanimate lump of clay until the Lord God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and, he, man, became a living soul. Now since he has become a living soul by reason of the God-given breath he exalts himself above the Creator and limits the Holy One, circumscribes his movements and places him in an inferior position to man. If there is one thing God wishes to do or have done and he cannot do it or cause it to be done then he is not omnipotent. If there is anything, even the minutest detail that his all-seeing eye has not seen, even from ancient times, then he is not omniscient. If there is any vacuum in space that is not filled with his presence at any and all times, then he is not omnipresent, and many have borne false witness, for Bible writers declare these three attributes as belonging to him, and to no other. They who feel they can keep the law, or even a part of it, and reap a reward,

in claiming this ability to procure a benefit for doing righteous acts and receiving blessings thereby, either in time or eternity, have broken the commandment that reads, "*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*" For to say that salvation, all of it, or any part of it, for time or eternity is in any way conditional is bearing false witness against Christ and overthrowing the testimony of the holy men of old who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The teachings of Christ are in no uncertain terms. "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.*" Here is a positive declaration of Christ that forever bars man coming of his own free will: he must be drawn. They are not drawn against their will, as some affirm that we believe. The psalmist says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." God's ways are equal. When he draws one he makes that one willing. There is much could be written about one's willingness and acceptance. Of course God's people accept him and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The elect according to the foreknowledge of God, are the only people that do, ever have or shall accept God the Father and his Son, or the salvation which he has wrought. When one talks about accepting Christ as his Savior and feels he can do something to aid his redemption or final preservation in glory, he has not accepted Christ, but he who is wholly

and solely dependent upon Christ for salvation, both now and forever, does accept him as his Savior. There is not a text in the whole Bible that can be claimed as foundation for conditionalism that is not to their destruction, for such *"they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."* Scripture means what it says; if not, it would say what it means. No mortal hated this doctrine more than the writer, but by hard and trying experiences, both in providence and grace, he learned that all power in heaven and earth is of God, and was given unto Jesus Christ, who is God manifest in the flesh, for the accomplishment of God's purpose in earth. Then if all power in heaven and earth, which is time or eternity, the church or the world, providence or grace, is in him it is a foregone conclusion, an undeniable *fact, that there IS none in man.* *"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* Are we going to doubt Jeremiah's word, *"the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath!"* who said, *"He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light."* Would any walk in sadness and affliction if it could be avoided! It was faith that Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Faith is the gift of God, therefore it was of God, and not of Moses, that he refused to be called

the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Would Paul have been struck down and turned about in a career of which he was so zealous if left to his own will! Most assuredly not, for his will was to go to Damascus, but like all other of God's chosen, elect and precious, he was made willing in the day of God's power. This power revealed Jesus Christ, whom he was persecuting as an impostor, and now he sees *"Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor,"* as his Savior, and accepts him whom he had rejected, because a power over which he had no control smote him to the ground and blinded him. By the power and magnificence of *"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* he was now willing to accept God the Father and God the Son. Now it was no wonder Paul could write the words at the beginning of our writing, *"To the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."* Who are the faithful? They who are full of faith. These are the people to whom this writing is addressed and for whom it is kept, and it does not apply to the ones who feel they can help the Lord in his work, either for time or eternity. In sending, this message to the faithful he could boldly and freely speak of them as being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is useless for man to speculate on such solemn

truths, or expect to reconcile them to reason. It is a senseless undertaking for one to try to make God's ways plain to any natural mind. Our finite mind cannot grasp the nearly six thousand years of time, then why dispute or attempt to explain away the mystery of that which took place before time began. There is no measure in eternity. Time and time things alone are measurable. As God is immeasurable, so are all his ways and attributes. Were his mercy or love measurable we would sometimes come to the limit and be without the mercy and law of God, but his mercy endureth forever and his love never fails. Because we cannot measure and understand God is no reason why we should deny the testimony of Paul, this faithful witness, who declares that God chose certain ones in Christ before the world was. It is essential that he did, and this being true there is a living unity between Christ and his people, for he was with the Father before the world was, and we were chosen in him. Then we must have been alive through him, or else he was then composed of dead members. It is not incredible then to one who sees God as sovereign to believe that all his people were foreknown and chosen in Christ Jesus before the world was, for when Christ came in the flesh he was just as verily God as he was verily man, God manifest in the flesh, otherwise he could not be seen, could not suffer, bleed and die; neither could he have been born of

a virgin except in the flesh. When man starts out to make the Scripture plain and understandable to natural reason he has reached the height of folly. No man dares question the prerogative of God, for all he does is right. The very fact that he does it is positive proof it is right. It is according to the blessing of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ that he chose us. It is a blessing, and not a recompense due us. For the children [Esau and Jacob] 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." It was said unto her (Rebecca), The elder shall serve the younger." *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* One would necessarily have to blot out such Scriptures as these in order to establish a conditional salvation for either time or eternity, and when he has eliminated this truth he has no foundation on which to stand, much less to build. *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."* The foundation of God is sure and unless we build on this foundation our building must surely fall, so why try to remove some of the foundation which God has laid and eliminate a timber or stone that is objectionable to the natural mind, or try to smooth over a rough place, or make this hard and unendurable doctrine a soft, pliant thing that any man can

bend about his finger to suit his own taste , Having faith in God no doctrine is too hard, and we glory in it because it abases man and exalts God. Makes us dependent creatures upon an independent God. By reason of the fact that God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, we were appointed to be children of God before time, and the appointing or choosing is done, the election is past. By an unchangeable purpose, irrevocable, impossible of change, sure and certainly all that were thus chosen are surely safe in him. Nothing that I can do can make me any other than the son of my father. Yet not for one moment does one of God's children wish to take advantage of this truth, or use it as a cloak for sin to excise his wrong doing. Being children there is a law and reverence and a desire to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Having seen his holiness we long to be holy as he is holy; we long to live right, being dead to sin, or separated from sin, by the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. We hate sin and hunger and thirst after righteousness. He saw all from the beginning, even the behavior of all men, nothing is hung on a contingency and nothing comes as a surprise, for each event is so fitted as to be in perfect harmony with its predecessor and successor, all things

going along in the stupendous plan that God alone saw and determined, and he executes his decree according to the good pleasure of his unchangeable will. The doctrine of predestination of all things is so clear that it seems all could see it, but God did not determine that all should see. This doctrine does not in any way charge God with being the author of sin, for how can he who is above any law commit sin, for sin is the transgression of the law. Further, the fact that man is not able to resist sin is not a misdemeanor chargeable to the Creator, for even in this his purpose is so far beyond our finiteness we are lost in the infiniteness of his plan. He had as rich a purpose in the transgression of our foreparents as he had and has in everything else. In speaking of Pharaoh the wicked king, it is written, "*And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.*" To which Paul also refers in Romans. If God sees fit to manifest his power in this way what right has man to interfere , all the acts of God are alike good. Also we read of the suffering of Christ in which Peter says, "*Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.*" In type Joseph was also taken in the same way and sold into Egypt where he was evil treated, but afterwards he

could look at his brethren who had sold him and say, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to save much people alive. It is because we cannot see far enough into God's plan, and lack of faith, that we cannot see and believe in the predestination of all things. God had some wise purpose in sin coming into the world, and remember this, had he not seen the awful consequences of sin, that it would condemn the whole world by the act of one man, he would not have prepared the antidote for Adam's transgression. *"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."*

This is not contingent upon the act of any mortal, Christ alone could and did atone for all sin. *"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."* The atonement has been made by one offering by Christ himself without blemish or spot unto God, which is the only acceptable sacrificial offering for sin. *"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."* The perfect gift is Christ, the good gifts refers to the temporal blessings we enjoy in nature. God's plans are as unalterable as they are unchangeable; he having designed from all eternity the course of events as they come along. Knowing exactly what Adam would do, to prepare for this he

chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. As we were in Adam, so also then were all that ever should be born of the Spirit in Christ. We may take two apples, and before they are ever opened there are just so many seeds in each one. Manifesting them does not add nor diminish the number. The number is fixed. As in Adam there is a fixed number of people to be born on the earth, so there is also a fixed and certain number in Christ. There is not one thing by chance. No event too large to have been managed, designed and planned by him, nothing too finite to escape his decree. It is a truth that he will be glorified in all he does and in all that is done. *"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."* There are no teachings in the Bible to warrant the assertion that salvation for either time or eternity is contingent, or conditional, or that God is not sovereign, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing. It is an admissible fact that if we do certain things the result will be so and so. If we fall into the water we shall get wet. If we put our hand into the fire we shall be burned. *"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."* No one denies the "if" in this, but this does not alter the predetermined

act, step or thought of any man, being, or thing ; neither do we have the ability to alter our course, and the fact that one does or does not do a thing is proof positive that they were to have done, or refrained from doing, the thing. If by the grace of God we refrain from an evil act, it is done by his grace, and we are not rewarded for doing, but in the doing we have our reward ; and, further, this does not frustrate the eternal plan of God. It is the only sure foundation upon which one can rest. Inasmuch as God saw and foreknew all things and determined this course, he saw who would and who would not live a godly life and walk carefully. There is no disposition on the part of a child of God to enjoy the pleasures of sin, for being made dead to sin he has no desire to live any longer therein, but longs to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Even while in this ungodly world he longs to keep unspotted by its evils, even though he be ostracized and have to live alone. There is no pleasure in the transient things of this existence, for there is a continual longing of the heart, soul and mind to be at rest. The only support we have here is the hope that is in mercy given us in Christ Jesus, that we are children, and if children, heirs, joint heirs with Christ: The plan of God is so sure and certain that all hell, with it's legions of tormenting devils, can never pluck us out of his hand, but all for whom he died, which were chosen in him before the

foundation of the world, are eternally safe. This, then, is our rest, our only rest in this life. May the Lord enlighten his people that they be not entangled with unsound doctrine.

F. S. FISHER.

HEBREWS X. 23-25.

“LET us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching!”

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.”* This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged be-

neath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance, of our Lord and Savior, by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, *“when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them,”* saying, *“Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.”* How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord’s; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread? The great apostle declares in our text that *“he is faithful that promised.”* Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd. The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love

the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord’s, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again; Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, *“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”* What was under consideration was, *“I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.”* These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, *“he bowed down his*

head, and worshipped the Lord," saying, *"Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren."* *"I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of Thy Master's brethren."* This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, : *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."* Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privileged to have meeting every Sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit of the Spirit considering one another and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the

definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother. Paul says, *"Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is."* So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, this showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, thoroughly and thoroughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should

search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."* It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, *"My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."* We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches" that may be without undershepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not for-

saking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is as the apostle says they should not do? These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but an earthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before It can speak forth his praise, and *"God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."* Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren *"Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern "the signs of the times,"* there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should *"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with long-suffering and doctrine."* The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God

that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shed with the preparation of the gospel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, *“but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”* Let us therefore take *“the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,”* and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. This is that new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son.”* He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of God, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this *“one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything *“among you, save Jesus Christ,*

and him crucified.” Jesus said, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”* Again, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.”* God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who *“kept back part of the price.”* There are those in the world today who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the *“pearl of great price,”* and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter’s day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold to the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from

experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together. Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering!" forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Finally brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

R. Lester Dodson

MEETINGS

PAYNES CREEK CHURCH

Starting with the first Sunday in June- the 3rd. The Paynes Creek meeting time will change to 2:30 p.m. Singing and preaching at 3:00 p.m.

We invite all our Brothers and Sisters to be with us.

Elder Wm. Hale Terry, Pastor

CONTRIBUTIONS

Priddy Shaw-VA	5.00
M. H. Brown-AL	25.00
Ted McDaniel-VA	100.00
Pauline Jones -TX	5.00
Walter Craft - WV	5.00
J. D. Neely -AR	5.00
<i>In memory of Mamie Sullivan</i>	
Nannie Quarles -AL	25.00
Mary Janney-VA	5.00
Jerry Mourer-AR	200.00
Charles Matthews -LA	35.00
R. T. Jacks-AL	5.00
Pauline Toney-MS.....	5.00
<i>In memory of Ethlene Watson</i>	
Gerry Compton-NC	25.00
Helen Stewart -NC	5.00
James Carr-VA	50.00

OBITUARIES

LETTIE MAE WILLIAMS FLOOD

On Tuesday, February 22, 2007, God called home our sister in Christ, Sister Lettie Mae Flood.

Sister Flood was born September 2, 1918 in Edgecombe County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Joseph John Williams and Mamie Lancaster Williams, who preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her husband of 37 years, Charlie Daniel Flood, as well as her five brothers: Milton,

Joseph Floyd, Thomas Earl, Roscoe Elijah and Rufus Williams. She is survived by her cousin, Sister Lessie Lancaster and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Flood asked for a home at Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church on January 22, 1949. She was baptized in the Tar River at the Falls by the late Elder A. B. Denson.

Sister Flood lived a humble life and was a faithful member, going to church regularly as long as her health permitted. She was always there to help clean the church and do whatever she could to help when she was able. As long as she could drive, she would visit those she had known as family, friends and neighbors. Sister Flood has already been missed, even before her passing, as she had resided for the last three and a half years in Guardian Care Nursing Home in Rocky Mount, NC.

Elder Cleo Robertson held the graveside services on Sunday, February 25, 2007 at the family cemetery in Edgecombe County, NC, where Sister Flood was laid to rest beside her husband.

May we all be blessed to look to our Lord, the author and the finisher of our faith.

This obituary has been written for the church records, *The Signs of the Times*, and a copy for the family and submitted at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference on March 25, 2007 by:

Sister Peggy V. Brake

ELDER HENRY CLAY JONES

Sept. 20, 1924 — Oct. 17, 2006

Elder Henry C. Jones has been called home at the age of 82. A devoted member of Pleasant Hill Church, near Rocky Mount, N. C., having been received into the fellowship of the church on Sunday, November 27, 1955 and baptized on the same day by Elder C. Norman Bunn.

Elder Jones was strong in his belief and always ready to stand steadfast for what he believed. The brethren of the church saw the gift of a servant in him and he was ordained a deacon on July 27, 1958 with Elders C. Norman Bunn, A. P. Mewborn, and Johnnie Joyner presiding. In due time, it was obvious that Brother Jones felt burdened to speak and was used as a lay speaker at home and among the sister churches until it was made known the brethren at home and abroad were ready to ordain him to the ministry which took place on February 25, 1968 with Elders C. Norman Bunn, A. P. Mewborn, and Johnnie Joyner presiding. At Elder Bunn's death in May, 1972 Pleasant Hill Church called him to serve as pastor of the church on November 25, 1972 which he faithfully did until his death. He also served the following sister churches for a period of time: Lower Town Creek, Williams, Providence, Skewarky, Smithwicks Creek, and since 1985 he had been serving the Tarboro Church.

He enjoyed his church affiliations and was always eager to be in the meetings at home and visiting sister churches. Going to the associational meetings was always a special joy for him. He looked forward to those times and when his health permitted was always making plans to visit an association. He was well known among the brethren in North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and perhaps places that I do not recall. Many brethren expressed a special love for him. I'm sure he has been missed by the brethren in recent years while his health was deteriorating and hindered his traveling a distance.

Elder Jones was married to 'Tilda Lancaster Jones for 61 years. They were not blessed with children but were extremely devoted to each other. The last few years found Brother Jones in failing health and in and out of hospitals at home and out of town at times. 'Tilda was always with him at his bedside night and day. When he was away from home, so was she.

In addition to his wife, Elder Jones is survived by one brother, Charlie Lawrence Jones and wife, Virginia, of Newport News, Virginia, the Lancaster family who he was very close to, four nieces, and his church family who reside nearby and far off.

A funeral service was conducted in Bowling Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, North Carolina by Elders Joseph Sawyer and Harold

Pittman. His body was laid to rest in the Williams Family Cemetery near Sharpsburg, North Carolina to await the second coming of Christ our Savior, at which time Brother Henry had a fervent hope that he would be carried to that eternal home of peace and joy.

His absence has left a vacancy that will be with us for some time to come. God called him to fill his place and he has completed the call. Now we are thankful for the dear Elders who have come to rescue us and help to make us at Pleasant Hill feel there is still purpose for us to move forward. We know they will fill their places and Brother Henry's place will still be void. We beg your prayers.

This obituary has been written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church in conference October 22, 2006. A copy to be placed on the church records, one sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication, and one to the family.

J. Carroll Williams
Elder Jimmy Gray, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

MATTHEW 6:21-22.

*For where your treasure is,
there will your heart be also.*

*The light of the body is the
eye: if therefore thine eye be
single, thy whole body shall be
full of light.*

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

"The Lord has been so good to me

I want to praise His name

His mercy long has been my plea

His grace I would proclaim.

Yea though of sinner I'm the worst

Still I desire to praise

The gracious God who loved me first

To Him my voice I'll raise.

*I pray the Lord that I might see
Myself released from sin.*

It's burden long has harassed me,

How sore a plague is sin!

I long to leave this world of woe

And with my Savior reign

Where self no longer is my foe

And I am free from pain."

Composed by Joyce Pittman

Sent in by her mother,

Sister Mae Williams

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 EDITORIAL

“Your Father Abraham Rejoiced to See My Day: and He Saw It, and Was Glad.” John 8:56



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Recorded in John 8:56-58 are the words, ***“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”***

What manner of man is this? The prophet Isaiah said He had no form

nor comeliness and no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He bare the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross. Yet, He was God in the flesh, ***“for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”*** He had all power. He knew all things that were to come to pass because He had purposed them and ordained them. He was the Word that was in the beginning, that was with God and that was God. He was the One by whom all things were made and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life. Even the wind and the sea obeyed Him. No man took His life from Him, but He willingly layed it down because of the great love wherewith He loved His elect. He had power to lay it down and He had power to take it up again. But His body of flesh, without sin, was a veil that the carnal eye could not penetrate nor the carnal mind comprehend. There were some such as Peter to whom this man was revealed as Christ, the Son of the living God. However, many of the Jews were not blessed to believe in Him and in fact, despised Him and desired to kill Him. But His hour had not yet come and they could not lay their hands on Him.

On the occasion of the above scripture, the Pharisees were con-

tending with Jesus over who He said that He was and who His father was. They said that Abraham was their father and seemed to believe that this natural tie of the flesh entitled them to be the children of God. But Jesus told them that He knew they were the seed of Abraham; and He also said, *"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. Ye do the deeds of your father."* Then, they began to profess that they had but one father, which was God. They had no understanding of this One who stood before them. No man can come to the Father, but by Christ and no man can come to Him, except the Father which sent Christ draw him. For the Father and Christ are one. Very bluntly, Jesus said that they were of their father, the devil. He was a murderer and a liar from the beginning.

Then, Jesus told them that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and he saw it, and was glad. They had no idea of what He was speaking. They replied that Jesus was not even fifty years old and how could He have seen Abraham. They only knew Jesus after the flesh. They knew nothing of Him spiritually because He did not reveal Himself to them. The world today knows nothing of Him spiritually. They have never experienced His love and mercy. Psalm 107 says, *"O Give*

thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endured for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." The redeemed of the Lord are the only ones who can say the Lord is good because they are the only ones who have experienced His love and mercy. Jesus told them that before Abraham was, I am. God is under no law nor time. There is no past nor any future with Him. It is an eternal now. He is the eternal I AM THAT I AM. As written in Exodus 3:13-15, *"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."* Our finite carnal minds cannot begin to comprehend this name of God. He had no beginning and has no end. He doesn't age as we do. He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Therefore, in

heaven, His people will not age, but dwell with Him in one eternal now.

When God commanded Abraham to take his only son Isaac (Genesis 22:2) whom he loved and offer him for a burnt offering, He gave Abraham the faith to believe God and that God would provide. So Abraham took Isaac and two young men and began their journey to this certain mountain. This was Mount Moriah upon which some 1,000 years yet to come Solomon would build the temple and yet another some 1,000 years Christ would hang on the cross. So it was not by chance or accident that Abraham was commanded to offer Isaac on this particular mountain, but by the divine purpose of this holy and all powerful God. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. I believe that Abraham saw more than just a natural mountain. The third day sets forth the gospel day, the day of grace. On the third day, Christ rose from the dead, having fulfilled the righteous, holy law of God to a jot and tittle. With the law having been fulfilled, the day of grace had come. Abraham was given an eye of faith to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world as He hung on the cross on this very mountain some 2,000 years in the future. Abraham saw the day of Jesus Christ. He saw the place afar off. Therefore, he could tell the two young men to wait there and he and Isaac would go yonder and worship and would come again to them.

As Abraham and Isaac journeyed toward the mountain on which God had commanded him to offer his son, Isaac asked his father, *"Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"* Abraham answered, *"My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."* By faith Abraham was given to see the day of Jesus Christ and to proclaim that God will provide Himself a lamb for the offering. Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 5:6 and 13:8). The holy, righteous law of God required a holy, righteous sacrifice to satisfy it. No one of Adam's race was qualified. *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."* *"There is none righteous, no, not one."* Therefore, God sent His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. As Abraham bound Isaac and laid him upon the wood on the altar and reached for the knife, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, *"Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."* When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. The ram was a type of Christ and I believe the horns set

forth the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Acts 2:23 says that He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Abraham rejoiced to see His day and he saw it, and was glad.

You, dear children of the heavenly King, also rejoiced to see the day of your beloved Savior and you saw it, and were glad. When the Lord imputed His righteous, holy law into you and you were brought down in condemnation to see yourself as a sinner and the vilest of sinners, you felt your lost condition and were given to know that you could not keep the law. As the Apostle Paul said, *"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."* *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* Then, the Lord appears as the Sun of righteousness as He arises with healing in His wings. Therefore, you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. You experience the warmth of His comfort and peace in His love and mercy. As calves of the stall, you are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Works of the flesh are done away and grace has come. The Lord feeds you with the bread from heaven which is Christ, the bread of life. As you are calves of the stall, God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Having seen by faith the day of Jesus Christ, you can witness with Psalm 31:7, *"I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy."*

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

VOICES OF THE PAST

Perdita Lowe,
Mt. Airy, N.C.

Dear Brother Denny:

My mind has been impressed for sometime to write a few lines to the "Landmark" in regard to my afflictions and the 'dealings of the Lord with me.

I was born June 1st, 1879 and when I was about 3 years old I had an attack of typhoid fever, which left me with an obscure disease which kept me weak and prevented my recovery; and thought I was able to go about and do some work, yet I could not feel well and strong, or recover my health again. In this enfeebled state I lingered till Jan. 15th., 1898, when I was taken sick in bed and have been in a helpless condition more or less ever since.

I am now 47 years of age-nearly 19 years of activity and 28 years of invalidism.

In my long and continued sickness I have almost forgotten what it

is to be able to go about where I please, and can hardly imagine just how I felt when I could go about with my sister to church and mingle in society.

I live on the farm and, before confinement, spent much of my time out of doors, working in the field when able, and sometimes doing around the house.

I loved outdoor life, but confinement seemed to me the most dreadful thing imaginable. Soon after I was taken sick, I had to limit my diet to a few articles of food which I could not relish and avoid such food as my appetite craved. During the first year of confinement I had strength enough to walk, and walked out into the yard a few times which caused me much suffering, yet it was hard to give up so long as I had strength to go. After many futile attempts to get up, and walk, when feeling my best, which made me worse each time and rendered me less able, I had to give up and remain in bed. But this was hard to do and I spent many sleepless nights mourning over my fate and the awful condition I was in. Through the day I could pass away the time comparatively well by keeping my mind occupied, and my hands busy knitting, crocheting, sewing and many other little things which I soon learned to do in a horizontal position.

But at the approach of evening when the shadows grew long, I dreaded to see the sun go down, for it seemed to me I should never see

it rise again. The long and wearisome nights seemed dreadful, and the little sleep I could get was not refreshing.

Sometimes I would feel smothered, and breathing so difficult that I would have to struggle for breath all night and get no sleep at all, and medicine did me no good. I tried to take an interest in everything going on around me and tried to be helpful whenever there was anything I could do. On Sunday mornings it was my delight to help my little sisters dress and get ready to go abroad or to church and I was busy and happy till I watched them leave, then I would feel so lonesome and as I thought of the days passed when I was able to go, my heart would get so heavy I would have to cover my face and give way to bitter weeping. But weeping over my lamentable condition only weakened my nervous system, and rendered me less able to withstand my disease.

As I felt my nerves giving away, my thoughts scattered, a deep depression of mind, and other systems which indicate insanity, I was convinced that if I proceeded further in this course, I should soon lose my mind. My condition was deplorable; but it could be worse; I could be insane, a condition which seemed to me most awful, the contemplation of which made me shudder and feel that I could endure almost anything if only I could keep my right mind. Thus I reasoned and at length re-

solved to put forth every effort possible to throw off my troubles, and stop mourning over my fate which I could not possibly alter. I would try to look on the bright side of everything and instead of brooding over my calamities, I would try to think of something for which I ought to be thankful. I would grasp every opportunity I had to pass away my troubles. I tried to enforce a cheerful disposition, especially when my friends were about to encourage me, which I soon found to be an excellent tonic to my weak nerves.

I was so successful in my attempts at cheerfulness that some of my friends seemed to think that I was comparatively contented and happy in this miserable condition. They would frequently ask me if I did ever try to get up and then add, "*There is nothing like a resolution,*" which very much annoyed me, remembering as I did the awful things which I had suffered in my attempts to get up and go in this diseased condition. I prayed for strength and courage to face all trials, mount all difficulties, and overcome every obstacle, and prevent my falling again into despair.

When a child I had a vague idea of heaven and the joys of that world to come. I understood it was a happy place where all the good and righteous would be gathered when they left this world. I had a seriousness of mind, even when a child, and loved to hear others talk of that beautiful world beyond. I thought when I

grew older and learned to read it would be delightful to read about Christ and the world above. I felt out of harmony with my surroundings here in this low ground of sorrow, sickness and dying and rejoiced in the thought of a perfect home where no death could ever come. I thought I would try to live right and be good and make certain of that happy state after death.

I always enjoyed hearing the good old songs, and when the family had gathered around the fireside at night, nothing pleased me better than to hear my father call for the hymn book, then my father and mother and older sisters, would join in singing beautiful hymns, which I enjoyed immensely. My mother had a beautiful voice and my father had a good bass voice, and it was delightful to hear them mingle their voices in such songs as: O happy day when saints shall meet; O when shall I see Jesus and reign with Him above; Come we that love the Lord, which were among their favorite songs. But now their voices are silent. My mother and father have long since left earth's cares and tribulations and gone to their reward. My brother and sisters, too, have left the old home and gone into homes of their own; only one dear sister remaining to attend my wants and share my troubles, and comfort me in my afflictions. The memories of those songs and fireside conversation are the sweetest of my childhood days.

As I grew older and learned to read and study my bible, which was my greatest delight, I found that it was not so easily understood as I had anticipated. But I learned that the hopes of a home beyond the grave, the thoughts of which had filled my childish mind and brightened my youthful days, were for those only who had been regenerated and born again; and as I could not point to a time when I had such a radical change in my feeling, I was convinced that I was yet in my sins, and an alien from God, in darkness, and in the shadows of death. The future looked so dark to me, and at that time I was in very bad health and felt that I could not live long and would soon die and pass into the unknown. I would often ask myself the question-if I should die tonight, where would I be? I tried to pray but the spirit that giveth utterance to prayer was not manifest in me. For several years I mourned over my lost condition and went about my daily occupation with a heavy heart, and a soul longing for peace with God and a knowledge of His will. About a year after I was taken sick, one evening in Jan. 1899, my heart began to feel very heavy, and after the family had retired I tried to pray, but the darkness grew deeper and all was darkness around me, and I could see that I was in the shadows of death; out of Christ and without God in the world; and for a moment I felt that I was cut off forever, and could never be numbered with the

redeemed, or come into the congregation of the righteous. Just then the light sprung up within my heart to lighten my way and manifested the scriptures to me and many passages of scriptures which I had learned by heart, but could not understand their meaning, were opened to me, so much so, I longed for day when I could read my bible, as I could understand it so much better than I ever could before. *"For God who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* 2 Cor. 4-6. I thought of the Lord's parables of the kingdom of heaven: *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field."*

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matthew 13 :44, 45, 46. Even so I felt that I could give up all the world for this little hope. I spent the night in sweet meditation.

After I had been confined for several years, I longed to hear the sound of preaching again.

About this time Elder J. A. Ashburn (now deceased) called to see me, and in our conversation I

asked him to have preaching at my home as I wished to hear him preach once more. He left an appointment for Christmas eve night. I looked forward to the time, and it was delightful to hear preaching and singing again. His sermon was very interesting, and I well remember his text, "*It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.*" *John 6:63.*

When I had been sick about 12 years they bought me a wheel chair which enabled me to go out to preaching. I well remember the first time I went to Stony Creek, (a church organized since my confinement) a short distance from my home, and as I neared the church I heard them singing, which made me feel very happy. It was my first time to hear Elder F. P. Stone preach.

He preached so comforting and the singing sounded so good. It was delightful to be with my friends in the house of worship. I continued able to go to church about 4 or 5 years and looked forward to the meeting days, and always tried to go when the weather would permit it.

In Feb. 1911, my father died, and the, next day after he was buried my mother was taken sick, and lived about 3 weeks when she, too, was laid to rest beside my father. This was a terrible strain on my nerves, and seemed to me the darkest period of my life. My home was broken up and could never be the same again. But the Lord who has carried me over all my trouble gave me strength

to endure and has preserved me unto this day.

On the 3rd Sunday in November, 1912, I related my experience to the church and was received into fellowship with them and on the 3rd Sunday in June following, I was baptized in Stony Creek on my chair by Elders G. O. Key and F. P. Stone, the pastor. Soon after this I was again confined to my bed and have remained helpless ever since. I have not walked a step in over 27 years, and cannot even sit up in bed.

Before closing, I will mention some scripture which has been a consolation to me in my afflictions, and to which often referred when in deep distress: "*For which cause we faint not, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*" *2 Cor. 4:16, 17.* "*My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing.*" *James 1:2, 3, 4.*

"*They that sow in tears shall reap in Joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*" *Psalms, 126:56.*

For His anger endureth but a moment, in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Psalms 3:5.

I try to be reconciled to the will of the Lord, and put all my trust in Him, *"and commit the keeping of my soul to Him, in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator," "knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God,"* and feel to say with the patriarch of old *"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh; blessed be the name of the Lord."*

Your sister in hope of a better life,
Perdita Lowe,

THE PRODIGAL SON Luke, XV.

In reply to the request of Sister Conner, found on page 440 of this issue of the MONITOR, we offer the following thoughts, First, it will be observed that the Savior is here addressing himself to the Pharisees and scribes, who were a very self-righteous people. They embellished the outside of the sepulcher, but the greatest of disorder reigned within. When they saw *"all the publicans and sinners"* coming to Jesus, though they sought with humble modesty an opportunity to learn of the precious doctrine he taught, they were disposed to criticize, saying, *"This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."* This was an offense to them. They esteemed

very highly their boasted dignity, and looked in great contempt upon those the Savior had now made his companions. It was too much for their wounded pride. Evidently they greatly mistook his mission into this world of suffering humanity, as do many to this day. He therefore spake three parables to them, which are recorded in this chapter, in which he draws his lessons from the analogies of human nature and circumstances current in daily life.

His mission was to save the lost. Not what is safe, but what is lost is the just occasion of his laboring in finding and joy upon recovering. This is clearly brought out in the three parables. *"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, more than ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."* Then why should he not receive publicans and sinners, however wicked they may have been, when they come to him bringing fruits meet for repentance? And thus with strong emphasis he clearly vindicates his kind treatment, sympathy, and love for poor sinners *"Even so it is not the will of our Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish;"* Matt., xviii, 14.

The inference is not to be drawn from what is said in the seventh verse concerning the "just," that there are any who were never lost and never needed repentance. The Savior is here reasoning with the

Pharisees and scribes upon common principles, as much as to say, You think you are all right, safe within the fold, why find fault with me for finding and saving the lost? How sharp his rebuke to them. Instead of giving them a word of commendation, he rebukes them for their selfish pride in the good opinion they had of themselves. It is a bad fault when one gets to thinking more highly of himself than he ought to think, but let him think soberly and he will feel very humble and little. He will esteem any of his brethren more worthy of attention than himself.

The prodigal son represents to us what the Savior saw in those publicans and sinners who so earnestly came to him for the living bread, feasting upon his words which were to them spirit and life; John, vi, 63. And for all this younger son had shamefully and prodigally wasted all his substance, bringing shame and poverty, ruin and desolation upon himself, until he fain would have nourished his famishing body *"with the husks that the swine did eat,"* yet he is not to be denied the blessings of a loving father's hand, a merciful father moved with tenderest sympathy for his sorrowing, repenting child. There is joy at his returning. The father is made happy. Such is the undying love of him who says to poor sinners, who are ready to perish, *"Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn*

thee." *"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, [mercy], in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* With endearing love to the Father the soul responds quickly, *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. We were prodigals sure enough, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."*

The elder son is taken to represent the Pharisees and scribes who were displeased when Jesus so readily received the poor souls of want-publicans and sinners. This parable he gives to them by way of reproof, to show the envy and wickedness of their hearts. How, like the Pharisee who boasts of himself and glories in his own obedience are these words of the elder son; *"Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments."* Those who fear they are better than others are very apt to speak of it. They even at times boast before the Lord as if he were really brought under obligation to them. How vain and presumptuous is the proud heart of

man until God breaks it in pieces. One has said, *"Those that think highly of themselves and their services, are apt to think hardly of their master, and meanly of his favors."*

In Conclusion we would say to any that have gone out from their Father's house and *"began to be in want,"* Do not think you can be satisfied on husks. You may have promised yourself satisfaction, but you will as certainly find disappointment as you are a child of God. In vain do you apply to the world for help, for they haven't that to give that will feed and nourish the child of God. You are away from your Father's house; cut off from its privileges you can not be contented and happy. Have you thought how much it would be to your interest to go home to your own kindred? In your Father's house there is abundant provision to supply all his children, and strangers do not want it. We are not debtors to the flesh, we are under no obligations to Babylon, but may say, *"I will arise and go to my Father."*

R. W. Thompson

WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCH AND WORLD?

Having been ordained as a minister of the gospel, and having done some writing and much reading, I am asked over and over again as to why there is so much disagreement in the church and the world.

Some people seem to believe

that all Christian people should be in perfect agreement on all points of doctrine, and practice, and that unless it is so, there is something radically wrong with religion.

Since it is evident that there was lack of perfect understanding, in the days of Christ's ministry here in the world, and especially so in the Apostolic age, can we expect perfect harmony in this age?

My opinion is, and has been, that as long as men are men, self opinionated, selfish, self willed, there will be conflicts of opinion.

What is the remedy? John said, in chapter 3, verses 3, etc., answering Nicodemus, who said to Jesus, *"Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher sent from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him."*

Jesus answered and said unto him, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of Heaven of God."* Nicodemus said, *"How can a man be born when he is old?"*

Jesus answered, *"Verily, verily. I say unto thee. except a man be born of water and of the spirit. he cannot enter the Kingdom of God."*

Jesus said, *"That which is born of the, flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."*

Does not this answer the question? Why are men in disagreement so generally?

By the natural birth of Christ,

and the world at large, born under the law, and justly condemned by the law, a remedy is the only escape from the curse of the law and Jesus alone, the sinless one made that perfect and acceptable remedy effectual. In Him alone is the righteousness of the family of God.

The New Birth, through Christ the Head, thus fulfilling the glorious covenant of redemption, the lawful captives are set free, and can sing free grace, first, last and through all time.

Jesus continued as the teacher sent from God, saying, "*Marvel not that I said unto thee*" "*Ye must be born again.*"

And this explains why unconverted men everywhere trust in the flesh, and fleshly engagements, and have no confidence in spiritual worship.

Jesus explains how this spiritual worship, and conduct is brought about.

Said He, "*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence to cometh and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*"

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. Does not this answer the question? Men, in nature, act out the principle that is in him and the Spiritual judgeth all things. (1st Cor. 2 :14-15).

The things of the Spirit are only understood by those who have been taught of the Lord. The worldly-minded man cannot understand, those who have been taught of the Lord. The worldly minded man cannot understand that there is a difference among men, some Spiritually minded, humble, meek, lowly in Spirit, beggars at a throne of grace, imploring the Mercy of God, upon their unworthy head, while there are many, in the broad way that leads to death, feeling that they are better than others, and yet we are taught that there is a straight and narrow way that leads to life, and immortality. And while it is said, "*Few there be that find It, the Book of Revelations records John's vision which he says HE SAW FIRST AN HUNDRED. AND FORTY AND FOUR THOUSAND of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel He then saw them come from every land, nation, kindred, tongue and people, AN INNUMERABLE Host WITH THEIR ROBES MADE WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.*"

So, let God be true, and every man a liar. "*We are saved by hope, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but we are taught that as long as we are in the world, we will be subject to temptation, and that even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to-wit, the REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES, FOR WE ARE SAVED BY*

HOPE, but hope that is seen is not hope, but if for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. "LIKEWISE THE SPIRIT ALSO HELPETH our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the SPIRIT ITSELF MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR US WITH GROANINGS WHICH CANNOT BE UTTERED."

"And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the SPIRIT, BECAUSE HE MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR THE SAINTS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD."

"What shall we say to these things IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?" "WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or peril, or sword? 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 POWERS, NOR THINGS PRESENT, NOR THINGS TO COME, NOR HEIGHT, NOR DEPTH, NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE, SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD, WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD. (Rom. 8th. Ch.)

It is enough.

O.J. Denny

"LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED"

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Jesus was soon to depart, and sought to comfort His disciples, and to prepare their minds against the time when He was to go home, and described to them the person, and grace of the Holy Ghost, which He promised to send, to comfort them. Read John 14, 1st to 7th vs.

As a dying father, surrounded by his family, standing on the threshold of the eternal world, He spake these comforting words: *"Let not your heart be troubled."* He, in this quiet hour shortly before His crucifixion, teaches the eternal nature of the God-head and His oneness with the Father, as He is the way, the truth and the life of all the children of promise.

Jesus assures them of His unceasing love for them and knows that after His departure they are to be kept by the Father, and the Son through the visitation of the Holy Spirit, unto the last and final day. And in the second verse, *"I go to prepare a place for you."* He said to them, *"It is expedient that I go, and, if I go, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also."*

"He did not promise that He would send for them, that they might long to go to that home that He was to prepare for them; but said, I, will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also." They were troubled in spirit; but Jesus assures them that it is expedient and for their good, that He was leaving them in person; but not in spirit, for He is ever watchful over His children, never leaving them nor forsaking them; but as a good shepherd, keepeth watch over His flock; so Jesus is ever watchful over His people.

He said, *"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you. (John 16:7).*

Though Jesus is absent in body, He is not in spirit, for He said, *"I will not leave you comfortless."* He also promised that We, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, will make our abode with you. He is the life, light, and joy of the whole family of God.

And said, *"As I live ye shall live also."*

O. J. Denny

Sent in by Keith Hiatt.

"A KING SHALL REIGN"

"A King shall reign in righteousness" Isaiah 32:1-2.

The prophet Isaiah was inspired of "God to say, *"A king shall reign in righteousness,"* over seven hundred years before the birth of our blessed Lord. Truly Isaiah said, *"reign in righteousness,"* not try to reign, but reign. Which means to have and to exercise power. And our blessed Lord said, *"As thou, (meaning God) has, given me power over all flesh, (that he, the Son) should give, (not try to give) eternal life to as many as thou hast, (past tense) given me."* This comforts me greatly, it does not depend on my righteousness, for I have none, except the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ my Lord. Jesus was made unto us, *"Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption."* Romans, 8:31. *"What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"* Dear children Christ Jesus still reigns, and shall forever reign.

Did he not stop Saul as he went to bind and put in prison, those that called upon the name of our blessed Lord? Did he not cause Saul to say *"who art thou Lord?"* Did Saul, (after this experience) ever persecute the church? No, but rather on every hand jeopardized his life for the church.

Little children, have you ever tried to find a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the storm? Oh the many times I have watched with a great dread the approach of the storm and how I feared the wind. I wondered if the house would stand up against the pressure. When Daddy appeared on the scene, I would get just as close to him as I could; I felt safe as long as I was close to him. But there came a time With me, that strong as he was, my Daddy could not hide me from the great storm that raged in my soul. This wind was so strong, that I felt myself being swept into eternal oblivion, yes separated from all the things that my soul desired and yearned for. And when I looked; there was no eye to pity, and no arm to save. I heard a voice Say. *"And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the storm."* I looked and lo it was Jesus. I cried out, Lord save or I perish.

If the above is your experience, you need not ask some what you may do in order to be born again, you are born already. Yes born of a incorruptable seed. Born of God. Redeemed by his blood. From here on you will need, each hour of the day, each day of the week, each week of the month, each month of the year, yes the rest of your life, a man behind whom you can hide from the winds of this ungodly world, and a *covert from the storms of adversity.* *"One mighty to save."* This man

is Jesus. *"For there is none other name given in heaven, or among men, whereby we must be saved."* And we have his promise that he will never forsake us, nor leave us alone, but will go with us even to the end of the world.

O. J. Rives.

DIVINE REVELATION

Dear Brother Crawford:

This morning, after having been sick the last few days, but was able to attend church yesterday and enjoy a good service and feeling somewhat better in body, my mind is on Divine Revelation. I know this is a broad subject, but I want to mention a few instances where God revealed Himself to His people, even to Adam the first man that ever lived on earth. After he had eaten of the forbidden fruit, that he was commanded not to eat, he and his wife knew that they were naked and endeavored to cover their nakedness with the work of their own hands, and hid themselves as they thought from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden and the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, *"Where art thou?"* Not inquiring where Adam was but to reveal Himself to Adam that he (Adam) might know the Lord was still mindful of his existence on earth, and of his transgression of Divine law. For sin is the transgression of the law.

Therefore he sinned, he and his wife were driven out or rather sent forth from the garden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. I'm not so sure what he lost, it wasn't eternal life I'm sure, because he only possessed natural life, yet he lost communion in some sense or a state of happiness that he enjoyed while in the garden. So he and all his race thereafter were lost in the ruins of the fall, being alienated from God and became dead in trespasses and sins, strangers to God and foreigners, so they had no will, nor power to acquaint themselves with God since they, or we were all dead, but it gives us great joy to know that God reveals Himself to His own, His elect, His chosen people, that He chose out of Adam, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the holy prophets and said, *"I am the Lord Almighty,"* and to His people in this age as He did show who profited in the Jews religion above many of His equals in His own nation. He was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of His Father.

But when it pleased God, he said, *"Who separated Me from My Mother's womb, and called Me by His grace, to reveal His Son in Me. Not only in regeneration, but that I might preach Him among the heathen."* So I love to think of the expression of Jesus when He said *"I thank Thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even*

so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight, all things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and He whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."

Paul the apostle in his epistle to the churches in Galatia said, *"I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

When Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And they said, *"Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets."* He said unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. After having Peter say that he knew He was the Son of the living God by divine revelation He follows this statement by saying, *"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* So I feel the church is built upon divine revelation. So all we know about God or His church is what is revealed to us.

Why has he hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes? Well, for so it seemeth good in His sight.

After His resurrection His own people didn't know Him, while some of them as they walked toward a village talked of the things that had happened. Jesus drew near and went with them, but their eyes were covered so they should not know Him. He said unto them, "*What manner of communication are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad.*" One of them said, "*Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem and hast not known the things that have come to pass in these days, concerning Jesus of Nazareth which was a prophet mighty indeed. We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel.*" But by and by as they sat at meat, He took bread and blessed it and gave to them and their eyes were opened and they knew Him. Then they said one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the scriptures?"

When Jesus saw Mary weeping He said, "*Why weepest thou?*" She said, "*Because they have taken away my ord and I know not where they have laid Him.*" Jesus was standing by and she knew not that it was Jesus. She supposed Him to be the gardener and even said, "*Sir, if thou hast borne Him*

away, tell me where thou hast laid Him." But Jesus only had to speak, and said, "Mary." She then turned at this point and knew that it was Jesus speaking to her, and said unto Him, "*Master.*" She knew Him because of divine revelation. And so it is written, "*Eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.*" But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit, yea, the deep things of God. So the Father reveals the Son. The Son reveals Himself, the Spirit reveals the Father and the Son. And so God reveals Himself to whomsoever He will. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever. So we must conclude it's all in His power to withhold or to reveal. What a sweet thought to feel in our own heart that the Lord has revealed Himself to us as our Saviour and Lord, yes, to us the fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Yes revealed to us that our sins were forgiven, and gave us a sweet hope of heaven's pure world. So often we forget Him here in this troubled world and feel so far from God, wondering where our beloved has gone. Oh, how wonderful to find Him, when He finds us. He makes us realize from time to time that He is God and that we are His people. This has grown too long now. There is no end to this subject it seems.

May the God of revelation bless Zion everywhere.

In humble hope of a better world.

Elder Walter Evans.

TRUSTED IN THEMSELVES THAT THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS

Kind friends: when you and I consider the admonition of our Dear Lord in the many great lessons found in the grand old Bible, it is very easy for us to think: well this is intended for Mr. so and so. It is not meant for me, for I know I am not guilty of this or that, I remember well once when I had used the text I have in mind, to make an effort to introduce for a man to preach and I felt then as I do now, that to some extent we are all guilty of this great sin, But the preacher who went into the stand said (*"I am not guilty of this myself,"*) To my way of thinking that is a good sign one is truly guilty. The Lord here teaches a much need of praying always, of having as much as possible at all times, the desire of our poor hearts to know and to do the will of God, A desire that God might lead us, might direct us in the way that is pleasing unto him etc, Luke chapter 18 and verse 8 says: *"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that, they were righteous and despised others;"* Friends:

that looks awful ugly when we behold it in the other fellow, but after all that is not at all hard for God's children to do, One thing I do know and that is this: Satan is always real handy, and he will cause you to think anything possible that might tend to destroy your most precious possession, and mind you kind friends; one of the most precious possessions is the spirit of meekness; Just as soon as you and I can begin to behold good in us. Of course we will in a measure feel to be righteous. We will in a measure trust in ourselves that we are righteous. Is it not always easy for one to acknowledge this, but just the same whether we acknowledge it or not, we can rest assured God knows every thought; Not one is ever hid from Him; and another bad thing is, Dear Friend: just as sure as we trust in ourselves that we are righteous, we automatically despise others. Isn't that an awful condition for our hearts to be in? We are not aware of the condition we are actually in, and yet we are made to wonder at times why God will not harken unto our cries. Wonder why thus and so is wrong with us. Wonder why we are so far from God. On the other hand, just as sure as we find we are in the condition, the poor publican was in, we are blessed with an humble and a contrite spirit and feel unworthy to even call upon HIS GREAT and GOOD NAME. We can only plead for His mercy. Then we, instead of despising others, will behold them better

than ourselves. We will see, the good in them and the evil in ourselves. God will hear our humble cries and will revive our spirit, *"will revive the hearts of the contrite ones."* Isa. 57 and 15.

God loves and approves the sweet spirit of HUMBLENESS and MEEKNESS. Christ was humble and Meek. He said so Himself. He said, *"Come unto me all that labor and are heavy laden, for I AM MEEK and lowly of heart."* Oh; that you and I were MEEK and LOWLY IN HEART more often, I am persuaded that there would BE MORE SWEET PEACE and REST AMONGST OLD BAPTISTS. Just as long as we Trust in ourselves that we are righteous, we will despise others and we will NOT GO DOWN TO OUR HOUSE JUSTIFIED EITHER. But just as sure as we come, as did the poor publican, then we will get the same results he got. God has not changed in the least.

God knew how wicked and how sinful His little children would be all down through the ages of time, and for that reason He spake this parable for their learning, for their good, for their profit that they might look into the mirror and behold their sinful condition and might want to change from that ugly way and go down to their house justified, and have the sweet felt presence of the Lord, might desire that our poor spirits be REVIVED, that we might enter into the JOYS of the Lord. One will never do that so long as he trusts himself

that he is righteous. For he will then despise others, even though they might not actually be aware of it. God is aware of it and God rewards His *"according as their works shall be."* REV. 22. No reward like the SWEET FELT PRESENCE OF THE LORD. We all know this is so. Oh; Lord Please give me a sweet spirit of humility. Enable me to behold my sinful ways, that I may have Thy sweet felt presence, is my prayer.

David P. Bridgman,
Tallasse, Ala.

HOPEWELL, N .J., March 14, 1904.

DEAR SISTER HELLINGS:- I received your kind and interesting letter of March 4th in due time, and feel like replying with a few words this morning. I feel glad for the blessing the Lord gave you through his word, of which you spoke, and hope that many such blessings are still in store for you. How precious are such summer seasons when they are given to the soul. They are like refreshing sunshine after a long dark time. *"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning,"* and his coming is like the rising of the sun. You were thus favored, and were glad in the favor. I am glad you wrote me about it. I am glad always in the gladness of the children of God when I know of it. But you also speak of dark seasons, and of the

sense of your own vileness and weakness. This is a common experience, and it is a needful one to all of us. As we learn to know ourselves we come to know the fullness of the grace of God more and more that can save such sinners as we are.

I hoped you would be able to meet with us yesterday. We had a good meeting together. I used as a text the words found in 2 Chronicles xx. 26. I had a very pleasant exercise of mind while speaking. Because the people did not need to fight in the battle, as the Lord fought for them, therefore, they could only bless the Lord for the victory. It is truly a valley of blessing. It is only when we are humbled and occupy the lowly places that we ever do really bless God, and the one thought that came to me with comfort was this: that we never do need to fight for ourselves. No matter who or what the enemy may be, let us go forth only singing and praising God and the Lord will undertake for us. If some one speaks unjustly of us let us still not contend against him, but go forward in the way in which we are commanded of God steadfastly, only remembering to sing to his praise, and we shall soon come to the cliff, where we see the enemy, all dead bodies on the plain. So Israel was bidden to go forward with the singers and prayers upon instruments in the forefront; not swords and shields and spears, but instruments of music and praise. I was glad I was enabled to speak.

I must close now. May God bless you and yours in all things. Remember me to Mr. Hellings and to all. We all join in kind regards to you. Bonnie is now steadily mending. Little Mary has been sick since last Wednesday, but is now better, though as yet in bed.

I remain as ever, your brother and pastor,

Elder F. A. Chick.

Chatsworth, Ga., Sept. 27, 1928.

Dear Brother Lefferts: If indeed I may be permitted under the Spirit of Jesus to claim such precious relationship. I would be pleased, the Lord giving you the spirit and desire to do so, to have you comment at some length upon the seventeenth chapter of John, especially the second verse. From my very limited conception, the sentiment contained in this second verse seems to be the very fundamental principle and capstone covering the salvation of God's people. Not one more nor one less. It seems to me it covers it, and should put an end to all doubts whatsoever as entertained by the world's religion. It seems these, whomsoever they may be, were given to the Son by the Father before the hills were formed; These are they that fell in the transgression of Adam and whom Christ, the Son of God, in his crucifixion and death redeemed from their lost and ruined state. These are they whom God in his mercy has invited to drink

from that fountain whose springs never run dry. These are those to whom the Scriptures were written as a guide to lead them in paths of righteousness. These are those referred to by the angel of God when Joseph was told that Mary should bear a SON, and that he shall save his people from their sins." There are many, many more who come under this; in fact, it seems to cover the entire scope of the plan of salvation.

Dear brother, please pardon me for having unnecessarily taken up your time, but for the time being I almost lost sight of myself, and of the object in view. I have a few special friends, and although they belong to the religions of the world, yet they seem to have an ear for the truth of the Scriptures as advocated by the Old School Baptists, therefore I am very desirous that you comply through the columns of the SIGNS on said Scripture for the benefit of said friends, and for my special comfort and consolation. I take several Old Baptist periodicals, but in none of the others do I see and read the deep things of God and his truth that I do in the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. When I was married (in the year 1882) my dear departed companion, whose maiden name was Nannie B. Woodall, was then taking this dear paper, and it continued coming, to her, but under the name of Mrs. G. M. Edwards, until her death, March, 1923. I have continued taking, it since then, and if it is the Lord's will I hope to never be

without it as long as he shall spare this poor undeserving and unprofitable sinner.

I beg you to remember me when at the throne of God's sweet grace.

In sorrow and tribulation,
GEORGE M. EDWARDS.

MEETINGS

The July 4th meeting in 2007 will be held, the Lord willing, with Head Of The River Church. Preaching to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder William Hale Terry

STAUNTON RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on July 7th and 8th, 2007 at Weatherford Church which is our usual meeting place.

The church of Springfield will be the host. Weatherford Church is located on Music Street at the intersection of 760 and 765 highways in Pittsylvania County about 5 miles from Gretna, Va.

We invite our correspondents and believers of our faith.

Burnell B. Williams, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2007

Allene Gallimore, NC	5.00
A.U. Hocutt, GA	5.00
Randolph Plybon, VA	5.00
James Pugh, AL	5.00
John Swilley, AR	25.00
Grace Manly, AL	5.00
Geneva Pettis, LA	75.00
Edward Ambrose, VA	5.00
Elder Barnabas Brammer, PA	10.00
Elder Theron James, LA	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER AGNES UTLEY HOCUTT

Sister Agnes Utley Hocutt, age 93, of Albany/Americus, Georgia, departed this life on Sunday evening, May 6, 2007 at The Magnolia Manor Nursing Center in Americus, Georgia. She was born on May, 21, 1913 in, and was a native of, Tuscaloosa County, Alabama.

She had resided in Albany/Americus, Georgia since late 1991. Her husband of 61 years, Brother Ralph A. Hocutt Sr., preceded her in death February 1997.

Sister Hocutt was a member of The Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church located near Berry, Alabama. She had attended The Bethany Primitive Baptist Church in Worth County, Georgia until her health failed in 1997.

Sister Hocutt is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Ralph A. Hocutt Jr. and Beverly J. Hocutt; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; a sister and brother in-law, Sister Christine Utley Ramsey and William Ramsey of Huntsville, Alabama; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on May 9, 2007 at The Heritage Chapel Funeral Home In Cottdonale, Alabama, with Elder James T. Howard officiating. Internment was in The Alberta City Cemetery where she was laid to rest beside her husband.

Sister Agnes traveled extensively during her many years to attend the meetings and associations among The Old Baptist Churches in the Southern, Southeastern and Eastern parts of The United States. She loved to be with the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Church. She will be missed by all of those who knew her.

Submitted by The Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

CATHERINE PAGE WYCHOCKE

Sister Catherine Page Wychocke passed from this life in Chicago, Illinois, on January 7, 2007, at the age of 83 after a long illness.

She was received into the Durham Primitive Baptist Church on December 16, 1951, and was baptized by Elder J. W. Gilliam. Later, she moved to Chicago, Illinois, where she lived for many years. Whenever she had the opportunity, she began looking for the Primitive Baptists in the area. As the scriptures tell us in the Song of Solomon *“Go forth by the footsteps of the flock”* and she found them.

Sister Catherine attended the church there for a number of years and later requested dismissal from the Durham Church that she might join the church in Illinois; On October 19, 1987, the Durham Church gave her a letter of dismissal showing that she was in good standing here. She joined the Chicago Church upon confession of faith. After a few years, that church disbanded after a long decline. Then she requested that she be allowed to rejoin the Durham Primitive Baptist Church. She wanted her name to be with the Primitive Baptist people even though she was unable to come here often, She was received by the Durham Church on confession of

faith on May 20, 2000. It was good to have her home again.

Because of the frigid weather conditions in that area of the nation her family felt it would be better to hold her funeral service in a Chicago Funeral Chapel. This was done and their regular chaplain conducted the service. She was placed in the mausoleum beside her husband, Matthew Wychocke.

Sister Catherine was preceded in death by three husbands: Aaron Mason, Harvey Sanderson and Matthew Wychocke; she was well acquainted with sorrow, grief and loss. She is survived by her daughter, Judith Mason Lencioni; two grandchildren, Angelo and Lance Lencioni; and two sisters, Dorothy Brinkley of Fortville, Indiana, and Frances Brinkley of Gainesville, Georgia.

Her hope was anchored in the finished work of Christ. She felt that she could witness with *Job in Chapter 19, Verses 25-26: “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.”*

Sister Catherine was a lovely member.

Catherine M. Humbarger, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

*DEEP in the everlasting mind
The great mysterious purpose lay,
Of choosing some from lost man-
kind,
Whose sins the Lamb should bear
away.*

*Them, loved with an eternal love,
To grace and glory he ordained ;
Gave them a throne which cannot
move,
And chose them both to ways and
end.*

*In them he was resolved to make
The riches of his goodness known;
Them he accepts for Jesus' sake,
And views them righteous in his
Son.*

*No goodness God foresaw in his,
But what his grace decreed to give;
No comeliness in them there is
Which they did not from him re-
ceive.*

*Faith and repentance he bestows
On such as he designs to save;
From him their souls' obedience
flows,
And he shall all the glory have,*

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 EDITORIAL

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. (1 John 4:9)



Elder R. H. Campbell

This scripture has caused more concerned inquiry among the children of God than most any other scripture in the bible. There is one thing that they all feel to know, and that is that they do commit sin, and here John is telling them that he that

is born of God cannot commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, and this makes them question very seriously the fact; are they indeed children of God? There is much evidence, in their daily experiences that causes them to wonder about this fact, without the above scripture, and, then to read where John makes such a statement, it adds fuel to the fire that they are indeed mistaken in their calling. This is a perfectly normal response, for, in the wisdom of this world, they cannot honestly and completely disregard that possibility, but, this must be considered with the wisdom that they have been given, in the Spirit. Remember, God said, by the word that came unto Isaiah, (Isa. 55:8-9) *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* It is in the wisdom of God that this statement is made, and must be discerned in the same way, and in the mind of God, the man that is born of the Spirit cannot sin, because the Spirit of God dwells in him, and that is a place where sin cannot dwell.

The fact to consider, in reading this scripture, is that there are two men within the body of all men, who have been born of the Spirit: there is the old man who was born, in nature, from his mother’s womb; and then, there are some men who are born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus. These are the only ones that

shall ever see the kingdom of God; and they are the ones to whom the above scripture is directed: in fact, these are the only ones to whom all scriptures are directed. The bible is printed and distributed throughout the whole world, but, that does not mean that it is to all men. To the man in nature, it is foolishness, and is just an accumulation of myths, which are just stories written, by man to man, without any foundation or basis in fact. I heard a commentator say, just the other day, when referring to the flood, that it was just a myth. The world looks upon the bible in much the same way that the Athenians considered the truth in that day, They had an altar labeled, "to the unknown god." They were correct in their labeling the idol that way, but not in the way that they were thinking. This is actually the opinion of the natural man, in the flesh, of the scriptures, but they are not directed to them in any manner because they have neither lot nor part in these matters.

All scriptures are directed to the inner man, the one who has been born again, and has been given the spirit of discernment, whereby he understands the scriptures, which were written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They are the only ones who know the voice of the shepherd of the flock, and will respond intelligently to the words that are said. Jesus made this very plain in, (John 10:1-5) "*Verily, verily, I say unto you,*

he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth them by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth his own sheep forth, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of the stranger." Jesus is referring unto the fact that only those who hear his voice and follow him are his sheep, and the above scripture is addressed to the same ones; those who have been given ears to hear, hearts to understand and faith to believe what they hear, regardless of whether it sounds reasonable to the natural mind.

The natural man responded to the words of truth that was preached to them, on the day of Pentecost, by saying, "*these men are full of new wine*" but Peter rebuked them, (Acts 2:14-15) "*But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken unto my words: For these men are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.*" The natural man always

misinterprets the word of truth, because it is unreasonable unto him, since he has no basis of comparison, whereby he can understand it. It does not confirm to the laws of nature, the wisdom that he has learned in the flesh; from other men in nature.

Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus's response, was of the wisdom of the man in the flesh, "How can a man be born when he is old, can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born." This will always be the response of the man, in nature, when presented with this question, because it is not in the vernacular of the world. When one is born again, he enters into a new realm, one that he was totally unaware of previously, but, one in which he sees, hears, and understand things that he would never have believed possible before. These are the ones to whom the scriptures are always directed, and they will hear the word, and they will most assuredly believe it, although they cannot turn around and explain it to anyone else, unless they have been given a hearing ear, and an understanding heart.

(Eph 2:1-6) *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that*

now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved): and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Until man has been quickened, by the Holy Ghost, he has no basis on which to pass judgment on the scriptures; they are spiritually inspired, and he is natural, or as Paul stated it, in ignorance and unbelief. This was the situation with many, on the day of Pentecost, when the heard the disciples declaring the wonderful works of God, for it was in an unknown tongue unto them.

The, old man, is still walking according to the course of this world, and according to the prince of the power of the air, and will continue to do so throughout his entire lifetime here on earth, but, the new man, who indeed dwells in the same body, has been quickened and set apart, sanctified in Christ Jesus, if you

please, and made a new creature in Christ. The old man still is, as he was born into the world of nature, and is still under the law, because Christ did not redeem him from the penalty due him for his sins. He will continue to be liable for them as long as he lives, because, the wages of sin is death in the lake of fire and brimstone, and there is no escape from that just penalty. The new man is delivered from the law of sin and death, for righteousness, and enters into the new covenant with God, where grace and mercy reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Christ Jesus the Lord, as is stated, (Heb 10:9-10) *"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will, we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."* And this is the man to whom all scriptures, in the new testament are written, as it is stated in the first verse of the new testament, (Math 1:1) *"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."* And this applies to all that follows, in that they are the generation of Jesus Christ as beneficiaries of the new covenant of grace.

This is the man that does not commit sin, for (Gal 3:26) *"For ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There*

is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond or free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." If the children of God, are in Christ Jesus, surely, there is no sin there; it was left in the body of the old man, which is what the following scripture says to me, (Rom 8:3-4) *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* And that is where sin was consigned, and it has never infected the children of God, as is stated in (Rom 6:3-8) *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"* An again in (vs. 6) *"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. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."* And neither doth it have dominion over those that are in him, for they were baptized into his death, which is where sin hath no dominion.

The sins of the old man are not imputed unto the new man, because his seed (Christ into whom he was baptized) remaineth in him, and there is no sin in Christ. This fact is

stated in, (Rom 4:6-8) *“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”* This is true because, the apostle Paul said, speaking of Christ, (and what he accomplished in his death on the cross, (Eph 2:15) *“Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of Commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace: and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”* In this statement, to me, the writer is saying that the Jew and the Gentiles were separated by the law, because the law was never applicable to the Gentiles, and required a sacrifice, to reconcile man unto God. In his death: on the cross Christ made the sacrifice required, and the law was satisfied: the sins under the law were atoned for by the shedding of blood, and in his taking away the law of ordinances, he hath broken down the middle wall of partition between them, and in so doing, he establishes the second covenant, which is a spiritual covenant and he hath reconciled both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body. (Eph 2:18) *“For through him we both have access by one Spirit*

unto God.” (vs 14) *“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”* The Jews were redeemed from their sins under the law, by the death of Christ making atonement for them, and the Gentiles were exempted from the law of sin and death, that would have condemned them, its being removed from them, and where there is no law, there is no sin.

All of the above conditions were met in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and is the foundation upon which the precious scripture found in the apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians, is based, (Eph 2:8) *“For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God,”* and brethren, no higher price was ever paid for any gift than that, and no greater gift was ever given than that which was bestowed on unworthy sinners such as his children acknowledge themselves to be. They indeed worship him in Spirit and in truth, because each one knows that this blessing was not bestowed upon them for any inherent righteousness within themselves, and therefore it must be because God first loved them, and gave himself for them, and provided everything necessary for their salvation from this sinful life in this low ground of sin and sorrow. The scriptures declare, (1 Cor. 1:30) *“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteous-*

ness, and sanctification and redemption: That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." His children realize this, and they praise God in Spirit and in truth, for this precious gift that has been bestowed upon them.

David expressed the feelings that inspired the heart of each one, when these things were first made known unto them, and the joy and love that permeated their very being, for God, his word and the brethren and sisters of like precious faith. (Psa 40:2-5) *"He brought me up also out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praises unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."* Does not this express your travels of mind, and the faith that you were given, as you reflect on your life before, and after your change was made known to you. It is all of God, and man is but the blessed recipient of this marvelous work of grace.

I would say unto all, although you may not understand fully all scripture, believe them as written, and pray that you be given a better understanding because they are talking to you, and all of the promises are sure and certain to those

who rejoice in a finished salvation that cannot be changed, or voided, regardless of whether you understand every point of doctrine, or not. You can most assuredly rest on the promise made in, (Eph 1:3-6) *"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 Christ to himself, according to the pleasure of his will. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."* Now, I cannot imagine a more comforting and positive scripture, that reflects the perfect security, and peace of mind, of every heir of grace, than this one. Believe it, because God has inspired it's being written by the pen of the apostle Paul, and that makes it true, because it was given to bring peace and comfort to the heart of those who are blessed to know God. It is to these that Jesus was speaking in, (Math 11:28) *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give your rest,"* He certainly was not speaking to the old man, in nature, because he never tires of his natural life, he is at home there, happy and at peace with all the things going on around him; is all that he has ever known, or will

ever know.

Now, to what conclusion do we come, after all of this rhetoric regarding the subject scripture, and the question of, whether or not the man that is born of God, commits sin. Well, we must say that he sinneth not, because that is clearly what the scripture states, so, why is there so much question in the minds of the children of God regarding this subject? The child of God, dwelling in this body of death, which is where sin dwells, cannot see the forest for the trees. He sees the constant sinning of the old man, and cannot distinguish where the line of separation lies. He cannot see the whole picture, of the salvation of the saints of God, from his position in this natural body of flesh. As we have stated before, the above scriptures show that there are two entities within the one body, and since Christ condemned sin in the flesh, we must acknowledge that, that is where the sin lies, and not in the new man that is born of God. When the scripture says that he doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, he is referring to the seed (Christ), or else, the verse means nothing, because the natural seed remaineth in all of God's creation as long as they live: and if he means the seed (Christ) remaineth in him, he must of necessity be referring to the new creature, because, that is where all righteousness dwells. The sin that is committed by the man is, as Paul said above, (Rom 7:16-17) *"If I do that which I*

would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me." As I understand this, he is saying that the sin dwells in the natural body, but not in the new creature in Christ, for this would be saying that Christ, who died for the sins of the new creature was still being contaminated with the sin of the old man. This was taken care of when Paul said, to repeat the scripture quoted above, (Rom 8:3) *"For what the law could not do because it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."*

With the above understanding of the scriptures, the saints can indeed enter into rest, realizing that all necessary work has been done to assure them that they will receive the inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for them. Otherwise, with all of the doubts and fears that they experience in the flesh, they could not possibly rest. This rest has been promised to them, by God, and they will receive it, (Heb 4:9-10) *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."* It may be though many trials and temptations, but beloved, it will come, and through much searching and studying of the scriptures you will find evidence along

the way, and you will come to the realization, and hope, that these blessed truths do indeed apply unto you.

May God, in the riches of his grace and mercy enable the sheep to continue to persevere and follow along, in the footsteps of the flock, seeking and finding those handfuls of purpose that God leaves, strewn along their path, in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They are to encourage them to continue to follow the example of those that have gone before, and to continue to press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. The apostle Paul admonished the saints, in his epistle to the Hebrews, (Heb 12: 1-2) *"Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* If they can be thus richly blessed, it will be a joyful journey, in spite of the trials and tribulations that they face. They shall, in the final analysis, agree with the apostle Paul when he said that he gloried in tribulations. I believe that he meant when he was given, by faith, to see the forest, not the trees which are nearby, but the whole plan of salva-

tion of the household of believers, in all ages of time, he rejoiced in the sweet anticipation and looked eagerly to that day.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE QUESTION HAS BEEN ASKED

What is done FOR, and IN, the sinner in Regeneration, or New Birth? This is an important question, and it has been argued Pro and Con. The Scriptures are a Perfect Thorough Furnisher, and contain all the answers pertaining to such questions. The Scriptures states that there is Certainly Something done FOR, and IN, a man that makes him different from the alien world. If not, how could you tell the child of God from the dead alien sinner? In the New Birth, the alien sinner is raised up out of a state of death in sin, to a state of life in Jesus Christ. It is the children of men, that are given Eternal, or Spiritual Life, which makes them Actually and Vitrally the children of God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Sovereignly, and Independently, without the help, or hindrance of any man, or set of men. This work brings about a Change in the Heart and Soul of, the child. *"Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given*

unto us." This causes the children of men to love God. ***"He that loveth is Born of God."*** The Scriptures describes the alien as having Eyes, but cannot See, has Ears, but cannot Hear, has a Heart, but cannot Understand Spiritual things. In the New Birth, the Holy Spirit brings about a change in the condition of the man. Eph. 2 :10, ***"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*** It is the work of the Holy Spirit, that gives the child, Eyes to See, and Ears to Hear, and an Heart to Understand Spiritual things. That is why Paul said in 2nd. Corr. 5:17. ***"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."*** The alien sinner has only a carnal nature, which is sinful and corrupt. The child of God, has the old sinful nature, and also a New Nature, which is Spiritual. Therefore they have a Cross, that is something contrary to their natural nature. Gal. 5:17, ***"For the flesh (carnal nature) lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."*** The child of God has Spiritual desires, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness, yet they often do things that causes them to mourn in Soul and Spirit. The alien sinner hates God, and resents the Gospel of

Jesus Christ, while the child of God loves God, and by the Spirit, is able to rejoice in the Gospel of Christ. Many have said, Why has God reached down in condemnation and ruin, and saved poor dead alien sinners? The Scriptures gives us the answer, Eph. 2:4-5. ***"But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:)"*** ***"We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*** It is the Divine work of God, that makes the children of men, the children of God. God provided every thing necessary for the salvation of the children of promise, whom He foreknew. Notwithstanding, death will consume our bodies, yet we will live on in Soul and Spirit. And in the Resurrection, God will send His Son, to gather up our bodies from death and the grave, and fashion them like unto His own Glorious Body, and carry us home to live with God forever and ever.

In love and hope,
Elder C.M. Mills

PSALM 136 : 23 & 26.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

“And Whosoever Liveth and Believeth in Me Shall Never Die.” St. John 11 Ch. 26th V.

Here is a very strange expression, especially to those who sincerely believe in the Divinity and Messiahship of the speaker, Jesus of Nazareth. Yet it is true. We all know that, so far as this earthly body of ours, the human frame, is concerned it is sure to become lifeless and must be laid away in the earth from which it was gathered. But is that death? So far as we can see with our natural eyes and our natural mind from this side of the grave, it is. But we, who have eternal life, have other means of seeing. The eyes of our faith go on into the great unseen and lay hold upon facts that cannot be reached by our five natural senses.

We may have an accident and lose a limb or all our limbs, which are a part of our flesh and blood body, but we are still alive because our mind and reason remains untouched. We are actively conscious. On the same principle to some extent, though all the body be separated from the spirit we will still be conscious. The London confession of faith, 31st chapter reads, ***“The bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption; but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, being made per-***

fect in holiness, and received into Paradise, where they are with Christ, and behold the fact of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into Hell where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to, the judgment of the great day.” This is not by Divine inspiration, but is the general opinion of our people of what Divine inspiration, as given in the Bible, teaches. Eccl. 12:7 is clear. ***“Then shall the dust return to earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”***

He that liveth and believeth in our Lord Jesus Christ is alive with Eternal life. He is a new creature. God’s work in joining the soul of that man to Eternal life is a perfect work and shall not be undone when the body fails and is laid in mother earth. If the life that is given to us in regeneration was taken away from us at earthly death of our bodies, that indeed would be death, but it is not so. What God doeth is forever and believers shall not die.

We step out of our dwelling house and go our way about our business or journey. Even so, we will depart from this house of clay when death comes to it and we enter into, or are taken into, a new environment in which, for a time, this body is not necessary, and there, in peace and love and with our Saviour, we wait the time appointed when

these laid aside bodies are to be raised up and fitted for us and for the new environment into which we are then to be taken. But in all of it we shall be, conscious. The Bible clearly shows this. In Rev. 6:9; John saw the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and they cried with a loud voice. So they were conscious and waiting the resurrection. So we have the assurance that at our time of departure we will be conscious and also will have company of our Saviour or his angels so that happiness of our new environment will begin immediately, Jesus said I will come and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also"; Luke 16:22 tells us that *"Angels carried the poor beggar into Abraham's bosom at his death. Nothing of the believer goes back to earth when God takes him from earth but the poor broken body, and it only for awhile until the time when Jesus Christ, the Judge of all the earth and the Saviour of all true believers shall call forth all our bodies and reunite them with our spirit."*

Thus the believer is in a state of life because of his union with Christ's life within him and forever afterward will continue in that condition. What a wonderful blessing the very poorest believer now has, and will ever have. In that living condition we are kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. May God give us grace and op-

portunity to show our appreciation of this wonderful condition while we are yet in this time world.

Yours in Love,
Leon H. Clevenger
Excelsior Springs, Mo. R-2

WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION

When God delivered the law to Moses, it was composed of TEN COMANDMENTS. Of course, there was the ordinances of worship; rules to govern the actions of the worshipers, that whatever they did in compliance with those ordinances, might be done decently, and above criticism, so as to glorify GOD, while performing the demands of the ordinance, and not be ashamed of their effort. The apostle Paul, so admonished the young ministers in his day. *"Study to show thyself approved unto God", a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing, the word of truth.*" 2 Tim. 2:15. The word "approved unto God," was given in the Alexandrian version, *"Approved in Christ."* The apostle again referred to the same thought, in Romans 16:10. *"Approved in Christ."* However, when we stop to consider the fact that God and Christ is one and the same, either version is correct, and in perfect harmony.

The children of God worshiped under the law by commandment,

expounded to them by both the priest and Levite who read the law and repeated it to them. No, they never read the books of the law themselves, and it was kept in the Ark of the covenant. Only the priest was eligible to look therein. The high priest being human, and no different from any other man in the flesh, desired as much glory for themselves as they could obtain. And also as much of filthy lucre, as they could swindle their brethren out of. So when our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, He found that there had been added to the LAW, 110 new commandments, making 120 in all. These new commandments, were added so that the income of the worshippers, might be taxed sufficiently, to increase the income of the priest accordingly. This was going on when Jesus came, and He called them "A DEN OF THIEVES." They weren't satisfied with the provision God had made for them in the Law given to Moses; they wanted to live high on the hog regardless of how the poor got along.

Our Lord came, and fulfilled the law for every one of His children, and took them out from under it, and made them free from the law of sin and death. He made them Kings and Priests unto God, A royal family. No more slaves to ordinance, but He kept every ordinance, in their room and stead.

And now, they are no more debtors, he paid every farthing that they owed, and satisfied His Father per-

fectly, for all their sin, both commission, and omission. It is true that they were sinners by commission, because they did wrong, willfully. It is also true they were sinners, because they failed to keep many of the commandments, sometimes intentionally, and other times because they were not able to do so. Many of the ordinances demanded more of them than they were able to meet. Being poor, and not having the wherewithal to justify themselves, they failed through inability. But the Law would not excuse them, so they were guilty, But, Jesus Christ, came and paid what they could not, and charged it to their credit. And He paid it in full. Yes they had nothing to their credit, for what they had done in OBEDIENCE, was overthrown, as to virtue, in their failure. *"For to be guilty of one, you are guilty of the whole law. Why then did the apostle Paul admonish the brethren at Philippi, "to work out your own salvation?"* They did not have the law, Christ had lifted them above the law, and made them free. What then, were they to work out that which would save them? We could talk all around this subject for the space of ten years, and never get any closer to the truth, if we failed to take under consideration, that GOD, in his mercy knew the weakness of His children. They were without strength, even though He had imparted eternal life in their hearts. They were babes in Christ, and did not know what the will of the

Father was, concerning them. They had not long been begotten in the gospel and had been living according to the guidance of the word, preached by their pastor. He had been with them constantly, to guide them in every work, that was necessary to keeping a clean house for GOD. Exercising themselves in charity, to the relief of the suffering saints, both in a temporal and spiritual way, dividing their worldly goods, with the poor, and comforting, and strengthening those that mourn. Encouraging the weak, and carrying the young in their bosom. All these things were done, without thought of themselves, or without expectation of anything in return. But with one goal in view, and that to show forth the love of GOD that the HOLY GHOST had shed abundantly in their hearts. Having this love one to another, bound them, not only to one another, but to the cause of their master, (the church). The apostle knew that false teachers was abroad in the land, and; was ever looking for an opportunity to fleece the flock. And this knowledge, caused him much anxiety concerning them in his absence. Hence, the letter of admonition. *“Wherefore my beloved, as ye have always; obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:* The same message was taken to the children of Israel by the prophet, Haggai 2:41 *“Yet now be strong,*

O Zerubbabel saith the LORD; and be strong, Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; saith the LORD, and work for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts.” We notice that He said, “I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts”. As I search the Bible for my own instruction, I have so far, failed to find in the records of GOD’s word where He has ever commanded only of His spiritual born children to work out anything, without His help. Always promised to be with His servants, both ministry and laymen. He has never forgotten, that we are constrained by the flesh, to adhere the will of the flesh. And He knows that unless He affords us His strength, to fulfill His commandment, We will be just as unable to do so, as those poor and weak Israelites were, to keep the law and ordinances, before he came. So, as He promised to be with them, even so, He promised to be with His children in the gospel age, to strengthen them, with His own strength, (the Holy Ghost) sufficiently to enable them to perform every work, that He impresses their heart with. And in that instant, the apostle, (by the Holy Ghost) reaffirms the promise, by telling them “that it is GOD, that worketh in you, both to will, and to do of His own good pleasure.” Phil. 2:13. When the apostle spoke of “GOD being in you” he was speaking of the Holy Ghost. We seem to discount the Holy Ghost, and His mission in the world. Jesus prayed for the Holy Ghost to come, or, for the

Father to send Him, that we might have His guidance, strength, and be comforted with the realization of it, and be encouraged thereby. So it was God, in the person of the Holy Ghost in them; working, both to will, and to do. Not of, or according to their good pleasure; which could have been nothing less than their own self preservation. But their work in the kingdom of GOD must be to the praise of His glory.

For this to be in effect, their work must be, to the denial of self, and a sacrifice made for others. This one cannot do, unless God, in the person, of the Holy Spirit, enables one to so do, by overcoming the spirit of the flesh, (binding the strong man) and giving strength to the babe in Christ. Then God will be pleased, and the work will testify of Christ, that He has arisen from the grave, and lives forever more. And lives in His children, "For, know ye not that your bodies are the tabernacle of the living GOD?" And further, "*That without ME, you can do nothing.*" That is the reason He told the disciples, "*and lo. I am with you*" when He sent them to preach the gospel. That is the reason His ministers go with bowed heads in this age, not knowing whether their going is of the LORD or not. But the love for Him, and His children, and the burden of their welfare, which GOD has laid on their heart, constrains them to go and see. Yes, they go hoping that their impression is of Him, and not of their own desire.

Hoping that He will afford them His strength, to "stand in the temple, and declare all the words of this life" not knowing whether or not it is the time of the LORD, yet LOVE urges them on. And Oh, if their breast is full, and sometimes hurting, they know that the babes in Christ, is hungering. Even so the brethren, when they are filled with a spiritual desire to be useful in the kingdom, they fear and tremble, lest it be of their own asperation, and not of GOD. But love urges them on, and a good pastor will admonish them in love, to work so as to show their love to one another, and thereby glorify their SAVIOUR. Oh, what a sweet comfort it is to me, when the servants of God, say to me, "Brother Tommie, the LORD is with you. Go trusting His sweet promise, that He will never forsake you. May we remember His sweet promises, the rest of the way.

Yours in humble hope,
T. R. Crawford

Job 37: 23-24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

ABIDING IN LOVE

"I am the vine, ye are the branches He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing:" John:15:8. "If ye keep My commandments ye shalt abide in My love," verse 10. They who abide in Him and His love bear the fruits of the spirit, The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, long suffering, goodness, faith, meekness; temperance," Galatians 5:22,23, This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. If we would abide in His love and bear the fruits of the Spirit we must love one another.

God's children can never be separated from His everlasting love, (Romans 8:38,39) but this love does not always abide in them because they do not always abide in it. That is, love is not always ruling our lives. They who do not continue to love His truth and His people, but are led away by the flesh after the world will be barren and unfruitful.

Many disciples of Jesus became offended at His doctrine and followed Him no more. Without Him we can do nothing religiously that is pleasing to Him. If we would bear the fruits of the Spirit we must continue faithful to His cause and truth.

"If any man will come after Me let him deny himself take up his cross and follow Me." Mat-

thew 16:24. If we would abide in His love we must be followers of Him by keeping His commandments, be baptized and then continue faithful in His service. The works of the flesh destroy spiritual peace and cause us to walk in darkness.

Elder J. Harvey Daily

The Experience of Stephen R. Burk

It seemed that in the spring of the year 1865, I first saw myself a sinner. I had had some thought previous to this in regard to my spiritual welfare, one particular day my trouble began in earnest. That night I could scarcely sleep. I thought I must die before morning. Eternity seemed to be just before me, and I just ready to plunge into hell, for I thought I had sinned away my day of grace. Such passages of Scripture as, *"Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity,"* would pass through my mind. I just rolled from side to side of the bed and longed for the dawn of day. I did not know what was the matter with me; so I thought I would get up and read in the Testament and see if I could not get relief in so doing. But to my sorrow I could find nothing but condemnation. It seemed that the book would open to such portions as were against me. There was nothing for me but all against me. When morning came I was so glad I was alive. I was a little more thoughtless

through the day, but I dreaded to see night come again, which brought the same trouble as the previous night. And so I got along for several days, until finally I thought I would do better and get relief in that; but, oh, how disappointed I would try to pray, and while on my knees I would have wicked thoughts; my mind was overwhelmed with grief. Then I would try to weep but alas! I could not weep. I would exclaim, "*Woe is me! I am of unclean lips.*" It seemed that I was getting worse instead of better, as I thought. Oh, I did not see how God could spare me, living so badly as I had done. Many an evening I have stood and watched the sun sink in the horizon and wondered if I possibly would be permitted to ever see it rise again. In reading, in trying to pray, all condemned me. But one day I thought I had a new plan.

I would promise to do better and would seal the promise by driving down a stake, which I did, and dated the day of the month on it. But oh that night I found the promise broken, which made me feel worse than ever; so I just gave myself up as lost, and if the Lord sent my soul to hell, his righteous law approved it well. As I never had heard anyone relate an experience, I did not know what was the matter with me.

I thought surely no one ever had such thoughts as I, and I thought if people knew what wicked thoughts I had they would not permit me to live. I often looked at a man that seemed to me to be the best man liv-

ing, and wished that I might be just as good as he seemed to be.

By this time I could get a crumb of comfort occasionally by reading the Book of books, and also get relief by asking the Lord to be merciful to me a sinner. Soon after this my father, my brother older than me, and myself went to the Baptist church for the purpose of helping to fix some Ditching-racks. When on the way every thing seemed to look so sad the trees and all things. When we arrived I looked across to where some had been baptized. I thought if I were only fit, oh, how I would love to go down into the water, as the dear Savior did, and be buried as he was. While at the church that day it seemed to me that the men who were helping were so good, whether professors or not, they all were so much better than I was. Soon after this a preacher by the name of Strickland came to Bethel church and had meeting two days and nights. The first night my brother and I went. While on our way we scarcely spoke a word. The cannons were firing, as peace had just been declared between the United and Confederate States. Yet I feared that I was not at peace with God, which was of greater importance to me than all things else. However, I was glad that peace was declared. But after we were in the house the preacher took his text. It seemed to me that he meant it for me, it suited me so well. I felt like the woman of Samaria, "*Come and see a man*

that told me all things that ever I did." The next day I thought I would love to go, but thought the folks would suspicion something if I went. But about meeting-time my brother fixed and started off on horseback to meeting. I looked after him, and this was the first thought I had, that he had been in trouble as I had been; and oh, how I wished I was with him, for I thought he was going to join the church that day, and there was hope for him and none for me. Oh, how bad I felt while he was at the meeting. I learned as soon as he came home that no one had joined.

The next day there was meeting at Village Creek church. We all went. The preacher preached at me all the time, I thought. After the sermon was over an invitation was given when my brother went forward. Oh, how bad I felt I thought if I was just only fit to go to the church. After they heard the experience they extended the hand of fellowship, when in spite of myself I went forward and extended my hand, and oh as I returned to my seat it seemed to me I would sink through the floor, and such thoughts came to me as: Now you have done a pretty act. You have shown how bad you are. Now there is no mercy for you. And oh, such a load as I had to carry down to the water where four were to be immersed. But as they were being immersed, I became very happy, and felt that if they would just give the invitation I would gladly go with them

down into the water and be buried with Christ by baptism. But I see another meeting at Bethel Church, Which was in about three weeks, I would try to improve the time and be better by that time. By this time I could find some comfort in the Scriptures, and in trying to pray, could find relief. But by the last week before the meeting had become so thoughtless of God's goodness and my promise. But on Friday before the meeting I learned that my sister Maria intended to join at that meeting, and oh, how I felt I was back where I was at first, instead of being better. Oh, what trouble of mind, I rather doubted if I would go now. I tried to pray, but was so guilty. That night I lay a long time thinking how I had wasted the time. Finally I fell asleep, and of all the dreams that ever I had this one was the most terrifying. I dreamed that I saw God, and that he was so angry with me for the way I had done. It seemed the lightning was flashing, ready to strike me down. I awoke to find myself all of a tremble, and oh, such a night the rest of that night was. I Finally gave up that I was doomed to everlasting punishment, which I justly deserved. The next day I was in deep distress of mind, and to hide my trouble I took the gun and went out as though I was going to hunt, but when out of sight I sat down on a log and meditated on my sad state, and whether I would do as I had promised or not, if I was spared as the meeting was that day and the next

(Sunday). I finally concluded that the Lord only knew, as I had made so many promises, just to be broken. Then I had some ease of mind, and that night, if I ever prayed I did then, that the Lord would have mercy on me; which I felt to be answered, as I had sweet rest that night, and the next morning I could read with the spirit and the understanding.

But when I first awakened in the morning I began to think of the promise I had made three weeks before. But, I had to admit that the Lord only knew whether I would make the promise good or not. I prayed that the Lord would enable me to take up the cross and follow the blessed Savior in baptism. When at the meeting-house the preacher (Eld. Sparks) took his text, which seemed to suit me and just preached at me all through. I now loved the brethren as I never had before. They looked so lovely, when preaching was over they gave the invitation, when two of my sisters went forward, and I could not stay away any longer. Oh, how my heart melted and I could not tell much of my trouble. We were to be baptized in the evening. Oh, how I feared that I was not just as I ought to be! but when baptized I was so happy. But, it did not last long, as on way home something told me I would bring reproach upon the cause; I was a hypocrite and had deceived the church and myself. Such doubts as these continued that night, until I really wished that I had stayed away, as I did not want to backslide. But

the next morning was the happiest season I ever enjoyed. It seemed that all things were praising God. But this happy season did not last long.

Stephen R. Burk

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

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realise 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 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

PSALM 119:9-11.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

MEETINGS

**PIGG RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The Pigg River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on Friday before the First Sunday in August 2007 and two days following, and Basham is the Host Church.

The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County.

Those coming from North 220, turn left on 724 (Goose Dam Road) two and one half miles to church.

We welcome and invite all ministers of our faith and order; our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

**SMITH RIVER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The next session of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Old Union Church in Floyd County, VA, On Friday before the first Sunday in September, Aug. 31, Sept 1, Sept 2.

Directions to Old Union Church, starting at the intersection of Rt. 8 and 221, Follow Rt 221 eleven and seven tenths miles to Indian Valley Road, (State Rd, 787), Turn right and

travel five and eight-tenths miles to Indian Valley Post Office Road, (State Rd. 622), Turn left and travel seven tenths of a mile to Macks Mountain Road, (State Rd. 754), Turn right and travel two-tenths miles to Old Union Church.

We invite all of our faith and order to meet with us at this meeting.

Association Clerk,
Tony R. Horton

**WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING**

The West Country Line Union meeting will convene on Sunday, July 29, 2007 hosted by Dan River Church.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2007

Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Francis Jarvis, MD	5.00
Robert Thomas, AR	5.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Loy Rodgers, AR	5.00
Carrie Williams, TN	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER JANIE FANNING

Sister Janie Fanning, departed this life on Saturday, June 9, 2007 at the age of 92 years. She was born on December 4, 1914 near New Market in Madison County, Alabama to the late Brother Milton and Sister Laura Fanning. She was preceded in death by two sisters, Nara Fowler and Edith Phillips, and a brother, George Fanning. She is survived by one sister, Cleona Piper and several nieces and nephews.

Graveside services were held at the Taylor Cemetery near New Market Alabama, with her pastor Elder Richard Campbell, Elder James Howard, and William Phillips officiating. Scripture reading by Chad Easter.

Sister Fanning asked for a home with the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1983 and was baptised by our pastor, Elder Richard Campbell. She remained a member of the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee which she attended faithfully until declining health forced her to remain at home.

Sister Janie traveled extensively over her many years to attend meetings and Associations among The Old Baptist Churches in the Southern,

Southeastern and Eastern parts of the United States. In the early 1940's Sister Janie started a thirty year career with the United States Government at Redstone Arsenal, located near Huntsville, Alabama. After her retirement from government service on June 30th 1972, she continued to travel visiting in Europe, Israel, New Zealand, and Australia.

She dearly loved the Brothers, Sisters and Friends of the Church and as long as her health permitted, she often entertained them in her home in Huntsville. She will be missed by all of those who knew her.

Written at the request of The Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church in conference Sunday July 1, 2007. One copy will be sent to the family, one copy to The Signs of The Times for publication, and one copy for our church records.

George W. Hyslip, Clerk

ANNIE MARTIN REED

It is with much sadness and unworthiness, that I attempt to write a memorial for Sister Annie Reed. She was a special friend I have known and loved for many years.

Sister Annie was born on January 10, 1906, and left her earthly home March 13, 2007. Making her stay on earth 101 years.

Sister Annie was married to Arthur Reed who preceded her in death. She is survived by her son Raymond Odell Reed and his wife Jean. Two granddaughters, Mary and her husband Steven Smith and Robin Anne Reed. Two great grandsons Matthew Steven and Joshua Reed Smith, and many friends. Her beautiful funeral service was held on March 16, 2007, at Salem (Head of the River) church, Conducted by her pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Junior Conner. She was laid to rest in Restvale, Cemetery, to await the coming of our Lord in the resurrection.

Sister Annie united with Laurel Creek Primitive Baptist Church June 28, 1936, and was baptized August 22, 1936. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, a faithful member and enjoyed going to her church as well as others of like faith. I had the sweet privilege of taking her to meetings for several years. Sister Annie rejoiced in talking about the goodness and mercy of our Lord and Savior. If she wasn't able to go to church, she always wanted me to call her, so she could hear from the meeting.

The last few years of her life, she had to have help to be able to stay at home. She was blessed to have a loving family and good care givers.

She never complained about her afflictions. Sister Annie had a strong faith and praised God for all the blessings He had given her. Through all her struggles and tribulations, she never relinquished her firm hold of grace.

Although we will miss her expression of love, when she greeted her brethren, we feel she looked forward to her departure with joy. God has called up one of his precious jewels, a mother in Israel, and our loss is her eternal gain.

Written by Mary Janney, as requested by her pastor, Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

SISTER DOROTHY SMITH

On September 19, 2006 Sister Dorothy Smith was gathered home to be with the Lord. Her body was laid to rest beside her first husband, William Hampton Smothers, in Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery on September 22, 2006 to await the resurrection morn and that summons from on high, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* She was born January 30, 1930 to Brother Vel and Sister Dora Alverson, who preceded her in death.

Her first husband, William Hampton Smothers, and her second husband, Jeter Clifton Smith, also preceded her in death. Among those left to mourn her passing are her son Gregg Smothers and wife Pam of Graham, N.C., her daughter, Leta S. Robles and husband Marcus of Warner Robins, Georgia, six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, three sisters, Barbara Harrell of Raleigh, N.C. Nettie Woods of Reidsville, N.C., Jean Nelson of Madison, N.C., one brother Hunter Alverson of Ruffin, N.C. in addition to three step-children and numerous step grandchildren and step great-grandchildren.

Sister Dorothy suffered many afflictions and trials during her life, one of which was the tragic loss of her first husband on February 25, 1970 when he was only age fifty-one and before her children were grown. The two of them, though not members, frequently attended Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church with their children. On April 25, 1987 Sister Dorothy asked for a home with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, was received and baptized by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. On occasion when we traveled to church together, she would talk of the joy she found in her early years in the church when she would travel to her mother's home for the weekend and they would prepare lunch for our Sunday meeting. It was as she described it, "the only time of grace, the only joy in this life." During my

last visit with her, she seemed "to rejoice with joy unspeakable" as she related what a condition she had been in and how the doctors had given her family no hope that she would ever talk or walk again. She described it as a miracle from God. It brought to mind the scripture found in 1 Peter 1: 7-8. "*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 honour 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.*" It was a great blessing to be there with her and to share in her joy. Words fail me in trying to relate the experience. It is best summed up in the words of the hymn writer:

All hail the power of Jesus' name!

*Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all.*

May the Lord bless her family and those of us, who loved her for Christ's sake, with grace to bow in humble submission to His most holy will and to render all praise, all honor, all glory to His great and holy name.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
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EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

*Kindred in Christ, for his dear sake,
A hearty welcome here receive;
May we together now partake
The joys which only he can give.*

*To you and us by grace 'tis given
To know the Saviour's precious name;
And shortly we shall meet in heaven,
Our hope, our way, our end the same.*

*May he, by whose kind care we meet,
Send his good Spirit from above;
Make our communications sweet,
And cause our hearts to burn with love.*

*Forgotten be each worldly theme,
When Christians see each other thus:
We only wish to speak of him,
Who lived, and died, and reigns for us.*

*We'll talk of all he did and said,
And suffered for us here below;
The path he marked for us to tread,
And what he's doing for us now.*

*Thus, as the moments pass away,
We'll love, and wonder, and adore;
And hasten on the glorious day,
When we shall meet to part no more.*

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
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Newton

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 EDITORIAL

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”
Genesis 2:8-9.



Elder J.B. Farmer

Considering my weakness, I have been fearful to endeavor to set forth the understanding I have been given about the meaning of the scriptures relating to the Garden of Eden.

We have been taught that the things of the heavenly kingdom are too high, wide and deep for us to understand apart from revelation, and that every good gift and perfect gift comes down from above. By ourselves, we can do nothing. I have written about these things some time ago, and finally seem to be given liberty to submit them to the “Signs of the Times.” It is my desire that anyone reading this should receive it only as far as it is in agreement with the doctrine of Christ found in the Holy Scriptures, and as far as it is in agreement with your experience of grace.

I am made to believe that the scriptures concerning the Garden of Eden, as most if not all of the other scriptures, have not only a surface meaning, which is readily understood naturally, but also have deep, hidden and mysterious meanings, which may only be known by God’s little ones; and then only by revelation. If we are given any light, surely it is only in part that we know these things. The fullness of them is as high above us as are the heavens. May God be praised for His goodness to us in showing us the least of His mercies, even though we know that we are unworthy.

Briefly, according to the scriptures and in my language: God formed the first man Adam of the dust of the ground. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. He put Adam in the Garden of Eden and gave him to eat of all the trees of the

garden, but commanded that he not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day that he should eat of it he should surely die. God took one of Adam's ribs and made a woman called Eve. Eve, being tempted of the serpent and deceived, took of the forbidden fruit and gave to Adam and he also did eat. After eating of the fruit, they perceived that they were naked, were ashamed and hid themselves. God made them aware of their sin, then made them coats of skins, and then drove them from the garden. There, on cursed ground amidst thorns and thistles, Adam was to till the soil and was to eat bread by the sweat of his face until he returned to the ground from which he was taken.

The readily understood meaning of these things by the natural mind, to me, is that the first man sinned and took all mankind down in sin and death with him. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve and all their posterity were banished from the paradise-like garden. They suffered the loss of happiness and contentment they had in the garden and had to remain the rest of their lives outside the garden in the world with all its troubles. I believe that these things are literally true, and so do almost all people who name the name of Jesus.

But there also seems to be a deeper spiritual meaning in these scriptures, which I am made to believe, is according to the experience of God's little ones. This experience

can never be known or understood apart from being born of God and without the revelation of the truth. The little children of God, being born from above, are given to see and to know many things by the Holy Spirit that the world shall never see or know. They are made to know that they are sinners, who can only be saved by the grace of God. They are made to believe and to confess that salvation for time and eternity is altogether by the grace of God, and that this great salvation is separate from any works of the creature. Therefore, the children of God are misunderstood and hated by the whole world, even by some who claim to follow Jesus, but have not the Spirit. But by the Spirit, the children of grace are given to truly understand one another's condition and experience, and to understand one another's hope in Christ. And they are made to love one another for the truth's sake.

In order to know what Adam experienced as a condemned sinner and what kind of death he suffered, I am made to believe that one must be given to understand what sort of creature Adam was from the beginning of his creation. Many say he was made a perfect spiritual being. They say that since God is a Spirit, that Adam was made a perfect spiritual man in the image of God and after the likeness of God. Many go on from there and say that Adam, a perfect spiritual being, sinned, died a spiritual death, lost his fellowship with God, and was cast away from

His presence. I have not been able to follow this reasoning since it seems to be impossible for a perfect spiritual man to sin. And also it would appear to be impossible for a perfect spiritual man to die a spiritual death since the Spirit is eternal and cannot die. God made man in His image and after His likeness, according to the scriptures. So then, believing that man was formed of the dust of the ground, and not altogether like God, in what aspects was man made in the image of God and after His likeness?

To give an answer, one must be given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart of understanding. May God help us to know the things needful. To have been made in the image of God and after the likeness of God, to me, was to be one who had been created much higher than the animals and who was given dominion over them; one that could reason; one that had a conscience; one that had some idea of right and wrong; one that had discernment of the concept of past, present and future; and one that had some conception of the Creator and of heaven and hell. When I consider what the inspired apostle Paul said about the man that God made, it seems plain in my mind that Adam was not a perfect spirit being like God as some have said. Paul said by the Spirit, "*The creature was made subject to vanity...*" It seems to me to be undeniable that the first man Adam was a created being, made like God in some respects, but not altogether

like Him. Man was made much higher than the animals, but it is evident that he was made much lower than God because man was made subject to the vain things of this world. I am made to believe that Adam, at the very beginning of his creation, was made subject to the vanity of pain, sorrow, temptation, sin and death - otherwise he could never have experienced those things. I am made to believe that he was made a creature subject to vanity just like we were made creatures subject to vanity. I cannot help believing that we are Adam multiplied.

The inspired apostle Paul, who was the pattern for all who should believe after him, in order to identify himself and others of like precious faith with Adam in his weakness, said, "*I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.*" This takes my mind directly back to the Garden of Eden and what transpired there. Adam and Eve seemed to be alive and happy naturally before they partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (the law). Paul was alive before the law came to him. Before we had any knowledge of the law, we were alive and happy in our ignorance (if we share in Paul's experience). I am made to believe that this has been the experience of all of God's little ones from the beginning until now. In what ways then were Adam and Eve, and Paul, and we trust ourselves, alive before the law came? We were going about in

our own self-righteousness, thinking we were just as good as the next fellow, and maybe a little better. We were taking delight in the things of the world. We had no fear of God. We thought we were doing well, but we were actually walking according to the desires of the flesh. Paul said, *“We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”* We were in our own little world of ignorant bliss.

How then were we brought into the knowledge of our true condition in the flesh, if not by the commandment of God? And how did the commandment come to Adam and Eve, and to Paul and to us? According to the scripture, God put His holy law in the mind and heart of His children. What was the effect of the law being put in the minds and hearts of Adam and Eve and Paul, and also in our minds and hearts? It worked in all of us the desire for that thing which God had forbidden. Paul said by inspiration, *“I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence [desire for that which is forbidden]. For without the law sin was dead.”* No one ever had any knowledge of sin until the commandment came. The inspired apostle said, *“By the*

law is the knowledge of sin.” According to the scriptures, the law is the ministration of condemnation and the ministration of death. It condemns us and makes us know that we are sinners and that our actions are worthy of death. It kills us to all our self-righteousness and supposed goodness. Just as eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (partaking of the law) caused Adam and Eve to realize and be ashamed of their nakedness, the law was given for the very purpose of making the whole world guilty before God. There is none good, no, not one.

The beloved apostle said, *“When the commandment came, sin revived and I died.”* So the death that Adam and Eve and Paul suffered, and the death that we also suffered, according to our experience, is the death to our ignorant bliss, to our self-righteousness, and to the pleasures of the perishing world. We are killed to our old way of life and to our old way of thinking, and are driven far away from it. The children of God are killed to the world and made alive to Christ. Paul said by the Holy Spirit, *“Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”* And, *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*

After the law was used to condemn and kill Adam and Eve and Paul and us, God showed mercy in that He provided coats of skins to

cover our nakedness, to protect us, and to comfort us. The coats of skins appear to me to represent the righteousness of Christ. There must be a death of an animal in order to provide a skin for a coat. Christ, the sinless Lamb of God, died and imputed His righteousness to His little ones. His people are given His righteousness for a covering. The law not only condemns and kills, but it also has the beneficial effect of being the schoolmaster that brings us to Christ. I am made to believe that all of God's little ones were brought down into the pit of condemnation and death by the law. They were made to see that there is nothing good in their flesh. The law brought them to the feet of the merciful Jesus. Their only hope was to have cast themselves upon the mercy of God, as did the publican, and to have cried, "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*" When all hope in the flesh has been extinguished, Christ is merciful to reveal Himself to us as the Savior, and causes us to hope in Him and to hope and trust that His righteousness has been given unto us for a covering. "*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*" Our fear and dread of destruction are cast out and are replaced by a hope and trust in Christ.

After Adam and Eve and Paul were made to see themselves as sinners, and we were made to see ourselves as sinners, and we all were killed to our old way of life, and were made alive and given coats of skins,

and were driven out from our formerly blissful home, where did we find ourselves? We were found in the wilderness of this world. This is the place that the Spirit drove the Lord Himself to be tempted of the devil. This is where the Lord found Jacob. This is the place where the Dragon persecuted woman flew to safety when she was given the two wings of a great eagle. This is where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time (the span of time until Christ shall come to receive His bride to Himself). This is where God has placed His people that they should show forth His praises. This is where their faith is given its fiery trial that it should come forth as gold. The wilderness is the place from whence they come up out of great tribulation. This is where God makes His great power known. It is where God glorifies Himself in His people. This is where Adam and Eve were placed when they were driven from the Garden of Eden. This is where Paul found himself, and we trust it is where we are now. This is where we groan, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies at the promised coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All of God's children are pilgrims and strangers traveling through this wilderness by faith. This wilderness world is not their home – they seek a better place, where sin, sorrow, suffering and death cannot enter.

Many more wonderful things are connected with these scriptures, which I am made to believe are also

hidden to the world, but are revealed to His little ones. For brief examples: Adam is presented as a figure of Christ and so is Eve presented as a figure of the church. Eve originally had her being in Adam, as the church has her being in Christ. As Eve was flesh of Adam's flesh and bone of his bones, even so is the church spiritually flesh of Christ's flesh and bone of His bones. Paul said by the Spirit, *"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.... This is a great mystery: but I speak of Christ and the church."* Adam loved Eve. After she was deceived and had sinned, he gave his life for her by partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, knowing fully that it would result in his death. In like manner, Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it by taking upon Himself the curse of the law. He willingly laid down His life and died to satisfy the wrath of God against all ungodliness for His bride, the church. *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."* And this, *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."* And there are many other similar examples of scripture too numerous to mention here.

I believe that a little about the tree of life also should be included before closing. As recorded in the third chapter of Genesis, the Lord sent Adam forth from the Garden of Eden, lest he put forth his hand and

take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. And it says He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. It appears that the tree of life is Christ, the Lord. I believe that the Cherubims indicate the very dwelling place of God. The flaming sword, to my understanding, is the word of the Lord, which prohibits anyone from coming to Him voluntarily. Jesus said, *"No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."* And Jesus also said, *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* So God has kept away the wicked, but has made a narrow way for only the elect to come to Jesus, the Tree of Life, in order that they should take and eat and live forever.

In my weak way, I have tried to set down briefly what the scriptures mean to me that relate to the Garden of Eden. I am made to believe that they have at least three meanings on three different levels. The first shows that the first man and woman sinned, the sentence of death was passed upon them, and they were sent forth from the Garden of Eden, which most everyone seems to understand. The second, to me, is a veiled and hidden description of the experience of grace of the child of God, which only those that are born of God and have had the experience

are enabled to understand. And the third, I am made to believe, is figurative of Christ and His bride, the church, whom He loved even before the world was. And it seems that only God's children are enabled to see and believe this. Although there are many, many more scriptures that bear on this subject, for brevity's sake I think I should bring this to a close.

With my whole heart, I believe the things set forth here are true, but God is the final and perfect Judge of all things. It is my hope and prayer and trust that God's little ones may be edified and comforted by the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I trust this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
7-28-2007

PROVERBS 21:1-3.

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts.

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

CORRESPONDENCE

7-10-07

Dear Elder Terry,

Please enter my 2 years subscription to Signs of the Times. I have enclosed a check for \$25 for that purpose. I have also enclosed a \$50.00 donation for the editors to use as they see fit. I read The Signs for the first time only a few months ago and was so very impressed by the beautiful writing. I was afraid that it had ceased publication. I was so happy when Elder Haywood Wray told me that the publication was alive.

Let me say that the area in which you live is one of my favorite places. We had breakfast at Mabry Mill a few weeks back. I love to visit that area, and I consider it among the most beautiful locales. I hope this note finds you well. Perhaps I will have the pleasure of meeting you at some point.

Please mail my subscription to:

Ronald Patterson
1316 Witty Road
Summerfield, N.C. 27358

Sincerely,
Ronald E. Patterson

Dear Editors of the Signs of the Times,

Collinsville, Va.
July 7, 2007

Please renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times for another year. Enclosed is a check for more than the amount. Please use the rest to hopefully help in some way.

I look forward each month for this wonderful book, I enjoy it very much, and thank you so much for it.

Gladys Shelton
2210 Mabry Dr., Apt. #2
Clovis, N.M. 88101

July 9, 2007

4033 Calderwood Dr.
Shreveport, La. 71119

Dear Elder Terry:

I am renewing my subscription for one year and put the rest in the fund.

My husband and I are 92 years old and I don't know how long the Lord has for us on this Earth. He has been so good to us on this Earth. He has been so good to us – I have been on a walker for 5 years and thank the Lord I can walk some. I enjoy the writings in the Signs so much. May the Lord bless and keep the writers and Elders.

A sister in Hope,
Lessie Smith

Dear Elder Terry,

I am enclosing a check to renew my subscription to the Signs use the balance as you see fit.

I thoroughly enjoyed the July issue of the Signs.

Hope you are doing well now and hope to see you at church this summer.

Thank you,
Vivian Underwood
3266 Daniels Creek Rd.
Collinsville, Va 24078

7-14-07

Dear Brothers,

Thank you for your faithful and valuable ministry, for the sweet, wonderful, delicious, nutritious, and wholesome spiritual food.

Please renew our subscription.

Van Solek & Family

Dear Elder Terry:

Please find enclosed check for two year subscription to the Signs of the Times.

I enjoy the writings very much and don't want to be without it.

Sincerely,
Ruby Queen

Dear Elder Terry,

I am so sorry; we got so busy and overlooked that our Signs was due to be renewed. I am sending enough we hope and trust, is enough for two more years renewal subscription. We really enjoy reading the writings of these like faith believers.

Neal and I really enjoyed our visit at the Staunton River Association last weekend. The church house was full on Saturday and we were blessed to hear some wonderful preaching from the Elders. The Lord was surely in the midst.

Please use the remainder of the money for your expense in publishing this wonderful little magazine that feeds our hungry spirit. May our Lord forgive us for our many sins and be with us unto the end.

In Hope,
Neal & Sue Reed

THESSALONIANS 3:8-11.

For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God:

Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

ARTICLES

The following is a sermon preached by Elder Raymond Goad at Little Creek Church near Delmar. Del. April 10. 1988.

Perhaps if there is one chapter in the Bible that identifies Old Baptist belief, it would be the eighth chapter of Romans. I am sure there are those who had rather this scripture not even be printed, but that's beside the point. I believe that all scriptures are profitable for the doctrine, and in order to understand these scriptures, we must understand in the spirit and in truth. As we read and all we ever see in these beautiful truths is the natural things of this life, it is evidence that we have not the spirit of God. Yet I believe that much of our time we are left to ourselves, that as we read we do not understand what we are reading, in the spirit. There are many times when I have opened the scriptures, my mind would wander away on earthly things. I trust that what few moments we stand before you that our minds may be removed from the vain and perishable things of this life, and be set on things that are eternal.

I will begin, the Lord willing with the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter of Romans. *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children*

of God.” Paul writes to the brethren here, to the church ; He is speaking something that is present with children of God. He says the spirit itself bears witness with our spirit and as we read these beautiful truths we beg for understanding and enlightening in what they mean. Certainly we could not rejoice in the writing that Paul has written, unless that our spirits are along the same lines as Paul’s experience was. In order to rejoice in the truth as it is written we must know something about the spirit in which it was written. Paul says the spirit itself, that is the spirit of God, the new heart, the understanding that God gives his people, bears witness that we are the children of God.

I believe that God’s people from time to time rejoice in the spirit. Not only when they are at church, not only when their hearts are turned to the hymns of Zion, but when it pleases God. Maybe, when about our work, when it seems everything else is removed, only the things that be of God. I have a few times took the wrong road as I drove along the highway when meditating upon the things that be of God. I trust that my spirit, if indeed I have one this morning witnesses with the spirit in which Paul records these beautiful truths. The truth bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

I have told those who talk about things that they believe, if they could find some other teachings that I enjoy more in the things that you be-

lieve, then I would go that way. For more than twenty years, I trust by the Grace of God, that I haven’t found anything that I love better than the teachings that the Primitive Baptists stand for, that is salvation by Grace. Then he says the children are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. If so be if we have suffered with him that we may also be glorified together. Sometimes it melts me as I read these beautiful truths. We have read the experience of Paul, we have read many of your experiences from time to time as you have been blessed to write them. We have rejoiced in hearing those who have come to the church tell their experience.

We think sometimes, perhaps that we suffer more than anyone else. We do in one sense of the word and Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John tells us why that we suffer. I am not talking about physically, but I am talking about spiritually. He tells us we are in the world but we are not of the world. That’s why you are here today, that’s why there is nothing out there in the world that is more important than to go to church. For me this is the most important thing in life, that we are blessed to meet together, to mingle our voices in hymns of praise, to talk about the goodness and mercies of God. Certainly it was the most important thing in Paul’s life after he was converted. It wasn’t important before, neither was it in your life, neither was it in mine. There was a

time in our lives when this was not important with us. I can remember going to church when it was boring to set even the short period of time while the minister preached. Yet I can remember even back then when I saw those dear saints set back there and shed tears of joy under the sound of the gospel. Paul said that I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. We know that we have aches and pains, sometimes we feel ours is greater than anyone else, but you know as we read these beautiful truths we find that God's people suffer at the hand of the enemy, many of them were beheaded, many of them were put to death. Paul was beaten and was in prison and even left for dead. He said he counted it all joy that he was blessed to suffer for the name of Christ, for Christ sake. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time is not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Isn't this beautiful, "*the glory that shall be revealed in us.*" The word us as it is used has reference to the church of God, every heir of promise. For the earnest expectations of the creature waits for the manifestation of the Son of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He said they

shall be delivered. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. I know the Bible says we know nothing as we ought. It says the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, neither has entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for them that love him. And we yearn for those little Bethel spots along life's journey. When our minds have been completely removed from earthly things, and yet they are not even to be compared with that which you shall receive. For we know that the whole creature groan and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why does he yet hope for it? There are those who criticize us for this. I will confess to you that this is all I have in this life is a hope. Sometimes it seems so small, but I don't believe it is ever completely removed. I have a hope that the Lord shall keep me from doing the things I see taking place in the world, from the things I have done and I have a hope that someday beyond this life, beyond these sufferings and trials that are mine and yours that we shall see him for ourselves and not another. We are saved by hope, but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. I believe God's

children wait for it with patience. I believe that they are completely satisfied with the promises of God. God is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness. If we hope for that we see not then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. And then he says these beautiful words. He that searches the heart. I think that so much of the time we are too anxious to judge. The Bible teaches us that we should not judge. It tells us in the book of Matthew to judge not that ye be not judged. He that searches the heart knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercessions for the saints according to the will of God. Satan would have you to believe it's according to your will, but it's according to the will of God. He taught his disciples to pray in this manner *"That Thy Will Be Done,"* not what we will. It's not always in our best interest for what we pray for, it's not that he doesn't hear our prayers, it's not that he doesn't answer them. Paul sought the Lord that he might remove the thorn in the flesh. He told him it's there lest you get exalted above measure, my Grace is sufficient for you. Then he says this, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

Not according to your purpose, not according to something that we have done, or something that we give, but according to the purpose of God. We spend much time in life wondering about those things and then we are reminded of this scripture. We find comfort in our hearts to know that these things are not out of control. If they were, then God ceases to be God. He is the supreme being of this universe and it tells us in this scripture there is no power except the power of the things of God. Then they are not out of control, they are working for your good. I know we can't always see that but we find comfort. He says my peace I give unto you. I find peace when I think of this. I find peace knowing that He is in control. That these things are not going to over run anything unless it is according to the will of God. We are not always blessed to see that, but when we are we find peace. I am at peace with what God has promised. I have no doubt whatsoever that he is able to raise those stones up. I have no doubt whatsoever that he shall raise the dead. I am at complete peace at the promises of God. I am not at peace with myself, but I have complete peace and confidence in the promises and will of God. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: He did

not leave anything to chance. In the 11th Psalm it reads, *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."* In His prayer He says, all the Father has given me I have lost none and shall raise them up in the last day. We had a dear brother come among us who had been in many different churches. And not long ago he joined the church, my home church and he told me this, "Brother Goad, what I like about your preaching is you all preach eternal security." He said that's what I want, eternal security. If we preach Jesus, we must preach eternal security for all the heirs of God. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called. When we are blessed in the Spirit to see these things they are very clear, we see the calling of Paul, we see the calling of all the Patriarchs of old and we don't find where they made any great to do's about their calling. They were about their business following after the things of Satan as you and I and would still be, had it not been for the love of God in our hearts, we would still be following after those things. Paul says it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me.

Moreover them he did predestinate, them he also called, we see the calling of many of the others. We see the calling of many of you. We have seen those who had said they would not be old Baptists, they would not come among them, would criticize them and make fun of them and later on made to love them. They were called out of nature's darkness and

brought in to the marvelous light. There are those of you who have told me of a calling. You were predestinated, and called here in time. Them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Paul said what shall we then say to these things if God be for us, who can be against us. There is no powers, nor principalities nor things present, nor things to come that shall separate us from the love of God, which is our Christ Jesus. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. All, has reference to all whose name is in the Book of Life. That is who this scripture is written to. That's who he is talking to. That's why He came to this low ground of sin and sorrow and took upon himself a body of flesh, that's what he did it for. He said for this cause was I born. What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us, who can be against us. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things. Something that you work for is not free.

Something you inherit is not something you work for. That's what the scriptures teach us, that we inherit these things. They are free. By Grace are you saved. Grace is a free and unmerited favor. You might go out and talk till you are blue in the face and you couldn't make one believe this. But God can, with even the Gaderene who lived among the tombs, when he cast the devils out and into a herd of swine and they ran

down into the sea. He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? I have heard those who believe differently say, oh yes, that was of election. You cast one vote, Christ casts a vote and Satan casts one and you have to cast for the deciding vote. I wasn't around here before the foundation of the world. The Bible teaches this took place before the foundation of the world. How could I have had anything to say in it. This is hid from the wise and the prudent. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect. It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

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.

I am glad Paul was talking about us. I am glad he didn't just say me, he said us, shall not separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

My dear hearers if this is not eternal security, I don't know what it is. If that is not the love of the things that you believe, the basis of the things that you love, the things that you hope for. I can tell you this morning I have no doubt whatsoever but that none of God's children will be left out. I don't believe God is slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is long suffering toward us. He came, he suffered as no other man has ever suffered, bled and died and hung between Heaven and Earth and shed his precious blood on the tree of the cross for you and I trust for me, that someday beyond the trials of this life that we shall see him, be made like him and be satisfied. I don't know what kind of body it will be, one of the writers said, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but I am satisfied with this promise, we shall be like him and and be satisfied. I believe with all my heart that he is able to perform that which he has promised to the children of God. I hope to live my days out among you people, I hope I never bring trouble among you and I apologize for my mistakes, but for the things I love I stand firm upon salvation by grace and grace alone.

Elder Raymond Goad

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE WIND

“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 everyone that is born of the Spirit.” (John 3:8)

These two things are produced by the Lord. Not the first created thing had the least part of these two productions being carried or developed to full fruition. Furthermore each and everyone from the first one in the pristine morning of time, have, if they have, come into the kingdom of heaven under just such trying circumstances as are described here by our Saviour. That is not the construction that I put on what He said, but it is the experience that I hoped to have passed through at the time.

That early experience was something terrible to endure, and it is still that way. I know that what the Bible says does not mean anything to anyone unless they have (and are) experiencing the things described. Therefore, I do not appeal (I do not preach nor write to those that have a vain philosophy) to those that have not, nor do not experience the power set forth by the Saviour's description of the New Birth.

Although the learned Saul had never bowed the knee to anyone,

nor to anybody, yet, I have never, in all of my reading, come across a man as helpless and ignorant as he had shown himself to be on the Damascus road. While we are at this particular place in the travel of one who has come under the experience and power of this wind, let me go a step further and say that anyone that leaves the spot where this wind has blown, that comes away knowing where it came from and what it is about, and what they are to do, one and all of them are mistaken about the Lord having demonstrated His power in their life.

Now I did not say that there wasn't a voice or a thunder or some other demonstration of great affairs. Many such occurrences happen which get a lot of attention, but when the dust has settled the Lord was not in any of them. Moreover, some of the time there is not a voice from outside the hearer Only his or her imagination is using them. In what I desire to call your attention to, each and everyone is brought into the presence of this devastating storm, and each one is brought into the scene when everything is yielding to this gigantic wind they feel the tremors that involuntarily pass through them; they bow down to great buildings that they have built to house their goods, and these are all laid waste about them; they feel the surge of the mighty power within and around them, Yes, they are aware that their house has been wrecked for all time to come. But

they fail to learn one thing that multiplied tens of thousands are learning every time that a breeze rises, to wit, they know where it comes from, and, as they arise, and pick up the fragments, they soon have still greater blueprints for better barns and storehouses in which to store their goods.

Not so with the true Israelite, the true child of God. He or she leaves that stormy ground in a lot worse state than when the wind arose. They know something happened to them that had never occurred before, but they spend the balance of their days in amazement and in wonder. What did happen to me? Where did it come from? Where did it go? Did it come from God or did it come from my depraved mind?

This was indeed the greatest wind to ever blow. It does not leave you with a lot of goods intact. It spoils all of that which you laid up. It does not take this great spoil away. You have to live with the spoiling goods (they get worse as time goes on), and you need not think you are going to find out where the wind came from, neither are you going to find out where it goes. There is not a shred of conditionalism that you can perform and get some relief. You will never get any while you live. For you see a Stronger Man than you has come on the scene and has from the start routed you. He spoils your goods and then binds you. People talk about that they are free to perform this and that and get blessings, or to leave off this and that and miss

them. That is not true. When this wind arises and blows itself out it leaves everyone a poor helpless sinner not knowing anything as he or she ought. They do not know where the storm came from much less do they know whether it is of God or not.

Once again I would urge that where this wind (Spirit) has blown there is not one that knows whether it is God that has dealt with them or not. Instead of all of those born of the Spirit being godly, they do not any of them know whether they are godly or not. Thus, as I leave this phase of the subject, I would kindly ask, have you ever come this wind, or has it overcome you?

Now let us follow the wind and the storm. Let us see if we ever do get to where we can master this Spirit. In order for us to have power to save ourselves, we must have power over the Spirit. Do we have this ? Have we the ability to retain the Spirit ? If so , we must also have the will to do so . Have we got that power? The question is: Are we able to stay in the Spirit or to retain that Spirit ? If there is a passage of Scripture that declares that wonderful fact, certainly, I desire to find it. I find to the contrary. There cannot be any mistake about two things. Even though there is right much in writing and more still of loud talking that any child of God can walk in the Spirit at will, yet the wise man declared that no man could retain the Spirit anymore than he could retain

life in the day of death. It is passing strange that those professing to be saved by the grace of God, yet boldly and blindly declared that if we just would do it that we can walk in the Spirit at all times. Or have I misunderstood you - do you mean to suggest that you can save yourself whether in or out of the Spirit?

All of the great blessings in nature are also spiritual gifts. Ever so many times, in divers manners the written word is teeming with references about the wind in the travels and experiences of those who are of the members of the kingdom of heaven. As far as the references to the wind it always finds the poor sinner at its mercy. At this period in our dealing with the subject, let us remember that God is the direct and immediate cause of there being any natural wind. Of course, if you have some kind of a book that gives a source of wind in a nature other than our wise and gracious Creator, you get all out of it that you can, but for those who learned in the outset of their experience that it blows where it listeth, and that is in keeping with what our heavenly Father does, we that hope in Him will continue to believe that He holds it in His fists, and thus that every cooling breeze from the south, as well as every frigid blast out of icy lands, together with every tornadic wind that ever hit Kansas came as a result of Him opening His fists. If those that can master the winds will be so kind as to tell us where they find that

fact in the Bible, we will appreciate it so much. But I think that they have an insurmountable problem to begin with for we are all reminded that the wind blows where it listeth, which is to say that it blows where it pleases and in relation to it blowing where it pleases, we are likewise reminded that God holds it in His fists, and that not only does that wind blow where God pleases for it to blow, both the wind of the Spirit and that in nature, but likewise that bound the waters in a garment that He has established all the ends of the earth, therefore, not only is every item of nature bounded, but that each time any of these natural gifts are spiritualized that in each case the Spirit is settled, fixed, arranged so definitely that happen so or maybe so or conditionality just cannot be found in the Bible concerning them by the children of God.

The people of God went down to sea to do business in great waters and on good ships. The wind arose, a storm was sent. The wind became quite rough. They could not master their vessels. They were tossed to and fro. About the time that they thought the storm was abating, lo and behold, the wind tossed them fro. Every last one of them lost their wits. A man and a woman that has lost their wits is not able to rescue themselves, to save themselves. It is useless for you to write me that you are able to maintain your wits at all times. If you have ever been to sea, you have, and you didn't know

what to do, and like these that I am describing, you would have been lost had not He that sent the storm caused it to abate. Salvation is of the Lord.

Jonah determined not to go to Nineveh. God determined that he go. He used what he had to keep from going, but he did not have the power to keep from going when the storm broke in its fury on him. At that time he said, even declared, that salvation was of the Lord. Both the wind of the Spirit, and the natural wind were effective in making Jonah renounce all subterfuges and all dodgeings of the flesh and to say without reservation, that salvation comes from the Lord.

In the 148th Psalm we have a long list of things that fulfil the word of the Lord. If the Lord spares my unprofitable life, I may at a future date touch upon all of these things, but right now I am delighted to call your attention to stormy winds fulfilling His word, and His word in every way that it is used in the Bible is used for the mutual benefit of His children these stormy winds are kept harnessed in the strong hands of the Lord and will never blow in a way to destroy their hope, their heritage, their home beyond this travail.

If I am not mistaken, I have seen and felt the tossing of the wind of the Spirit. I have felt, as I hope, the bending down of every plant that I have planted. I have known that a power greater than I was laying waste to what I had thought to have done. I

did not know then, as I would have liked to have known where the wind was from. I have sought time after time that He in whom I sometimes am given a faint hope that it was He at the helm, but that this been nearly sixty years ago, and my testimony today is the same that it was that day of yore. I do not know as I would like to know that it was the Spirit of the Lord. If I got brave and said that I did know I would then be subjected to the same rebuke that is due all these that have withstood the Spirit and the wind in salvation.

But I write in hope. I do hope that I have been to sea, and that the storm has been furious, and that I, together with all of those whose hope of salvation now and hereafter is in the hands of the Mariner that rests in His own love (Zeph. 3:17), but is ever kind and merciful to the cry of His sea and wind tossed trophies of His covenant, and that HE rebukes the wind and the waves and out of His fulness gives them to rest also in His redeeming love.

Elder W.D. Griffin

PSALM 84:1-2.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

PREACH IN ALL THE WORLD

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;” Mark, xvi. 15.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother in Christ: The Monitor of July the first is before me, and I notice that Brother G. W. Chancy, of City Point, Fla., requests any brother that may think the above scripture binding upon preachers today, to write on it. I can assure dear Brother Chancy that I do not aim to animadvert his position. I only wish and aim to humbly present such views as I may have on the text. Evidently the dear Lord enabled the twelve apostles to do some things that he does not see proper to have his dear tried preachers to do in our day.

Because God worked special miracles by the hands of the apostles does not militate against his servants going and preaching the *“gospel to every creature.”*

Before the middle wall of partition was broken down the gospel was confined as well as the preachers to *“The lost sheep of the house of Israel,”* but after the middle wall of partition was broken down by our precious Redeemer, the imperative command of Jesus Christ was and is, *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”* The preaching of the gospel of the grace of God is a lifetime work to all of his servants that he has called and separated unto the gospel of the Son

of God. Some desire to “go into all the world,” while others desire to serve churches. It would not work well for all to go into all the world, for the churches would be left pastorless.

Because Paul says the *“gospel was preached to every creature,”* certainly does not mean that it should not be preached with the *“Holy Ghost sent down from heaven”* to every creature in our day. If there is a text of Scripture similar to the one at the head of this article, that is binding on the preachers in our day, how is it that the above text is not also binding? I feel sure that it is the duty of some preachers to spend their entire time in preaching the gospel to every creature, and to fail to encourage them is to impede the prosperity and peace of our beloved Zion. The preacher is to *“Go ye,”* because God has said so. He is to *“Go ye into all the world”* for the same reason. Not only so, but he is to preach the gospel to every creature, for the very good reason that God has commanded it. If my mind serves me right, I read in the Old Testament something like this: *“One sea and twelve oxen under it;”* three oxen looking towards the north, three looking towards the west, three looking towards the south, and three looking towards the east; and I believe three times four are twelve. The *“one sea”* represents the *“Burden of the word of the Lord,”* or the gospel of Jesus Christ. The twelve oxen represent the twelve

apostles, and as the twelve apostles were commanded to "go," I presume they went in the direction they were looking. If so, they went in every direction, and as preaching was their calling, they went into all the world and preached the gospel to every creature. If the apostles went and did not go in the direction they were looking they went backwards.

Again I read in the last chapter of Ezekiel that there was a certain city that had twelve gates, three in the north, three in the east, three in the south, and three in the west; and I also learn that there was a certain man to go in and out at his respective gate, and I think that as he went in and out he found pasture. It was not the duty of Benjamin to go in and out at Dan's gate, nor Dan's duty to go in and out at Benjamin's gate. If a brother is satisfied to stay around home and serve the churches, that is his gate; on the other hand, if a brother desires to "go into all the world," or "into regions beyond," that is his gate. Let each preacher abide in his calling and thus fulfill his vocation.

In conclusion I will say, that I think the above text is binding only upon those whom God has impressed to devote their entire time to the "work of the ministry." I hope I have written in love, and that Brother Chancy will not think me unkind for thus writing. May God bless us, is my sincere desire.

J.S. Newman

"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.
-- 1 John iv. 7, 8.

If ever you have loved Jesus with a pure affection; if ever you have felt him near, dear, and precious to your soul, that love can never be lost out of your heart. It may lie dormant; it does lie dormant. It may not be sweetly felt in exercise; but there it is. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (1 Cor. xvi. 22). You would be under this curse if the love of the Lord Jesus Christ were to die out of your heart. But this love is often sleeping. When the mother sometimes watches over the cradle and looks upon her sleeping babe with unutterable affection, the infant knows not that the mother is watching its slumbers; but when it awakes, it is able to feel and return its mother's caresses. It is so with the soul sometimes when love in the heart is like a babe slumbering in the cradle. But as the babe opens its eyes, and sees the mother smiling upon it, it returns the smiles, and stretches forth its arms to embrace the bending cheek; so when the eyes of the soul are opened to see the smiling face of Jesus stooping to imprint a kiss of love, or drop some sweet word into the heart, and there is a flowing forth toward him of love and affection -- this is the power of love.

J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

**EASTERN KEHUKEE
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The twenty-fifth session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, NC. The meeting will be held on Saturday October 6 and Sunday October 7, 2007. Services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

From Raleigh take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 East exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite the ministers and lovers of the truth to meet with us.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton river Union meeting will convene the Lord willing the 5th Sunday in Sept. at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 & 23, 2007.

Union Church, located about 5 miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Sixty-Second session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Prospect Church, on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 2007.

Prospect Church is located on the North side of Highway 67, about three miles East of Sims, Texas. (Look for sign.)

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

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
318 / 687-6775

**WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING**

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held the Lord willing, at Greensboro Church on the 5th Sunday in September.

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

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2007

Gladys Shelton, MN	20.00
Pamela Screen, TN	10.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	9.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Elizabeth Webb, IL	10.00
Lessie Smith, LA	35.00
Ronald Patterson, NC	50.00
Roscoe Reed, OH	10.00
Donald Ferguson, BC	25.00
Van Solek, NJ	5.00
Joe & Connie Wall, TX	25.00
Norvell Godwin, LA	10.00

MATTHEW 18:20.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

OBITUARIES

**LULA IZOLA
HOLLANDSWORTH SLAUGHTER**

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to our Lord in the calling of our dear Sister Izola H. Slaughter from this life to her Eternal Home on May 24, 2007 at the age of 84 years.

Sister Izola joined the Indian Creek Primitive Church on April 24, 1977 and was a member for 30 years. She was baptized, by her Pastor, J.S. Sechriest, on May 15, 1977. Her funeral was held at her home church on Sunday, May 27, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. by her Pastor Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram.

Survivors of Sister Izola H. Slaughter are her husband of 66 years, Herman L. Slaughter, one daughter, Rachel S. Marshall, one son and daughter-in-law, Donnie and Yvonne Slaughter. Also surviving are three grandchildren, Tammy Costigan and husband Scott, Sonya Gautier and husband Tony, Joshua Slaughter and two great-grandchildren, Trista Costigan, Seth Gautier and one sister and several nieces and nephews.

She was a dear Sister who believed in the Doctrine of Salvation By Grace and Grace Alone. She will be missed, by her family and her family in the church. She was laid to rest in the Captain George Cemetery. We feel that our loss is Heaven's gain.

Arrangements were made by
Maberry Funeral Home, Floyd, Va.

Done in Conference,
Moderator,
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins
Committee,
Brother J. B. Mitchell, Clerk
Sister Jean Mitchell

ALSEBERRY EVINS SMITH

Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church bows in humble submission to our Lord in the calling of our dear Brother, Alseberry E. Smith from this life to his Eternal Home on May 5, 2007 at the age of 90 years.

Funeral arrangements were made and held at Maberry Funeral Home in Floyd County, Va. His funeral was held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday May 8, 2007, by his Pastor, Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins and Elder Tommy Pegram.

Bro. Alseberry was laid to rest beside his loving wife, Clessie H. Smith in the Captain George Cemetery in Floyd County, Va. Survivors of Bro. Smith are his loving son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Sue Smith and his loving daughter and son-in-law, Phyllis S. and Harold Hollandsworth. Also surviving are two grandchildren, Brian Smith and Diane Smith and husband Tommy Smith and two great-grandchildren, Annabelle and Tommy "Bubby" Smith and five sisters and two brothers and one brother-in-law.

Brother Alseberry was blessed to ask for a home with the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church on May 15, 1965, and was baptized by his Pastor, J.S. Sechriest and Brother G. E. Duncan. He was a true and faithful member to his church for 42 years. He and his companion were blessed to travel far and near to sister associations of like faith and order, but come his meeting time at his home church he tried always to be there.

We feel this scripture fits our dear Brother found in 2nd Timothy Ch. 4 Verses 7 & 8; I have kept the faith, hence forth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness with the Lord. We have lost a dear Brother, but feel that our loss is Heaven's gain.

Done in Conference, at the Church,
Moderator,
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins
Committee,
Brother J. B. Mitchell, Clerk
Sister Jean Mitchell

REVELATION 7:16-17.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 175

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Elder Wm. Hale Terry
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder Wm. Hale Terry, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

*My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delight,
The glory of my brightest days,
The comfort of my nights!*

*In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning
star,
And he my rising sun.*

*The opening heavens around me
shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows his heart is
mine,
And whispers I am His!*

*My soul would leave this heavy
clay
At that transporting word,
Run up with joy and shining way
To embrace my dearest Lord.*

*Fearless of hell and ghastly death
I'd break through every foe;
The wings of love, and arms of
faith,
Should bear me conqueror
through.*

Watts.

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 EDITORIAL

“Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.” - I Timothy 5:24



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

I believe this scripture is setting forth that God’s elect will not stand before God in the end of time and face judgment, but others will.

When God gave Adam the law of sin and death in the Garden of Eden,

all of Adam’s race were covered by that law. That included all of the Lord’s people in the flesh, for the Apostle Paul says that we all were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Some say that everyone of Adam’s race will stand before God in the end of time, be judged according to their works and that judgment will be rendered at that time. They also say those who have done good or received Christ as their savior will be given eternal life and those who have done evil or not accepted Christ will be cast into hell. But, I believe that judgment has already been rendered because Romans 5:12 reads, *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”* Judgment was rendered. Romans 3:23 says, *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”* Judgment was rendered. Romans 9:11-13 states, *“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;”) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”* Judgment was rendered. Romans 3:10-12, *“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*

They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Judgment was rendered. All are guilty.

God's law being spiritual, holy, just and good required a perfect sacrifice that was holy. It could have no blemish (sin). Therefore, none of Adam's sinful race could satisfy the demands of God's law and redeem themselves from its curse. *"The carnal mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."* *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* Since it was impossible for God's little ones to pay their debt and redeem themselves, God sent His own Son in the likeness of their sinful flesh and yet without sin under the same law that they were under to stand in their room and stead. Here was the perfect Lamb of God without spot or blemish who stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He took the sins of all His people in His own body on the tree of the cross and was made to be sin for us. He took our judgment and the execution of that judgment. The wrath of God was poured out upon Him who knew no sin. Innocent, but oppressed;

humble, but afflicted; He opened not His mouth. He, in his great love, willingly laid down His life for His friends and satisfied every demand of His father's holy law. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment.

You must experience the condemnation of the law which says you are guilty. Romans 14:10-12 says, *"But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God."* You stand before the judgment seat of Christ and your knee bows in humble submission and repentance and you confess that you are a lost sinner and you beg for mercy. As the publican who stood afar off and alone, you felt so sinful and such a wretch that you could not even lift your eyes unto heaven, but could only cry out, Lord be merciful to me a sinner. The judgment seat of Christ is only for His people and is within you. Psalms 99:4 says *"thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob."* Psalms 101:6 reads, *"The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed."* The law was given that sin might abound. When the law was applied to you, your sins abounded

and you died. As the Apostle Paul said, *"I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived (abounded), and I died."* We cry as the Apostle, *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment. Your sins are open to you as you are shown that you are a sinner. Your sins have gone before to judgment as Jesus took them in His own body on the cross. The execution of the judgment was accomplished when the Lord suffered, shed His blood, and died to pay the price demanded by His father's holy law for your redemption. Therefore, you will not have to face the judgment of God at the end of time. Your names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world. Therefore, in the resurrection, you will be with all the sheep on His right hand and will hear the summons, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."*

All others will experience their sins following after them. In this life, they will never know the Lord and will never know their sinful condition. But at the end of time, they will be brought to stand before God in all His power and glory and be judged out of those things written in the books of the law according to their works. Judgment has already been rendered and they are all guilty,

but their judgment has not been executed. They will stand before God in all His power and glory and be shown that they are indeed sinners and lost. Then, they shall be cast into the lake of fire. I believe this lake of fire or everlasting punishment is described by the Apostle Paul in II Thessalonians 1:7-9, *"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."* To have their sins made known to them and to stand in the presence of God and then to be banished from His presence eternally is a hell that burns as a fire that cannot be quenched. As Cain said when God banished him from His presence after slaying Abel, *"My punishment is greater than I can bear."*

Romans 6:23 states, *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Also recorded in Psalms 107:1-2, it says: *"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."*

In bonds of love,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Terry,

Enclosed find a check for \$100.00 to cover a 2 years renewal and \$75.00 is a contribution to be used where needed.

This past winter Dan and I had a chance to visit Elder Campbell's Church in the Memphis, Tenn. area and enjoyed hearing him on a Sunday morning. The past couple winters we have spent about 6 weeks each year toward the south and I try to locate us on each Sunday near a Primitive Baptist or a Sovereign Grace Church that I have previously found on the internet. I wish we had some of these churches closer to us.

Sincerely,
Annabel Arne

VOICES OF THE PAST

ELDER AUSTIN JONES CASSELL

Born: March 22, 1820
Died: October 14, 1901



Elder A. J. Cassell

Eld. A. J. Cassell was received by experience by the arm of Jack's Creek Church, Patrick Co., Va., at Green Hill meeting house, Patrick Co.,

Va., April 9, 1836. Green Hill was constituted into a church on Sept. 10, 1836. He remained a member until granted a letter of dismissal, Feb. 8, 1873. He placed his membership with Center Church, Henry Co., Va., where he remained until his death. He was ordained as a deacon, Aug. 11, 1849; licensed to preach, March 8, 1851; ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, July 10, 1852. He pastored several churches and was the moderator of the Smith River Association for many years. It is also interesting to note that he was the father of Elder John R. Cassell, and the great-grandfather of Elders Bennie Neal Clifton, Leonard Lester Cassell, and J.L. Cassell.

CIRCULAR LETTER

From the minutes of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association, held with West Fork Church, Floyd Co., Va., July, 1882, and also Charity Church, Patrick Co., Va., October, 1882.

To the churches of the Smith River District Baptist Association and all whom it may concern, greeting.

Beloved, we have met together in associational deliberations twice this year, each time in love and continued in love and peace, while we your messengers were together, and parted in love and peace. How good it is for brethren to be in love and peace with each other. Such has been the case for some year or two.

It appears that the interest of one is the interest of all the others; the mind of one, the mind of all the rest; no jars, no new resolutions, no debates; nothing to chafe the feeling of each other, but all seem to wish for and labor for peace.

No big, self-opinionated messengers have you in your association; whether public or private all appear to be valley livers, dwelling in the valley of humility, poor and dependent upon the Lord, having one general aim for the good of each other, enjoying each others' company and conversation, esteeming each other better than themselves. Never to my recollection, have I seen or known your association more in union and peace than at the present time. Most of the churches are healthy and in peace, strong in faith, trusting alone in the Lord. When any of the dear brethren come to see us at our association as correspondents or visitors they are kindly received in our body and treated with special respect that they may feel welcome and pleasant with us, and I hope they do.

Though our body may be small yet it is blessed with peace. Sometimes small families have as much enjoyment as large families do, especially when some of it's members are unruly, possessing self importance. Oh that we may still live in peace while we are permitted to stay here on earth, that we may be poor in spirit, and often at the throne of grace asking the Lord to lead us;

that we may not do ourselves any harm, nor harm to others.

Let us try to watch over our ways and words, and look at our weakness and nothingness instead of looking at our poor hobbling brother and complaining of him; for to his Master he stands or falls. What poor judges we are when left to ourselves.

Oh that we could and would do this, see that we did not lay something in the way that our brother would stumble over to his hurt, for if one of the members suffer, all must suffer with it, for all of the members are of great use, for God has set the members of the body as it pleases Him; so the hand has no right to say to the foot I have no need of you; neither has strong members a just right to say to the weak you are of no use to me. The strong ought to bear with the weak, and when such is in distress try to comfort them.

Oh, that we could have patience to bear the many trials of this life, and especially with our dear brethren, that instead of looking down on our brethren and sisters we might feel that we had good cause to look upon them, viewing them in worthiness above us, for oftentimes we feel to say, Oh, is there any one like me? Jesus said, *"learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls."*

It is good for us to have poor opinions of ourselves, so that we may not trust in ourselves, but in the

Lord, who is able and will give strength to the poor and needy. Our faith hovers around His promises, believing that the time appointed of God they will all be fulfilled. Dear brethren and sisters, the Lord attends to and maintains the cause of the poor; so if you are poor it is in self, but you are rich in the Lord, for unto this man will I look that is poor and of a contrite heart and that trembles at my Word. I am such a poor hand to gather up fragments that I fear I shall not hardly get a taste for any. The brethren desired me to write, but it is surely a task. It looks like most anything that I write is awkward and weak; but such as I have I wish to give unto you in the name of the Lord. Oh that I was prepared by the Spirit of the Lord to admonish you not only to love but to good works, to let our light shine, but it seems to me often that I have but little light that I know not how to travel, and say like David said to the Lord, "is thy mercy clean gone and will He be favorable to us no more?" We are yet in the flesh and have the warfare to encounter which often brings us so low, and our condition seems to be a pitiful one, but it is necessary for us to go through great tribulations, even the furnace of afflictions. But God has appointed a time for them to end. We hope He has chosen us out of the world, and if so He will bring us safe to that Heavenly home, where Jesus says are many mansions. No breeches of fellowship will be there; then little children,

we will all get together to dwell in peace in love forever; then the days of trials and grief will be over; then the dear brethren that are scattered away from each other, wishing greatly to see each other will get together. Oh, what a happy time it then will be with the poor tired pilgrim. Heartaching days will be over, doubts and fears left behind, tears no more flow down our poor withered cheeks, no more death to dread. We will be beyond the wilderness where we will receive truly the milk and honey. Bless God for such a prospect.

Elder Austin J. Cassell

REVELATION 7:14-17.

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes? and whence came they?

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

ROMANS VIII. 28.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.”

These words bring to our minds solemn thoughts and reflections, of the ground they cover, and the real true meaning of the words here spoken by the apostle, under the inspiration of the holy Spirit of God. How hard it is for poor insignificant creatures to understand or comprehend the working of his almighty power, as he (God) works all things after the counsel of his own will. As we contemplate the majesty and glory of our God in all his works let us ever remember that *“as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* It seems to me that Paul was here contemplating the work of God from the beginning to the end, from creation to the final glorification of all the redeemed, and not a single link in the chain of God’s providence could be left out and his most holy will and purpose accomplished for his dear saints and his glory. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what our God should do or not do, or divide between the good and the bad, from our viewpoint. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things, but not the bad. Who of us is able to sit as judge and draw the

dividing line; place the good things on the right, the bad on the left?

Let us examine a few things left on record for our learning. God created Adam upright, a good created being, gave him a law. He broke that law and fell under its curse: sin and death upon all his posterity. Now we all know that our God could have made Adam strong enough to have withstood the temptation, but in the purpose of God, with an end in view in the far future, he made Adam just as he was. We would place this evil step on the left, not comprehending the thing to be accomplished: the glorification of our God and his only beloved Son Jesus, the Savior of sinners. But I want it distinctly understood that God is not the author of sin; man is wholly responsible for all his sins and misdeeds. We note again among the “all things” the selling of Joseph. Joseph had a dream. (Read the narrative.) Was it a mere chance dream, or did the God of heaven inspire it? He had a purpose in it, therefore it was a link in the chain. Joseph told it to his brethren and they put their interpretation upon it (and a correct one). The evil of their corrupt nature arose and they conspired against Joseph and sold him to merchantmen, who carried him to Egypt. See the sorrow of poor old Jacob. Would we not all place this on the left, with the bad things, as Jacob did when he said,

these things are against me? Dear reader how often have we said in our hearts as Jacob did, not seeing the end? But reader, follow Joseph in all his career, shut up in the prison cell by evil intention, is this for good? Yes in the purpose of God, though yet hid from mortals. Pharaoh dreamed a dream, Joseph was there to interpret it. Suppose Joseph had not been there, then what? But he was there to interpret the dream. Seven years of plenty, seven years of famine. Joseph finds favor with the king, and is made head over all, to save much people alive. God sent him there; the end is good, and when made known his brethren bowed to him willingly, and Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Again, the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Where in all the history of the world was there a blacker or more heathenish crime? yet it was all in the fixed, predestinated purpose of our God. Suppose there had not been a Judas; then what? The Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, nor the purpose of God. It is written, "*As Jonas was three day and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*" When Jonah took ship it was evil upon his part, but God meant it for good. He was to learn obedience by the things he suffered. The storm came. Was it by chance? Certainly not. They cast lots, and it fell upon Jonah, the guilty one, and

they cast him overboard. Then what? Our God was superintending it all, and had prepared a great fish to swallow him up and carry him to the place appointed, ordained or fixed. Had our God control of that fish? Most assuredly he had, and when the three days and nights were up he was delivered. So they "were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Now how any true believer can repudiate and hold up to ridicule this blessed doctrine I cannot understand. I am satisfied many are prejudiced by wrong interpretations of evil doers. I have heard of some, in trying to refute the doctrine of predestination, taking up some atrocious crime of murder, and holding it up in all of its most heinous nature, crying out with a loud voice, Tell me that God made that man do this awful deed? Now that is a false statement. I have traveled extensively in twenty-two states, and Canada, and have never heard any one ridicule such an idea, and I could not fellowship any one who did. God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man, man of his own lust is tempted. I know of one man who thus tried to justify himself in an evil deed, but the church excluded him, and did right in so doing. I have never favored setting this up as a standard in church fellowship, but have opposed it. I have full fellowship, but have opposed it. In all my travels I have met but one man who favored

it as a standard. I opposed it, and do yet. For the elect's sake the world stands, and many of the dark scenes that take place, that are beyond our comprehension, will be among the "all things" in the providence of God, and in some way, though remote, be for the good of his people, individually or collectively. The wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath will He restrain. The wicked are his sword for the chastisement of his people. What a sweet comfort when we can rest all in his blessed hand and power, and know that the darkest scene is as necessary as the brightest one. Darkness and light are alike with the Lord. He dwells in the thick clouds; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Truly it is a day of darkness. Darkness has covered the earth, and it truly seems gross darkness the people, and I sometimes wonder why his wrath is not poured out; but for the elect's sake will the world stand until the last one for whom Jesus died be made manifest.

*"Chained to his throne, a volume lies,
With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size,
Drawn by the eternal pen."*

*What a blessed comfort to feel that
"The steps that I tread, and
the station I fill,
My Father determined and wrote
in his will?"*

Dear reader, I trust you may be favored to gather a few crumbs of comfort from these scattered thoughts, for there has been a little comfort to my soul as I have penned them, and a relief to an exercised and burdened mind. The dear Lord bless you all, and lead and guide us all in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours in sweet gospel fellowship, though the least and poorest in my Father's house.

P. W. Sawin
Shelbyville, Kentucky

PRAYER

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps, we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach any one how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again it does not mean that it is not gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination.

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a mo-

nopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we can use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it don't follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach - it is mighty hard work - in fact it cannot be done. While trying to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of how but of what and why. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for.

This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as un-

changeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ. Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice.

Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must try to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, as for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we

must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more often, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask why if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the wisdom of this world. Just think of the prayer (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church.

We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles commanded us to pray.

Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and feel the doing of that will?

Elder W.D. Griffin
(Sept., 1947)

1 SAMUEL XVI. 23.

“And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.”

Our inquirer wants to know if this means that natural music had the power to drive the evil spirit out of Saul. In other words, did the effect of the music upon Saul prove an influence which music is of itself capable? The crux of this matter lies in an expression in the eighteenth verse of this same chapter. This expression spoken with reference to David is this, *“And the Lord is with him.”* This fact explains the power of David’s music on the harp. The fact that the Lord was with David gave his music that peculiar potency over the evil spirit in Saul. David slew Goliath with a stone from the brook. Does that prove that stones picked up from brooks have the power to kill giants? By no means. The power to kill the giant was not in the stone, but resided in the truth that God was with David and guided the stone unerringly to his mark. The secret of David’s success lay in the fact that God was with him. His cunning skill with the harp could not of itself have availed to drive the evil spirit from Saul, but the fact that the Lord was with David imbued his music with a

peculiar charm that the devil himself could not resist. Music is refreshing, and we love it, but it would not do to say that music is an infallible recipe to drive the devil away. It takes the Lord to do that. If the Lord chooses to use music to refresh us in our evil hours, well and good, but music without the Lord cannot do it.

Elder Lefferts

"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."
HEBREWS xii. 2.

No one can ever run the race set before him, except by looking unto Jesus. He is at the head of the race; he stands at the goal, holding the crown of victory in his hand, which he puts upon the head of the successful runner. And we can only run on as we view Jesus by the eye of faith at the right hand of the Father opening his blessed arms to receive us into his own bosom at the end of the race. Nor indeed can anyone really look to him but by the special gift and grace of God. He must be revealed to the soul by the power of God; we must behold his glorious Godhead and his suffering manhood by the eye of faith; and we must view him as the incarnate God; the only Mediator between God and man. We must see the efficacy of his atoning blood to

purge a guilty conscience; the blessedness of his obedience to justify a needy, naked soul; the sweetness of his dying love as an inward balm and cordial against all the thousand ills and sorrows of life, We must see his glory, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; his suitability to every want and woe; his infinite compassion to the vilest and worst of sinners; his patient forbearance and wondrous long-suffering of our sins and backslidings; his unchanging love, stronger than death itself; his readiness to hear; his willingness to bless; and his ability to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, Thus the heavenly runner looks not to the course however long, nor to the ground however rough, not to his own exertions however multiplied, nor to his own strength whether much or little; nor to applauding friends nor condemning foes; but wholly and solely to the incarnate Son of God, Jesus draws him onward with his invincible grace, Every glance of his beauteous Person renews the flame of holy love; every sight of his blood and righteousness kindles desires to experience more of their efficacy and blessedness; and every touch of his sacred finger melts the heart into conformity to his suffering image, This is the life of a Christian, day by day, to be running

a race for eternity; and as speeding onward to a heavenly goal, to manifest his sincerity and earnestness by continually breathing forth the yearnings of his soul after divine realities, and to be pressing forward more and more toward the Lord Jesus Christ, as giving him a heavenly crown when he has finished his course with joy.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, where-with he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

BELIEVERS BAPTISM

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
{Mark 16:16}

Article 9 of *Signs of the Times* “PROSPECTUS” says: “That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized Rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.”

The purpose of this Article 9 is to briefly state the position of the SIGNS relative to the members, ministers, and rule of the Church of Christ. We pray God to enable us to more fully define the term, BAPTIZED BELIEVERS, in this treatise. We are deeply impressed of the necessity of this endeavor because of so many varied and conflicting opinions confusing our people this day on the subject of VALID BAPTISM. Lack of information often causes misunderstanding. Misunderstanding begets confusion. Confusion leads to errors. Errors often results in strife. Strife breeds hatred. Hatred breeds malicious actions. Malicious actions cause divisions. Divisions in churches result in each faction declaring null and void all actions of others. For this cause the Lord removes *candlesticks* and *spues* churches and ministers *out of His mouth*. We desire to carefully exam-

ine this vital subject and consider prevalent questions.

Primitive Baptists are careful relative to the mode or manner of baptism; that is, the method in which the act is performed. Proper qualifications of the person receiving baptism is important. The administrator of the ordinance of baptism must be properly authorized before the baptism could be considered valid. Proper ceremony connected with this act is worthy of consideration. Different elements are mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with baptism; so, we must ascertain when *water* is the *element* under consideration. We want to reconcile the expression: "One baptism", in Ephesians 4:5, and "*The doctrine of baptisms*", in Hebrews 6:2. We shall define the word, baptism.

The shortest and most comprehensive definition of the word from which baptism is derived is: *To dip*. This dipping includes casting down, submerging, and raising up. When this process is followed it is rightly called baptism. The administrator puts his subject into the element, causes this element to completely engross, and then raise the subject up. There is always a change in status by the subjects being baptized with the baptism spoken of in the Scriptures. We shall now take up the baptisms which are administered by the Holy Ghost in face of this definition.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus

Christ were baptized into his death?" To sum this up, it means that we were baptized into the death of Jesus Christ, being chosen in Him. It means that we who were chosen in Him, were in Him, while He was dying, engrossed in death, and raised up in Him from death. The changed status was that Jesus having been cast down and engulfed in suffering and death arose to die no more. The changed status of His people who were in Him was; the dying, the death, and the raising of Jesus from death, made certain eternal life for all who were in Him. No man can perform this baptism of which Paul speaks. Yet, Paul uses this baptism to show what water baptism portrays. Paul speaks of the baptism in Jesus' death, which was two thousand years ago, to preface a baptism of the present day. Paul further reasons: "*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*"

Water baptism is the "*Likeness*" of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes that this baptism is but ONCE. Then he adds: "*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (v. 11) When you obey from the heart that form of doctrine you become free from sin to become the servants

of righteousness. The carnal man is a servant of lust.

This man has no knowledge of the law, and is alive without it. God causes His Holy law to be written in the mind and heart of this carnal man. This servant of carnality has been thus brought under the dominion of the law, consequently he tries to be a servant of the law, His failure in every attempt to serve the law makes him to know that he is in every case a servant of sin because he has disobeyed the holy law. This servant of sin despairs of life to such extent that his soul faints. (What a terrible death!) Sin has reigned unto death. The spirit of grace and truth raises this servant of sin from death to become a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ who accomplished the law for us, and died for us! The killing and making alive is a baptism God administers.

God administers the baptism of repentance of heart, repentance means turning. If we were immersed in repentance and left there, we would forever be turning in a circle. The godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation need not to be repented of according to 2 Cor. 7:10. There is a turning from error to truth, from darkness to light, from law to Gospel; from which there is no need of further turning.

John *preached* the baptism of repentance, and baptized in water all who gave evidence that they had been given repentance by the Lord. He would not baptize those who

came to him for baptism unless they brought forth the evidence that they had repented. See Luke 3:7-8. John was a qualified judge of the ones worthy of water baptism. The administrator is the Spirit not man in the expression: "*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...*"

(1 Cor. 12:13) These baptisms that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost performs are essential unto eternal Life. Water baptism is the only baptism that is to be performed by man as the administrator. This baptism is essential unto obedience as it is the answer to a *good* conscience toward God. Scriptural water baptism changes the classification of the one baptized. Before baptism one is classed with those who "*walked according to this world*". After baptism one is classed with "*fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*". (Eph. 2) Paul was told to, "Purify thyself with them." (Acts 21:24) This was necessary because of so many misrepresentations concerning Paul which had caused the Jews to be very angry with him. The actions and explanations of Paul in response to this request did not make him more pure to himself or God; but it did make him more pure in the sight of the Jews. The sins they had against him were washed away. While in the process of telling his experience in order to abate the anger of the Jews, Paul quoted Ananias:, "*Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling*

on the name of the Lord." The water baptism purified Paul in the sight of the brethren whom he had before persecuted. Before baptism he persecuted Jesus Christ. It took baptism to wash away the accusation of persecution of Jesus Christ and bring him into a new status as a proclaimer of Jesus Christ.

John, the Baptist, and Jesus, the Saviour, were both named by the angel Gabriel. Both had miraculous births in that one was born of a virgin; the other was born to a barren woman well stricken in years. John was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. John was termed by Jesus as "*More than a prophet.*" John had the authority from Heaven to baptize with water. Jesus was sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. John instituted water baptism and had no authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Jesus did not baptize with water but submitted to baptism of John in water, making manifest that John had this special authority. John was the first preacher in the gospel dispensation.

Facing the fact that a great majority of professed Christians of this age consider that a little water sprinkled or poured upon a person constitute baptism, it becomes necessary to point out a few expressions of Scripture that prove otherwise. One who has never heard of baptism can take the New Testament, begin reading, soon simple language will convince the reader of

proper mode. The first chapter in which baptism is mentioned is 3rd. chapter of Matthew. Verse 16 says: "*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.*" This statement would simply prove that Jesus himself was *in the water* when He was baptized. The reader will find in the second book of the New Testament, Mark 1:5, "*...and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.*" The simple expression, In the river of Jordan, convinces the reader that the baptism was performed in the river, not by a little water taken from the river. Mark says, "*And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit Like a dove descending upon Him.*" This shows simply that the baptism was *in Jordan*, the river, and that He came up out of the water. John 3:23 says, "*And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized.*" Why the necessity of *much water*? The unprejudiced reader would by now know that the ones John baptized were in the river at a place in the river where there was more water than at other places of the same river. According to these expressions much water is neces-

sary to perform baptism. As Philip and the eunuch were riding along in the chariot, they came unto a certain water. This must have been a place where there was *much water*, Enough water for both of them, Philip and the eunuch, to go down into the water, Philip to baptize the eunuch, and both of them to come up out of the water.

Let us quote acts 8:38-39: *“and he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”* We have already quoted Romans 6:4 elsewhere in this treatise which shows baptism to include burial. The person uninformed of the meaning of the word baptize, would gather the meaning of it by the time he read the New Testament to include the 6th chapter of Romans. We now understand that baptism in water means that the one doing the baptizing takes the one to be baptized down into much water, buries him in water, raises him up out of the watery grave, and brings him completely out of it by bringing him to the shore. Sprinkling or pouring a little water upon a subject is not Scriptural Baptism. The administrator really baptizes part of his finger, or hand, by dipping it into the water. He does not baptize the subject

upon whom the water is sprinkled or poured. Burying one in water is not baptism until the buried is raised up. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We shall next consider the question, Who is qualified to be baptized?

Scriptures plainly show that John baptized persons who confessed their sins, brought forth evidence worthy of repentance, and professed belief in Jesus Christ the Saviour. The same qualifications are necessary now. Last Sunday afternoon I led a brother down into the water and baptized him. My ceremony was something like this: Upon confession of your sins and your admission that you cannot save yourself from this condition in any sense by your own merit; and, upon confession of your faith in Jesus Christ being the complete and perfect Saviour of His people; and upon the evidence of your trust in Jesus Christ, your perfect Saviour; and, upon expression of your desire to follow the commandments of Jesus Christ, - depending upon Him for imputed strength and, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: I baptize you, Brother P, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *“As I raised him up I concluded the ceremony with, Amen”*. This is the longest baptismal ceremony I have ever spoken. This is not a model ceremony but it does give in essence the requirements of one qualified for baptism.

We next refer to Acts, 2nd chapter, 37th verse, to show that those who were qualified to be baptized were first, *“Pricked in their heart.”* They were undoubted terribly upset by these pricking sensations caused by the working of the Holy Ghost. Peter’s sermon had brought condemnation to their hearts. The last words of Peter’s sermon must have pierced them sharply. *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”* (Acts 2:36) I have wondered if their thoughts were: I crucified Him! I crucified Him! What Guilt! No wonder they said, *“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”* They had undergone such remorse in their hearts toward themselves for having part in such terrible crime! It did not take an altar call to entice them to respond. The Holy Ghost pricking their hearts with condemnation and guilt of the crucifixion of Jesus was enough to make them ask the question: What shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, *“Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* Scholarly men fed by pride have argued over the term, *for the remission of sins*, used in this expression which greatly confuses the readers and hearers. Let us look to Matthew 27:24; *“When Pilate saw that he could prevail noth-*

ing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.” He washed his hands in the presence of the people there to prove his abhorrence of the crucifixion of Jesus. This act of washing his hands in water is the presence of this people with the expression, *“I am innocent of the blood of this just person,”* cleared Pilate in the sight of the people. The people responded, *“...His blood be on us, and on our children.”* (v. 25) These people who were pricked in heart on the day of Pentecost, as well as all of us who feel that our sins crucified this Jesus, are, and were, willing to do anything to prove our sorrow for such crime. They, as well as we, respond to that command: Repent, be baptized, save yourselves from this untoward generation: calling upon the Lord.

First, these were pricked in heart by the Holy Ghost. Next, their cases were presented before men and brethren. Thirdly, they wished to know what to do. Next, they received special instructions consisting of definite commands, promises of gracious gifts of God, the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost; testimonies, exhortations of many words; all added up to:—*“Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”* Fifthly: *“They that gladly received his word were baptized.”* Sixthly, they were added to the

Church. This is the order of procedure which is given in the second chapter of Acts. This proves that one must be a *Baptized Believer* before becoming a member of the Church. We have no Scriptural evidence that this order has ever been changed.

We next consider: *Who is a Believer?* “*And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*” Acts 8:12) We ask, *what was Philip’s subject on this occasion?* We read Acts 8:5; “*Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached CHRIST unto them.*” We read again in the same chapter of Philip preaching to the eunuch: “*Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.*” (v. 35) *When the eunuch asked, “See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? Phillip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.”* The eunuch answered, “*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*” This testimony was sufficient to satisfy Philip that the eunuch was a believer. It was enough to prove that he was a proper subject for baptism. The case of the eunuch’s baptism gives proof that the baptism may be administered before taking the matter up with the church. Of course the church must be consulted before one could become a member of a certain

church. He must be baptized before a church could consider him as a member. According to the scriptures we have no precept given which necessitates one subscribing to a list of doctrinal theological ideas before one could be baptized. A true believer in Jesus Christ the Saviour, plus a desire to be baptized is sufficient. A proper administrator who is properly ordained and set apart by a presbytery, is qualified to preach the gospel and baptize believers. If one is not qualified to properly judge who the true believers in Jesus Christ the Saviour are, he should not be set apart by a presbytery to preach the gospel and baptize believers. We shall quote a portion of *Church Covenant* as recorded in “*Hassell’s History of the Church of God,*” page 695: “*Forasmuch as Almighty God by His grace, has been pleased to call us (whose names are underneath subscribed) out of darkness into His marvelous light, and all of us have been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ Jesus, and have given up ourselves to the Lord, and to one another...*” This quotation shows that in the 18th century that the baptism was based upon profession of their faith in Christ Jesus. It shows that they were baptized before constituting themselves into a church by covenant. These were already baptized when they composed this covenant. The specifics in this covenant was by the mutual consent of

the members. Mutual agreement is necessary on many things in order that brethren may agreeably walk together in church capacity. Because of the many and varied opinions expressed by professed Christians relative to faith in Christ Jesus; it need be that we clarify our position upon this. A mere assent to the fact that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God is not sufficient proof that they believe in him. I must first be convinced that an inquirer does not have faith in himself to save himself from his sins confessed. My reasoning is that the person who thinks he can merit salvation does not actually feel the need of salvation. Next, I must be convinced of his vehement desire for salvation. Then, I want to know whether or not he has been made to trust in Jesus Christ only for salvation from his sins. I want to be further persuaded that his desire is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ. I want to be convinced that he looks only to Jesus Christ to strengthen him to perform works of righteousness. Lastly, I want evidence that he has the God-given, God pleasing faith without which it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6) Upon satisfactory evidence of these facts, I gladly baptize anyone in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and leave it to the judgment of the church concerning their membership. We

shall conclude this installment on Believer's Baptism by quoting the last paragraph of the last *editorial* prepared by Elder Gilbert Beebe as recorded on page 941 of "Hassell's Church History."

In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidate for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the Scriptures. We have said to them, 'If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest.' After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptist, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourselves ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. We know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Saviour, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow Him, and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the Heavenborn child, no other duty

or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed.

May the Lord bless this attempt to your edification. Amen.

Elder E. J. Lambert
Reprint from ("Signs" 1968.

FRAGMENTS

WHAT a wonderful word is Love; how deep, how broad, how full of sacred meaning, how infinitely comprehensive, and yet inexpressible. In the New Testament it is dwelt upon by all of the inspired writers with great variety, and yet everyone who has felt its sweet and holy power and blessedness will seek some new form of words in which to tell of its wonders.

The apostle John says: "*Perfect love casteth out fear.*" These words were given to me once, I must believe, with divine power; they lived in my soul many days, and I lived in them, it seems to me, though that is much for me to claim.

Paul, speaking of the abiding power and enduring quality of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, names sixteen things which cannot separate us from that love, and then includes every "other creature" in that wonderful list, thus assuring the absolute security of all who have ever known that love (Romans xxxv. 39,) and yet those who have surely felt that dear love in their hearts will

give place to doubts and fears, and say:

*"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?"*

In another place this same apostle, expressing to his brethren at Ephesus his desire and prayer for them that they may know the love of God, tells some wonderful things concerning that love and those in whom it dwells. First, he bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in prayer for them, that they may know this love; this knowledge I understand being a daily vital experience of its blessed power.

Second, he expresses the truth that part of the family of God are in heaven and part on earth, and that all of them in heaven and earth are named of Jesus Christ.

Third, his prayer shows that all the living children of God in earth, in order to know this love, must be strengthened, according to the riches of Christ's glory, with might by the Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ must dwell in them by faith.

Fourth, those in whom this infinitely blessed grace of the Spirit shall be felt and manifested must be rooted and grounded in love, sending their roots, as a plant or a tree, down into the sacred soil of love, and grounded like a pillar standing firmly

upon the solid Rock, upholding the order of God's house.

Fifth, all saints have a measure of this comprehension, which includes and embraces the breadth and length and depth and height of this boundless and incomprehensible love.

Sixth, still a greater wonder; to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; to know what cannot be known. The mortal powers of the wisest man cannot know this love, but to the babe in Christ the knowledge comes without effort, as the breath of spiritual life. The love of Christ passes all human knowledge, the natural heart cannot know it. It is not the love of man, but the love of God, which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. We feel to be so vile, so unholy, that we cannot be a fit dwelling-place for that holy principle. But sunshine may fall into a polluted atmosphere, and it cannot be polluted; it may fall upon a heap of corruption, but it will not be corrupted or stained.

Seventh, and the last and best, is that to know that love of God as it is here so wonderfully presented is to be filled with all the fullness of God. This is beyond my power to comprehend, or even to think, yet I do love the sweet truth so wonderfully presented. O that I may be given more ability to comprehend this wonderful love, and to feel some

little measure of the fullness of God. Love is the deepest, broadest, most glorious thing within the range of thought, and yet nothing is so easy and so sweet to do, or rather to experience. "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us.*" God is love, and he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. May that love be more felt in our hearts, and go out in word and act to all the family of God.

Elder Silas H. Durand

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the Contentnea Association will convene with Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in October. The date is October 13-14, 2007. The Church is located at 144 Middle Prong Road, Lowland, Pamlico County, North Carolina.

We welcome and invite all who love the truth to come and worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-7441

**LOWER MAYO
FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING**

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, September 30th, 2007.

We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m. Coleman Church will host the meeting. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Fancy Gap, Virginia, just off the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Those coming south on parkway, from Fancy Gap, turn right a short distance past milepost #209, on road #715. Go about 50 yards and turn left on Cole Creek Road. Go about 1 mile to church location on left. Those coming north on parkway, turn left at mile post 211 on Cole Creek Road. Go 1 1/4 miles to church location on right.

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

In bonds of Love
Carlton Brown, Clerk
(336) 366-2112

Creek meeting house. The meeting house is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia near the Virginia, North Carolina Border. Those coming North or South on Route #8, turn East on Ayers Orchard Road #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to church location on right Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827, turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church location on right.

We invite the Ministers, Brothers, Sisters and all believers in Salvation by Grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

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

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2006

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on October 5th, 6th, and 7th, 2007. Mayodan Church will host the meeting and it will be held in Russell

Clara Jones, VA.....	5.00
Larrie Bowler, VA	5.00
John Vipperman, VA	25.00
Margaret Link, TN	5.00
Carl Terry, VA.....	5.00
Alan Terry, VA	5.00
Donald Arne, VA.....	75.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
202 Carousel Lane
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EDITORS

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

Tony Horton

202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403
Phone (276) 398-2923

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Tony Horton, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

We, the staff of the "Signs," are very saddened at the loss of our good friend and Editor, Elder Hale Terry. Here is the notice of his passing from the Moody Funeral Home in Stuart, Va. an obituary will follow later.

ELDER WILLIAM HALE TERRY



Elder Wm. Hale Terry

Elder William Hale Terry, age 71 of Meadows of Dan, passed away Wednesday, October 3, 2007 at his home. He was born in Patrick County on May 25, 1936. Elder Terry was a member of New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, and had pastored at four Primitive Baptist churches, Old Union Church in Indian Valley, Paynes Creek Church in Floyd, Salem Head of the River Church in Check and New Bell Spur Church in Meadows of Dan. He was the moderator of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association and managing editor of the Signs of the Time magazine periodical based on the Primitive Baptist faith. He had served in the United States Army

and had retired as an engineering supervisor with Appalachian Power Company with over 37 years of service. Elder Terry was preceded in death by his father, William Hugh Terry; a grandchild, Hannah Fleming; a brother, Lee Terry.

Elder Terry is survived by his wife, Glenna Turman Terry of the home; three daughters and sons-in-law, Jennifer and Jon Coleman of Bassett, Carla and Tony Horton of Hillsville and Gina and Frank Fleming of Mount Airy, North Carolina; one son and daughter-in-law, Marcus and Mary Ann Terry of Meadows of Dan; four grandchildren; Joshua Coleman, Austin Horton, Megan Fleming and Makayla Terry; two great-grandchildren, Skylar Coleman and Benjamin Coleman; his mother, Ilene Hale Terry Clifton of Meadows of Dan; three sisters, Marie Bowman of Meadows of Dan, Ruth Hall of Hillsville and Jane Largen of Dugspur; two brothers, Elder Alan Terry of Floyd and Tom Terry of Woodlawn; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services for Elder Terry will be held Saturday at 11 :00 a.m. at New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church with Elders Larry Hollandsworth, Kenneth Key, Alan Terry and Carl Terry officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery with a flag presentation by the Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard. The family will receive friends Friday evening from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the New Bell

Spur Primitive Baptist Church. Flowers will be accepted, or memorials may be made to the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Odetta Terry, 1222 Woodstock Road, Laurel Fork, Virginia 24352, or to Hospice of Patrick County, 835 Woodland Drive, Suite 101, Stuart, Virginia 24171. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is in charge of the arrangements. Online condolences may be sent by visiting:

www.moodyfuneralservices.com
 Oct. 7, 2007.

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EDITORIAL

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7.



Elder J.B. Farmer

The children of God are great mysteries, even unto themselves. But God is merciful to show each one of them a little about themselves and about the kingdom of God, that they might not be utterly perplexed and totally cast down. If God had not shown us some things about ourselves and about the things of the Spirit of God, we would be in complete confusion, because spiritual things cannot be understood by the natural mind. Can you think back to your earliest days, when your troubles came upon you like a powerful and overwhelming army? You were given a love toward God, and a desire to please Him, but everything seemed to be against you. Your sins rose up like a mountain and you had no ability to remove them, even though you tried everything in your strength to make things better. You tried to read the scriptures, but they only condemned you. You were too embarrassed to tell even your closest friend of your troubles, because you thought you

were the most miserable sinner on the face of the earth. You tried to pray for relief, but felt to be too hypocritical even to make the attempt. After many long and grief filled days and nights of groaning, you were brought completely to the end of your wisdom and strength and felt to be too exhausted to go on. You thought you were all alone in your desperation. You were about to give up and concede that death, hell, and destruction surely and deservedly would be your end, when the Lord appeared to you with a word of mercy. Have you ever been brought through things similar to these? If so, I believe you have been blessed with some of the experience of all the saints that have ever lived.

There is a reason for all these trials and tribulations, and God is merciful to explain some of it to His people, out of love and pity for them. The Lord said by His apostle, *"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* The creature under consideration, I am made to believe, is the little child of grace. He is subject to all the vain things of this world and of this life. He is familiar with sin, sorrow, suffering, pain and death. He was made this way from the very beginning in order to experience these things. He

was made of the dust of the ground, and shown that he must return to the dust from which he was made. He was made first a natural man, and second a spiritual man. The creature, who was made subject to the vanity of this world, was put here in this condition that he might be delivered by God from this miserable state unto the freedom of the Spirit and to the hope of glory, which shall be manifest fully in the last time at the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. And through all these things a great mystery is presented. How can a person be natural and spiritual at the same time?

Jesus said to Nicodemus, *“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* This great mystery was far too great for Nicodemus and also for us to understand without revelation from God. Jesus made it plain that the little children of grace are born of nature and also born of the Spirit from above. They have a fleshly nature by their natural birth and a spiritual nature resulting from being born from above. These natures are contrary to one another, to the extent that the little child of grace is not able, by himself, to do that which he most desires – to walk in the light and to speak the truth in love. Aren’t you glad the apostle Paul said, according to his experience and according to the wisdom of God, *“When I would do good, evil is present with me.”*? And aren’t you

glad he was blessed to say, *“How to perform that which is good, I find not.”* And thankfully he also was given to say, *“He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”* He was shown these truths by grace that he might relate them to the saints of God for their comfort and edification. The child of God was made subject to vanity according to nature, and by grace he was blessed to hope and trust in the good works of God.

There is an inward man, the new spiritual man, Christ in you the hope of glory, who is not subject to vanity. And there is the outward man, which is the old natural man, who is subject to all the vanity of the flesh. In the opening verse of scripture, the children of God are likened to earthen vessels, having a spiritual treasure stored inside. The outward part is of the earth earthy, and the inward part is of the Holy Spirit. But all vessels are not the same. Although all men are made up of one lump of clay, only those vessels that have been chosen of God and sanctified for holy use receive holy things and are preserved for glory. Those vessels not chosen and not sanctified receive only the base things of this world, and are therefore fitted for destruction. By Wisdom the apostle said, *“Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another to dishonor? What if God, will-*

ing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of Jews only, but also of the gentiles?" The earthly vessel, or body of the child of God, is sanctified and made holy and is shown to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. The inspired apostle said, "*What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*"

It appears to be evident from the scriptures that the vessel, or the outward man of the child of grace, is highly favored above the vessel of the child of the devil. The vessels of mercy are made up unto honor and glory, even eternal life. The vessels of the wicked ones are made up unto dishonor and wrath, even eternal destruction. It is manifest that the earthly vessels of the children of God shall be preserved forever and that the vessels of the wicked ones shall be destroyed. The beloved apostle Paul was empowered to say, "*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul*

and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Here is another mystery. How can the body be preserved, seeing that it must return to the dust from which it was made? God is merciful and kind to make known to His little ones what they need to know concerning these things. God spoke through his apostle concerning this earthen vessel saying, "*It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; 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. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold I shew you a*

mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." This flesh and blood body cannot inherit the kingdom of God. It must be changed and made a spiritual body.

So we understand from all these scriptures, believing they have been opened a little for our edification, that although the body of the saint is corrupt because of sin, it has been sanctified and cleansed by the Spirit and made holy unto God. And God shall preserve that body, even though it goes down in corruption

to the grave. According to the scriptures, God shall raise and change these corruptible bodies into bodies of incorruption. According to the scripture, which cannot be broken, mortality shall be swallowed up of life. "*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*" This is the earnest expectation of the creature. He yearns for the redemption of his body. According to the understanding given to me, if not deceived, when we die the body returns to the dust and the spirit returns to God who gave it. The spirit is joined to the soul, which Jesus said no man is able to kill. As it was with the poor beggar Lazarus, so it is with the child of God. After he dies, the spirit joined with the soul of the child of God shall be carried to the bosom of Abraham by the angels of God, where Lazarus is now being comforted. There, he, and all that die in the Lord, shall remain at rest and at peace until the Lord returns to gather His elect from the four cor-

ners of the earth. This includes both those living at that time and those dead in Christ. According to the Holy Scriptures, the Lord in His glorious appearing shall bring with Him the spirits of just men (the elect that have already died in Christ). And at the resurrection of the dead, by the power of the living God, the bodies of the dead in Christ shall be raised and changed, and the bodies of those who are alive and remain at His coming shall be changed, and each one of their bodies shall be made like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then shall the earnest expectation of the creature be fulfilled, all things shall be brought into subjection unto God, and forever and ever all shall be praise and glory and honor to God, who alone is worthy. The body shall be redeemed from the grave, changed and united with its soul and spirit, and together with those alive at His coming and changed, each child of God then shall be a complete spiritual man in body, soul, and spirit. In this wondrous spiritual state each shall be blessed to look upon the face of the living God and not die, but live, and each shall have full enjoyment of heaven and immortal glory world without end.

He shall sing the song with all saints that none other than the redeemed of the Lord may sing. John heard them singing during the revelation that he was given. *“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and*

to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.”

Yes, the sanctified earthen vessel, the body of the child of God, shall be preserved and shall not be destroyed with the wicked. It shall be changed and made a glorious vessel by the power of God at His coming. This shall be to the praise and honor and glory of His grace and mercy toward the poor sinners

that He foreknew and loved with an everlasting love, to the extent that He laid down His life for them. This is my hope and my trust, as I desire to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is also my constant desire that I should be blessed with all saints to be faithful unto death that I might receive the crown of life, although I know I am not worthy of the least of the mercies of God.

This was written, I trust, in love toward God and all saints, and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer.
8-7-2007

PSALM:93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, where-with he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Hale Terry,

Our hopes are for the Lord's blessings to be showered upon you and your family during this trying time.

I truly hate to burden you with another chore but I would like to order the Signs of the Times. I am enclosing a check for \$25.00.

My name and address is:

Ada V. Beeghly
4935 Henry Rd.
Henry, Va. 24102

With sincerest regards,
A sister in Christ I hope,
Ada V. Beeghly.

Dear Elder Terry,

I am so sorry about being late with the Signs of the Times payment. I am almost blind. I have to have someone to read it to me.

I love the Old School Primitive Baptist Church, the brethren and Jesus so much.

My husband Elder Clovis Towney's loving wife.

Frances Neal

Elder Wm. Hale Terry
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va.

Brother Terry,

Please renew my "Signs" for 2 years. Enclosed is my check for \$30.00.

Thank you so much. God bless you and all those who write for the "Signs of the Times".

In fellowship,
Rebecca Jean B. Moran

ARTICLES

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin—"(Isaiah 53:10)

Why did it please the Lord to bruise Jesus? The answer was to satisfy Divine justice. The justice of God demands death for the broken law.

Notice the expression: *"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."* The sins of God's people were laid upon Jesus. *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, "Who knew no sin."* (2 Cor. 5:21) *"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world*

9-1-07 *unto himself, (the world does not mean all of mankind, but means all of the children of God, whether they are Jews or Gentiles), not imputing their trespasses unto them;"* (2 Cor. 5:19) God the Father charges Jesus for the sins of the Children of God.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman" (enmity between the church or bride of Christ and satan) *"and thy seed and her seed."* (the seed of the bride of Christ or the church and satan) *"it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel"* (Gen. 3: 15) When satan bruises the heel of Christ shows the sufferings of Jesus when he was crucified. How does Christ bruise the head of satan? This Scripture gives the answer: *"That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil."* (Heb. 2:14)

Jesus said: *"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."* (John 14:20) We cannot explain this close connection.

Christ's soul was made an offering for sin on the cross. Jesus told Pilate: *"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world—"* (John 18:37) This was determined before in the purpose of God. *"For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."* (Acts 4:28)

The sentence of death was placed upon the world, and Jesus suffered in the place of his people. *Jesus suffered the pain and sorrows of hell upon the cross. "How long, Lord? Wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?" (Psalm 89:46) "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27 :45-46)*

All of the sins of the children of God were placed upon Jesus. *"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all)" (Isaiah 53:6)*

"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:29)

May the Lord bless what is written in honor and praise to almighty God. *"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8)*

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr.

PSALM 4:1.

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE WATCHES

Elder J. A. Monsees
Ellenwood, Georgia

The principle watches originally among the Hebrews were those of the night, from sunset to sunrise, and these were divided into four watches, three hours of each, called respectfully "Even", "Mid-night", "Cock-crowing" and "Morning."

No doubt these watches were drawn from the expression of our Savior. *(Mark 13:35) "Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at evening or at mid-night, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning."*

These watches, "acoemetea, or acometi" according to the Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, inspired what was known as an "Order of Monks at Constantinople, in the fifth century, whom the writers of that time and the following age called, "aeometi" that is, watches, because they performed divine services day and night without intermission. They divided themselves into three classes, alternately succeeded one another, so that they kept up a perpetual course of worship. This practice they founded upon that passage, *"Pray without ceasing." (1 Thes. 5 :17)*

From the above we gather some of the importance of the office of watchmen. The watchman was an important person in the nation and society throughout the different periods before the coming of the Lord. The importance of which varied with the object of the watch. Where there was the life and liberty of men, women, and children involved, imminent perils made these watches so important that severe penalties were annexed when the watchmen or sentinals were found careless, indifferent, or sleeping at their posts.

Watchmen were supposed to be alert at their post, and informed of everything and at all times during their watch, so that when called upon, they may be able to give an accurate account of all that happened during such a period. The duties, oft times were pains taking and arduous, and the watchmen were relieved of their duties sometimes when they had served for a short time as two hours. Where the duties were not so important services for longer duration were required.

At an early age shipping was the important method of transportation, and the lives and valuable treasures of the nations were transported from one country to another, and so lured pirates upon the seas which menaced and imperiled the lives and property of all nations, that these watches were made important.

The watchmen, therefore, were obligated as a matter of necessity

to remain awake at their post of duty during the period of their watch, as the pirates may come upon them at any hour, killing the passengers and officers of the ship and robbing them of the treasures and valuables thereof. We get a picture of the church, sometimes referred to as the "old ship of Zion" upon the sea of time imperiled by many pirates and enemies of the truth infinitely more important than any watches of a national or commercial nature.

Jesus says, *"Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is."* (Mark 13:35) *"What I say unto you I say unto all, watch."* (Mark 13:37) The importance of the watch referred to was not for a thief or pirate, but for the passing away of the heaven and the earth, and the coming of our Lord Jesus, who as a man taking a far journey left this earth with the watchmen and porters on duty, with the command to watch for His return, without giving any specific indication of when it will be. If He should return and find these watchmen asleep, we shudder to think of the consequences.

We get the idea sometimes that watchmen are preachers. The preacher is a watchman but the watchman is not necessarily a preacher. The preacher is better qualified to give an accurate account of the happenings during the watch, and the burden of his duty is to proclaim such happenings as to give warning of dangers, and com-

forts, and assurances when the voyage is peaceful and the sea clear of pirates.

In Isaiah 21:11, the watchman was called upon to give an account of the night, or of his watch, in which there was some penalty annexed for his failure to do so. This penalty is described as the "burden of Dumah" (silence)- the burden of silence. Such a penalty is described by Jeremiah as "*fire shut up in the bones.*" Such fire as can not be described with human tongue. The fire which burns and consumes our flesh is a sufficient torture, to take away our natural lives, so that we will never feel the pain of the bones burning. In this case the interior of the bones are ignited and the burning from this point is outward, and no way for us to reach this point to extinguish the fire, and the burning continues on so long as the silence endures. "*This is the burden of Dumah.*" The preacher is placed upon the wall as a watchman, and with the eagle eye sees danger from a greater distance than the other watchmen, and is supposed to give warning of its approach. Many times these dangers are of a perilous nature, and for the minister to be silent, and give no warning makes his crime unforgivable in his own conscience, and of others who are imperiled by it. Happily in these watches he has the company of real comrades — comrades in arms — to stand and hold up his hands, give comfort and aid in every time of trouble.

What watchfulness! What attention! We give over the sick beds of our loved ones, we watch their breathing, the pulse, the flushes of the face, the smiles, the frowns, in fact every symptom, constantly hoping for improvement. With the Lord's children there were many sickly among them and need to come under the watch care of those who are alike interested in their welfare. In such a case we both watch and pray. You do not watch over your loved ones for evil but for good. All these watches are intended for the good and protection of the household of faith. You do not destroy one of your own passengers in order to kill pirates, but you kill the pirates to protect your own passengers.

We are mindful, of course, there are wolves in sheep's clothing that get among the flock and some disposition must be made of these, but we don't want to destroy all of the flock in order to get rid of one wolf. We feel sure the proper amount of watchfulness will protect sheep from the wolves. Wolves creep in unawares when the watchmen are asleep and when he fails to give the proper warning. The wolves must be dealt with before he enters among the flock; if we wait until he gets in, the destruction of the flock is certain.

Old Baptists are censured for preaching too much on the fundamentals, such as election, predestination, and the final preservation of

the saints, etc. These may seem dry principles, but they furnish an impregnable wall over which the wolf, the carnivorous animal that feasts upon the flesh and blood of other animals, cannot pass. He can't eat straw. These dry principles are too much like straw, therefore, those who are established upon these walls are a safeguard against the wolves entering.

The thing that creates a definite blockade for the wolf, is the requirement of what Old Baptists; call an "*experience of grace*" or reason for their hope. This is the evidence of a revelation of Jesus Christ to His child. The scriptures asserts No man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. Jesus says "*Upon this rock (of revelation) I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" The watchman standing at the threshold are careful to see that those who enter have the evidence to support a claim of such knowledge, or revelation. Our Lord does not reveal himself to wolves, so they cannot rightfully enter.

Elder J. A. Monsees

LUKE 22:42

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

JEALOUSY

Webster says that jealousy is a suspicious fear or watchfulness, especially the fear of being supplanted by a rival. Solomon said that "*it is cruel as the grave.*"

We might add to the above that it is a dreadful disease, entirely without reason, and denotes lack of faith in God. It is selfish, caring nothing for the misfortune of another, and has been the destruction of many people, for it always destroys the person thus afflicted.

Many of God's servants have suffered this ailment to destroy their usefulness and influence in the church, and that without cause. When a preacher begins to manifest a spirit of jealousy toward another, he seeks in every way possible to build himself up by promoting the downfall of him whom he supposes to be his rival. The cause of jealousy is a lack of faith in God, and also proves a lack of love for the cause of Christ in the world. One preacher seems to have a greater talent than another, and this causes the one who seems to have the lesser talent to try to destroy the other.

We hear brethren say that they esteem their brethren as better than themselves, and then many times belie that statement by showing a spirit of envy toward others who seem to be more prosperous in the service. We should all remember that we have the talents God has given us, and that He is not unjust

to ignore those with lesser talents while He heaps blessings upon those with greater ones, and if we use our one talent to the glory of God and the upbuilding of His kingdom, He will bless us with peace of mind and satisfaction. We should also remember that we could not handle our brother's talents, because God gives us talents according to our several abilities.

I have met many preachers who had greater gifts than the one I have, if indeed I have one, but they have not given me any cause to be jealous of them, because the greater number of them have treated me kindly and with respect, and have never shown by their attitude that they considered me as unworthy of their fellowship. They have treated me as an equal, and so how could I desire their downfall? I have NEVER wanted to serve a church that any of them served, and when some church calls one of them to serve it instead of calling me I am perfectly happy about it, because I have no fleshly desires in the matter.

I can assure all of God's servants that just so long as they conduct themselves as they ought, they will never lack for a place to preach, nor will they be made to feel that their labors are not appreciated. When one preacher thinks he is envying another preacher because he feels that he has more advantages than he himself has, he is mistaken, for it is not the other preacher he envies, but he envies God who gave

the gifts. To envy another preacher would be the same as saying that God has not dealt fairly in dispensing His gifts, but has slighted us.

There is one sure preventive for jealousy, and this is it: never have a fleshly desire to serve churches, nor to obtain any special notice in the church; never think more highly of yourself than you should, and don't ever want something in the kingdom that IS NOT yours. If you deserve blessings in the service you will receive them, that is, if you deserve the fellowship and true companionship of God's humble children you will have them. God is the founder of His kingdom and He is the keeper of His servants, if we can but keep this in mind and then strive to serve in humility and godly fear, we will receive as many blessings as we can contain.

When one permits himself to be jealous of another servant, he does so without cause, and reason gives place to fear, and fear produces panic. Suppose some brethren do show more consideration for one preacher than they do another, what does that prove? It either proves that the one they show more consideration for is more active and consecrated in the service, or it shows that they are in the flesh and are not seeking to glorify God but to gratify the flesh. If the first reason is true, we can build ourselves up in their esteem by being more faithful and devoted to the cause,

while we manifest a humble spirit; if the second reason is true, we should feel sorry for them and for the preacher, if he permits them to continue their flattery toward him. We should remember at all times that the faithful and devoted members of the church will love and appreciate us if we conduct ourselves in the right manner.

Maybe we have not applied ourselves as we should and our fellow preacher has, and if this is the case we cannot think hard of him nor the Baptists if they are a little more attentive to him than they are to us. Carelessness on our part has been the cause for some of us being jealous, for we somehow come to the conclusion in our befuddled minds that the preacher who is appreciated more is to blame for our not being appreciated so much. I have often felt condemned in my own mind when some preacher manifested in his preaching that he had applied himself to the study of the Bible, but I have never thought to blame him for my fault. If a preacher seems to show by attitude toward me that he is rather important in the church I only feel sorry for him, because I know that he is in the flesh and will soon come to a fall. The truly great preachers are the most humble, the most approachable, and the ones who are never known to boast of their own ability. I do not envy other preachers their ability to preach but I rejoice when I am permitted to hear them.

I learn from them, and can feel safe when in their company. If we aspire to be called to churches, or to surpass our brethren in preaching, we are sure to be disappointed, for our aspiration is of the flesh and is out of harmony with the spiritual blessings of God.

My prayer is that God will bless all His humble servants who contend for the doctrine of the Bible, both fundamentally and practically, and that I may continue to have opportunities to hear them preach; they comfort and instruct me, and their fellowship and companionship strengthen me. If and when God impresses churches to call them, I bid them Godspeed. They are the salt of the earth and the finest companions a poor unworthy one such as I could ever have. I trust they will overlook my imperfections and continue to let me walk with them, that they will pray for me, and that they will feel free to visit the churches I try to serve. I cannot be jealous of those I love and have so much confidence in.

R. K. Blackshear.
Sent in by Keith Hiatt.

HEBREWS 2:9.

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

REASON OF MY HOPE

Elder R. W. Thompson, Dear Brother:—This vile worm of the dust is in no wise worthy to claim relationship with the Lord's dear children; but, if love makes us akin, I feel a hope that I can beg to be permitted the sweet privilege. When I read the sweet and comforting testimony of the precious brethren and sisters, and they tell my feelings so plainly, make themselves as nothing and exalt the name of the Lord, I am constrained to praise his holy and exalted name for his mercy and compassion on poor worms of the dust. We are taught in the Holy Scriptures of divine truth that the people of the Lord are begotten in love; for God the Father, is love, and to be born of him is to be born of this holy love; and if we love the Father whom we have not seen, surely we should love the brethren and sisters whom we have seen; and when they tell the same story we have to tell, and sing the same song we love to sing, even though we have never seen them in the flesh, are we not made to love them for the truth's sake?

This morning I have been reading the April number of the dear old MONITOR, which you kindly sent me, and it was all so good and comforting that I felt as if I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed it. Your editorial, "Why Baptize for the Dead?" was so wholly in accordance with my understanding of that holy ordinance and brought me so much

pleasure, that I must speak of it, though I feel my inability to say anything worthy of notice. But, dear brother, if I have ever been made to know anything of spiritual things, I do feel that I have been made to see a holy beauty in this. All my life, since I was old enough to think of such things, it was rather a boast with me that when I asked for baptism I would be able to give some reason for it; but how vain is the thought of man! When I tried to talk to the dear brethren and sisters, to relieve my troubled mind, it seemed I had so little to tell, and felt too unworthy to tell even that; and when they received me, with such tender love and fellowship, I was almost overcome. All night long I tossed to and fro in my distress, fearing I had deceived the dear people whom I held in such high esteem, and I resolved I would go to them when morning came and ask them to let me tell them more of my vile self, for I thought I must surely have misrepresented the matter. But when morning came I found no opportunity to speak with them, and was not so forcibly impressed to do so.

We were to meet at the water at ten o'clock, and all morning I went about sad and cast down; I wondered how the family could all appear so cheerful when we were going to a burial. Again and again the thought would come that we were going to a burial, though never once did the thought enter my mind that baptism is a symbol of a burial.

When we met at the water's edge, I was so cast down and burdened I did not know what to do, I feared I was doing wrong, and felt so dead and lifeless. But do people bury the living? Certainly not. It is only the dead that have need of being buried, and I humbly hope I was dead to the law of sin and death. When we came to the water, the dear brethren and sisters began to sing, and I thought it was the sweetest, saddest music I ever heard, and it sounded just like a burial hymn. Then the dear old servant of God began to offer up prayer, and my very heart, it seemed, was melted to tears. When he was constrained to make petition for this poor, vile, sinful wretch, O, how unworthy I felt! I could not doubt but that he was indeed blessed with the true spirit of prayer, but how could it be that a servant of the most high God could offer up a petition in my behalf? I cast my vile body prostrate upon the earth and almost wept aloud. I thought I had never heard such an able prayer, but it seemed to me to be the saddest, also, that I ever heard; and again came the thought that it was just like a prayer at a burial, but all this time, strange as it may seem, no thought came to me that a baptism represents a burial. Even at the last moment I was tempted to tell them that I must not take this step, for I did not feel fit, but, as I walked down into the water, these words came into my mind: "*I leave it all to the Lord.*" As I went under the water, a

groan seemed to escape me (I felt, rather than heard, it), and some real burden seemed to leave me, and I seemed to be sinking into eternal rest and peace. I cannot describe it. I felt as one who had labored until all his strength was gone, and the load had become so burdensome that it could no longer be borne, when it then pleased the Lord in his wisdom and mercy to lift from my shoulders the heavy load, and joy and peace filled my soul. No bed could be made so soft and restful as that watery grave felt, and I wished that I could just remain there. When I came up out of the water, all my burden was gone and my soul was filled with a holy peace and rest that words are inadequate to describe.

As I came out of the water these blessed words came into my mind: Arise to walk in newness of life. I felt no wild, tumultuous joy; no desire to shout or sing but it seemed that peace like a dove rested upon my soul, and all my burdens and troubles were gone. The dear ones were singing, "*I'm going home to die no more,*" and while I had always despised that song, it now seemed the sweetest I ever heard, and I thought they could have chosen nothing more appropriate. Such peace and rest filled my soul, that I did not care whether I spoke to anyone or not, and had I been left to my own inclinations, I would have simply gone my way without so much as removing my wet garments.

The dear old apostle says that baptism is not the putting away of the sin of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. It has seemed to me that of all the words in the English language, there are none that could so well describe and define baptism as those. Being buried in the watery grave, does not wash away our sins; for they are covered up, hid and overcome by the robe of righteousness, which is Jesus; but when he is made manifest in the poor sinner, the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely and that poor sinner is given a mind to follow his blessed Master in the holy ordinance of baptism, in the performance of his duty, he finds a free mind and an acquitted conscience, such as nothing else can give. Peace, like a river, attendeth the way. Surely, I felt this to be true; for it seemed that nothing of this world troubled my mind for weeks afterwards, but my time was spent in sweet and holy communion with the gracious Lord. It seemed that the Scriptures were opened up to my understanding in such a way that I cared to think of nothing else, and most of my time was spent in singing and making melody in my heart unto the Lord. I would seldom read the Bible, for that seemed unnecessary; so many scriptures came to my mind, and with them the interpretation in a way that brought such joy and comfort to my soul, that many times when I sat in the company of others, I had no idea of what they were talking for

my mind was on far different subjects. I felt a desire to put off the "old man," and as he who hath called us is holy, so should we be holy in all manner of conversation; for as many of us as are buried with him by baptism into death, like 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 that our "old man" is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. It was the glory of the Father that raised up our blessed Savior from the dead, and it is the glory of the Father that raises poor, dead sinners from the darkness of nature and gives them a mind to praise his holy name. And, when Jesus, the great Conqueror, shall come in the morn of the resurrection, in the clouds of love and glory to bear his jewels home, this same glory shall raise these vile bodies from the tomb, change them in the twinkling of an eye, from corruption to incorruption; from mortality to immortality; fashion them like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and cause them to be caught up with Jesus In the air to join the innumerable host in his praise throughout for his goodness and mercy! All that is within me, praise his holy name!

Lola Holland
FAYETTEVILLE, W.VA.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF RUTH

ELDER J. A. MONSEES

Ellenwood, Georgia

The Book of Ruth consists of only four short chapters, but it is an excellent diagram of the Church of our Lord Jesus through all the ages.

Naomi (representing the church in the broad or aggregate sense, and more particularly the Jewish Church) and Ruth (representing the separating and obedient followers of Jesus, and more especially the organized church of the Gentiles, which we think today are the Primitive Baptists) are the principal characters of this Book.

Orpah represents the unfaithful hordes of the aggregate church, and particularly, those who have been in close contact with the dear people of the Church, and have heard, believed and loved the gospel, but the church's desolation, combined with their own poverty, creates an obstacle their weak faith cannot or does not overcome; hence they falter and turn back weepingly.

Elimilech, Hahlon, and Chilion represent the law under which the church has lived with contentment, under all conditions, so long as the husband remains alive. The three perhaps represent three branches of the law considered most vital to their well-being. The Samaritan woman had five, and when Jesus

met her at the well, she was then trying out one she knew was not her husband. Those unmarried to Jesus in service sometimes have a plurality of husbands, and the more they have, the better, they are inclined to think. A complete marriage to Jesus means a complete separation from these other husbands, for Jesus is a complete Savior and Redeemer who provides all our needs.

Naomi looked longingly during the famine in her own land into the land of Moab, which appeared to be a land of prosperity and contentment, where she could enjoy the comradeship and association of her own husband and family. Hence, she, her husband, Elimelech, her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, left Bethlehem Judah, their native land, to sojourn in the land of Moab, for she had heard the Lord had visited His people there with bread, and the famine had made it difficult to live in their native land. The four continued their residence in Moab and the two sons married native girls, Ruth and Orpah.

Soon Elimelech died, but Naomi had two strong sons upon whom she could depend. His death was a major loss to Naomi, but this was not enough to wean her from the lures of the land of Moab, for she had two strong sons, the issue from a strong husband, upon whom she could look for support and maintenance.

Then these two sons, husbands of Ruth and Orpah, die, leaving Naomi not only a widow, but with two widowed daughters-in-law, and in a strange land.

Perhaps Naomi knew of no famine in her native land like the one she was now suffering in the land of Moab, among strangers. In her native land she suffered for bread, but she is now suffering in heart and with leanness of soul, a famine for the word of the Lord is of much greater magnitude than any of an earthly nature.

It was during these sore afflictions, Naomi determines to return to her native land. So sad in heart was she, that she requests that those of her loved ones *"Call me not Naomi (pleasant) but Mara (bitter)"* (Ruth 1:20), and mournfully proclaims, *"I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty; why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me."* (Ruth 1:21)

Upon reaching the decision to return, Naomi intreats both Ruth and Orpah to remain in their native land and return to their people. She had no way to feed, clothe, and house them, and could promise no husband for them. She had no living sons, could have no more, and if she did, they could not wait for them, and weepingly kissed them, as a signal, "Good bye." There is nothing to indicate that Naomi loved Ruth bet-

ter than Orpah. The church loves all her subjects, the obedient and the disobedient, those who are with her and those who turn back. The church is sad when she cannot provide the destitute and helpless with the things they need. In these circumstances, there are many Orpahs with weak faith, who let hunger for the things of this world control them, and with sad hearts turn from the fold to look for an easier way. The way of the cross is hard, they say, and the church is too poor." *"It may be hard to find bread,"* they murmur, *"to say nothing of the luxuries of life."*

Ruth gives us the interesting part of this drama, for when Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and turned back, Ruth clave to her, held on to her would not go and would not let Naomi go, and pleadingly said, *"Intreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God"* (Ruth 1:16)

Just how well Ruth was rewarded for her faithfulness to Naomi is revealed in the remaining chapters. Back in the land of Bethlehem Judah, she finds Boaz, representing Jesus, who was a rich planter. She was given permission to glean after the reapers, with orders from the master to let some handful fall on purpose. There were other gleaners in the fields of

Boaz, as there are other gleaners besides the organized church in the field of our Lord, but Ruth was given special consideration, "*Hard by the reapers,*" with orders for special favors, with "*handsful of purpose*" to her.

The marriage of Ruth to the rich Boaz follows with all the privileges and blessings of this wealthy and merciful friend.

As to Orpah, we have left her in the land of Moab, and as to her subsequent prosperity, we hear no more. Her life, so far as the following generations are concerned, is closed. She lives no more. There are no recorded eulogies at her passing, no flowers for her casket, no one of God's ministers say, "*She hath done what she could.*"

Not so with Ruth; she lives on, and like Mary Magdalene, who anointed the head of Jesus with expensive ointment, washed his feet with the tears of her eyes, and wiped them with the hair of her head, Ruth will be pleasantly and lovingly mentioned wheresoever this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached.

The gist of the story, it seems to me, is to show the blessings of a faithful and diligent life. The gospel urges us to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14). To live this life, and then die in Christ, in the faith, we have the assurance of resting from our labors, and the works will follow after, or be remembered after we are

gone. "*The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger*" (Job 17:9).

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2007

Amy Heppler.....	10.00
Lowell Hopkins	5.00
Glenford Sigmon	5.00
Victor Terry.....	5.00
David Spangler	5.00
Jean Moran.....	5.00
Eva Cruise	5.00
Brandon Lane	5.00
Frances Neal	5.00

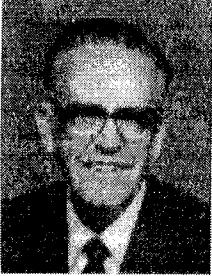
HEBREWS 1:1-3.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

OBITUARIES

JAMIE EVERETT COOPER

Jamie E. Cooper

It is with sadness that I write the obituary of my dear husband Jamie E. Cooper. He was blessed to leave this world of suffering and his hope and desire was to die and go home. Like the white doves that circled over the grave site that holds his earthly body, he too had traveled far and was given the desire to go home there to be sheltered and at rest. Brother Jamie E. Cooper was born July 2, 1918 and raised in Patrick County, Va.

He was found dead in bed, September 8, 2007, at our home. His stay on earth was 89 years - 3 months 6 days. He died from asbestosis and had suffered a long time with the affliction. He asked the Lord to let him go to sleep and never wake up. God granted Jamie a dying wish. Oh the beauty to see the unfolding of God's love and mercy.

He was given a good hope when a young man. Jamie joined Reed Creek Church July 11, 1940 at the age of 22, served as clerk of Reed Creek since 1947, served as deacon since 1955. He served as clerk of the Pigg River Association from August 3, 1979 until 2004 resigned due to

health. He served as trustee of The Signs of the Times since 1985. He was a trustee of the Primitive Baptist Assistance Inc. He was a Navy Veteran of World War II.

He was a man of few words, that were weighed before spoken. He was a firm believer that stood for the truth, order and doctrine and he was a peacemaker with a tender heart. He was a good husband, daddy, grand daddy and great grand daddy. God truly blessed us to have him in our lives. Our blessings have been many and wonderful.

Jamie and I were married June 11, 1938 at the home of his uncle, Elder Lonnie Cummings. We were married 69 years. Also surviving are two daughters Judith C. Owen of Martinsville; Stephany C. Simpson and husband Henry Simpson of Roanoke, Va., four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren a brother, nieces, nephews and so many lovely brethren and friends. May God bless us to behold God's love for us and to know that all things are in His hand to unfold at the time and place that He appointed.

His funeral was held September 10, 2007, conducted by Elder C. B. Davis and Elder Thomas Solomon, at Norris Funeral Home, interment was at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Virginia.

Truly missed and loved by many.

Jamie's wife,
Frances M. Cooper.

**IN MEMORY OF
DEACON GUY JUDSON HOLLEY**

Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom and mercy saw fit to call our beloved and highly esteemed Brother Guy Holley from the walk of life and give him peaceful rest until He comes again to gather the jewels of His mercy, whom He redeemed with His own precious blood.

Brother Guy was born November 26, 1918, a son of the late Tom Pete and Wilda Emberson Holley. He was a U.S. Navy Veteran of WWII and experienced The Hand of God deliver him from danger. He founded Holley Used Auto Parts in 1954, which was very successful and provided well for his family. He was married to Mary E. Holley and to this union was born a son, Ronald and Phyllis Holley and daughters, Deborah Trail, Linda Underwood and Rose Mary Mason. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary E. Holley, daughter Rose Mary Mason and sons-in-law Jackie Underwood and Sam Trail. He is also survived by wife Dorothy C. Holley, stepchildren Darrell and Mary Ann Craighhead and Linda Watson, seven grand-children, three step-grand-children, nine great-grandchildren and brother, Grady Holley.

Brother Guy Holley joined Republican Primitive Baptist Church September 21, 1975, ordained Dea-

con December 20, 1980 and chosen clerk October 21, 1995. He was blessed to serve faithfully to the end, always having the welfare of the church and his pastor at heart.

Funeral services were held August 7, 2007 at Flora Funeral Chapel by Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Larry Hollandsworth, Clarence Stone, and Thomas Solomon. His body was laid to rest at Franklin Memorial Park to await the call of our blessed Lord, whom he loved and served.

We feel our loss to be great, but we believe his gain is even greater and eternal. May The Lord bless and comfort the family and his church with the comfort that He only can give.

Done by order of Republican Primitive Baptist Church in conference August 18, 2007.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Sister Ada Beeghly, Clerk

REVELATION 14:5-6.

And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.



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Tony Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
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Phone (276) 398-2923

EDITOR in CHIEF

Elder Kenneth R. Key

721 Willard Street
Greensboro, N.C. 27405
Phone (336) 273-7464

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder Richard H. Campbell

2171 Allen Court
Germantown, Tenn. 38138
Phone (901) 753-7791

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

1251 Paynes Tavern Rd.
Roxboro, N.C. 27573
Phone (336) 599-7236

Elder J. B. Farmer

6373 N. State Hwy 7
Grayson, Ky. 41143
(606) 474-4327

Elder Cleo Robertson

111 Livingstone Drive
Cary, NC 27513
(919) 460-7721

All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Tony Horton, 202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405.

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*WAIT, my soul, upon the Lord,
To his gracious promise flee,
Laying hold upon his word:
"As thy days, thy strength
shall be."*

*If the sorrows of thy case,
Seem peculiar still to thee,
God has promised needful
grace:
"As thy days, thy strength
shall be."*

*Days of trial, days of grief,
In succession thou mayst see;
This is still thy sweet relief:
"As thy days, thy strength
shall be."*

*Rock of Ages, I'm secure,
With my promise, full and free,
Faithful, positive and sure:
"As thy days, thy strength
shall be."*

W. F. Lloyd.

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EDITORIAL

I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

(Isa 45:5-7)



Elder R. H. Campbell

The above scriptures, sets forth as candidly as possible, and as only wisdom can, the absolute power, wisdom and sovereignty of God, and his control over all things, his being answerable to no one but himself, and he is clearly declaring the fact that there is no God beside himself. He created all things by power of his word, and according to his own will and purpose, and none can stay his hand, or, say unto him why doest thou? And, as Elder Griffin used to say, he always says what he means, and means what he says. This applies to everything, and is not contingent upon anything being contributed to it from any other source, whether it be for it against it, whether by principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, or against spiritual wickedness in high places, None of these are of any avail when they are confronted by the absolute power of God. (Rom 9:17-23) *“For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his*

will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shalt the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hath thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels, which he hath afore prepared unto glory.” It is even as Moses said, on one occasion, (*Job (34:29)*) *“When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or a man only:”* God’s power is effective against any, or all powers, for they were allotted by him.

There are those who will question some, or all, of the above declarations and say that this would not be fair, because it excludes some and embraces others who are no better than they are, and also the fact that there is no way that they can have any input into the equation, or the outcome. This is absolutely true, that they may be as good as any other man, in the flesh, but the error of this rationale is covered by the scripture, (*Isa 64:6*) *“But we all are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy*

rags: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind have taken us away.” They are using their human reasoning, and do not understand, that God created all things for himself, and according to his own good will and pleasure, and is accountable unto no power, higher than himself, because there is none.

They are using the wisdom of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; and it is not subject to the law of God neither can be. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are complete foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned, and this fact also is by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the creator, (*1 Cor. 2-21*) *“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”*

The world will, especially question, vs 7, *“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.”* They will violently disagree with the stated fact that God creates evil, and darkness, but Isaiah, per the above scripture says that he does. They will quote (*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.”* They will say that since all things work together for good to

the children of God, this could not possibly include the evil, and the darkness. Well it most certainly does, as per Isaiah's quote above, and both are just as necessary in the plan of God, for the purpose that he had for them. The apostle Paul, said, *(II Cor:15) "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace, through the thanksgiving of many, will redound to the glory of God."* The, "all things" in, II Cor 4:15, and again in Rom 8:28 are one and the same, and they certainly do include the light, and the darkness, and the peace and evil mentioned in the subject scripture.

The reason for the disparity between man's understanding and God's reasoning is explained by Isaiah in, *(Isa 55:8-9) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* Well, so much for the mind of man, imagine his trying to judge the actions and decrees of God with the vain and corrupt intellect of the man of flesh. They are not on the same basis, for their reasoning, and therefore they cannot be compared: it is like trying to compare apples and oranges, they are two entirely different realms. God's judgment is based on the infinite love and compassion that he has for his children, and things that are for their welfare spiritually, and includes

all things that are needful to assure their eternal salvation, and they are all judged good, in the mind and purposes of God.

I heard a man state one day that all of God's creation was for the good of his children, whether they knew and understood it or not. He said, to have good, you must have evil to make it manifest, and to have light you must have darkness to make it manifest, and so goes all of the other, seemingly opposites, in the plan of God. He went on to pose a reasonable and hypothetical situation. The angels were discussing the attributes of God and said, we all agree on the absolute omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of God in the affairs of his children, and then someone said, but what about his mercy, and they said, what's that? another said what about his grace, and they did not understand what he was talking about. The same thing is applied to all of the other absolute essentials and all of the other characteristics of God which are so precious and meaningful to those who love God, and trust him for their salvation. The way and manner that they are made manifest to them in life, is by their having experienced the opposites, to which they can compare them, in their travels here, in this low ground of sin and sorrow. They will then understand light, by their having experienced the darkness, and they will understand good by their having suffered the pangs of the evil, and then

having them all made manifest unto them in their own lives, in this manner, they then will worship and praise God for their deliverance from the realms of darkness and evil, and by their being blessed with an understanding of the love and grace which God has bestowed upon them. They realize that they all have free and precious gifts of faith, given by a merciful and loving heavenly Father making these precious truths known unto them in this manner.

It is upon this knowledge and understanding that the apostle Paul was given to pen this scripture, (*Eph. 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.*" They will then realize that all things do indeed work together for their good, and that anything that is involved in the further accomplishment of this glorious goal in their lives, are all certainly good, and this most certainly includes the darkness, evil and all of the other negatives included in their experience, because they all work to make manifest the positives.

I believe that it is in this train of thought that the apostle Paul was in when he said, (*Rom 5:1-5*) "*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in*

tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." He rejoiced in tribulations also, because, he knew that they were also steps along the path that had been set before him, whereby he would receive the end of his faith, that precious inheritance, which was reserved for him, from before the foundation of the world, even the salvation of his soul.

So, looking at them in this perspective; light and darkness are alike good, in God's economy, as well as peace and evil, and all of the trials and tribulations that they experience in this life work together for good, because they are all the sum total of God's love and care for them: Jesus' promise to his disciples, on one occasion was, (*John 16:33*) "*In the world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world.*" In this statement he was telling them that, tribulations must come in the path that they must run in this life, but to fear not because he has already overcome them for their sake.

Therefore they are to run their race with patience, looking forward and hasting to the day that they will receive that blessed inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. In that day, faith will

be replaced with reality, and they will enter into the joy of their God and his Son Jesus Christ, to reign in his presence throughout the endless ages, Oh, blessed thought.

It is therefore, in this manner, that all of the seasons, good, evil, light, darkness, and the many other characteristics are wrought in their lives to make them see and understand that they all did indeed, work together, and in harmony for good to them, and to all who are called according to the eternal purposes of God. These characteristics are all contrary to the inherent characteristics of the natural man, and are given them by the indwelling of the Spirit of God within their heart, as evidence that they are indeed, new creatures in Christ.

Taking them individually, there are many of these steps that we would avoid if at all possible, but, on one occasion when Paul had just been stoned and thought dead, he rose up and continued to preach unto them these same basic truths, *(Acts 14:22)* **"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."** and this is the only way that they may come, for Jesus himself said, *(John 14:6)* **"I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."** and in me ye shall suffer tribulations. Can anyone question any of these facts?

There will be tribulations, for the children of God, in all ages of time, and which they must endure, as evidence that the same God, who reigned in Isaiah and Paul's day, is reigning now, Isaiah then went on to make the statement, *(Isa 46:9-11)* **"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 thing that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all of my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it."** Is not this the same God that we hope that we worship today? *(vs13)* **"I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."** This is the purpose for it all, and who would question the fact that everything included in this process is for good, and is needful, including the seasons of light, darkness, peace and evil?

Oh! The peace and joy that fills the heart of those who believe this doctrine, and feel to have a portion in these promises left on record.. It instills in the hearts of all of those who do, such a sense of confidence and assurance, when blessed with

the presence of the Holy Ghost, and abiding faith, which is the gift of God, that they can stand firm against the powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places in Jesus' name. They stand in the same manner in which the three Hebrews stood, in the book of Daniel, and faced the king, declaring that although they may die, they will not bow down and worship the gods and deities of this world.

When so blessed, they can witness with David, when he penned the following text, (*Psa 149:1-4*) *"Praise ye the Lord, Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beauty the meek with salvation."* When so blessed, all darkness and evil flee away, and all is light and joy and peace. In this moment, the words of Moses comes to mind, (*Josh 33:27*) *"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee: and shall say, Destroy them."* Such peace and joy as this, cannot be found in this low ground of sin and sorrow, but it will be the eternal abode of those for whom Jesus went

to the cross to prepare such a place for them. This is the earnest expectation of all of those who look for the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom all things promised in the future are as sure and certain, as those things past.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

Elder Thomas Solomon has moved, the following is his new address:

Elder Thomas Solomon
255 Morgan Clay Drive
Glade Hill, Virginia 24092

Phone: (540) 483-7176

PSALM 18:1-4.

I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please renew my subscription to the Signs for one year and use the remainder as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the Signs and look forward to getting it each month.

May God bless you,
Sister Helen Pittman

Address:
2920 N. Eastman Rd., Apt. 226
Longview, Tx. 75605

10-12-07

My Dear Brothers,

I'm sending you a check for twenty five dollars for one year subscription. The rest you can use as you see fit to do so. Its been a trying time this year, no rain, but deep down He knows whats best for us all. God is too good and too merciful, to forget just what we need. Not what we want. I think so much of my time how good He has been to me at age 88 able to take care of myself and live alone. My health is very good, to tend me a garden, which I love to do. Its been a difficult time, but God sent enough rain blessed

with a plenty. I love to read my brother's experience and to know I have been there.

Sister Lovie Q. Thompson

VOICES OF THE PAST

SELF EXAMINATION

Feeling so low in spirit, I began to examine myself, which I confess is not a very pleasant employment, (though it could be profitable, and will be, if one will be honest and make proper use of his findings) and hardly had I begun to make this examination before I began to wonder, "Am I a hypocrite?" Usually when I thought of the hypocrite, I thought that it was some other person or persons and surely not me, now I am not so sure about it. There are at least two ways of examining oneself. The first way is to **MEASURE YOURSELF BY YOURSELF**. You will be well pleased with the result. All measurements will be the same, they will come out even, and there will be no room to suggest improvement. You will conclude that you have attained the desired goal, in learning, thinking, and in action. And you might just get lifted up with pride (false pride) and begin to look down on your brother or neighbor and wonder why they don't see, think and act just as you do. And no doubt you will begin to think that if

all members of my church were just like me, we would have a wonderful church.

The second method is to measure yourself by the word of God, in the light of His commandments, written both in His Holy Book and on the tables of your heart, and in all probability the result will be somewhat different.

An honest, sincere private examination of yourself will, no doubt, cause you to be glad that the inward thoughts and emotions that motivate your words and actions are not seen and known to others. You might find an affliction we might call "Borderline Anemia almost a Christian and almost a hypocrite. Christ frequently accused the Pharisees of hypocrisy. See 23rd chapter of Matthew. They say and DO NOT. What about you? Do YOU SPEAK and SO DO as the hypocrite, or as those who shall be judged by the law of liberty? Their practice was not agreeable to their doctrine. Is yours?

They severely exacted obedience in others, but they themselves did not observe the least part of the law. Are you of this temper? Do you demand perfection in others, while you excuse yourself for your own failings? What good things they did were for the praise of men. What is your reason for doing, or pretending to do good? They were very zealous for an outward show of religion, are you? They pretended a great deal of respect for the ancient prophets, disallowing what their fathers" did to

them, and yet were so ready to practice to like themselves to Christ and His apostles. What about you? Do you profess to love Christ, His church, and to have fellowship for His ministers and the gospel, and yet will only go to church if your pastor or favorite preacher is to be there? Do you go to church to worship or admire the preacher, or to hear the gospel of your salvation and worship God in spirit and in truth? Sometimes one professes to join the church, yet in reality they join the preacher, and never love the church. They are never truly a part of the church, but just have a name on the church book. What about you?

Hypocrites only pray to God in time of trouble or affliction, and when things go well they turn their faces" from Him, from His service and worship. When do you pray? They are quick-sighted in worldly affairs, also very zealous, and will make any sacrifice to go where they will be recognized and honored with a high seat; while they disdain to go humbly to the place where God's humble poor assemble only to worship God, eat from His table, enjoy His fellowship, rejoice in the riches of His kingdom, and enjoy their inheritance with the saints in light. Worldly honor and friendship seem to mean more to them than the praise of God. What about you?

You and I will probably never be tried or examined in a civil or ecclesiastical court, so we will probably be the only one to know if we be a

hypocrite, for men can't look into our hearts or know our thoughts. However, GOD KNOWS!

It is written in His word, *"The hope of the hypocrite shall perish."* Job 8: 13. *"For an hypocrite shall not come before Him."* Job 13:16, *"The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment."* Job 20:5. *"A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor."* Prov. 11 :9. *"The congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate."* Job 15 :34. *And again, "Woe unto you hypocrites."* Matt. 23 :13.

I have not written this to insinuate in any way that any of you dear readers are in this category, but rather am persuaded better things of you. But perhaps it will be profitable to subject ourselves to a thorough examination in private, and if there be found a need for improvement, we might give ourselves diligently to the task; that we might show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed. *"So speak ye, and so DO, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."* James 2:12.

W. H. Hancock.

COMMENT-Elder Hancock has given all of us a task, and if we are sincere in our efforts to worship and serve God, we will begin our self-examination at once. If we find ourselves desiring special notice when we go among God's children, we need to consider the spirit we are in.

R.K. Blackshear

CHILDREN MANIFEST

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." 1 John 3:10.

National Israel were called children of Israel. By keeping the law God gave them, they were to have material blessings and national protection. They were chosen in Abraham and the law was given to them by Moses. Spiritual Israel was chosen in Christ, and are to have spiritual blessings on earth and to be with Him in glory after death. They are born again in time but this birth is of the Spirit and is an internal work of grace, and can only be seen and known by its fruits. *"By their fruits ye shall know them."*

Spiritual Israelites are compared to sheep. They are a chosen generation and belong to Christ by sovereign love, mercy and grace. They were predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son, but the rest of the world were left to die in their sins. They are compared to goats. Men may make a profession of religion and may deceive other men, but God looks at the heart and knows His sheep.

The chosen in Christ are made manifest by effectual calling. *"Whom He predestinated He also called."* They who are the called according to His purpose were given to Him in the decrees and purposes of God. When this

calling brings them to know God experimentally they begin to appear like sheep. They follow Jesus, hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Jesus is their bread of life, He reveals Himself to them as their justification and redemption, and they are satisfied, being at peace with God.

Who are the children of the devil? They are those who follow the devil. They are said to be his children who are his servants and under his control. Jesus said to some of the Jews, *"Ye are of your father, the devil, and his works will ye do."* Although these Jews were religious, they were enemies to God and to His truth, fighting against Jesus and His people. Being ignorant of God's righteousness, they went about trying to justify themselves and cover up their wicked ways. They are justly condemned under the law of God and declared to be the children of wrath.

The heirs of promise are also the children of wrath by nature even as others, (Eph. 2:3) until quickened and saved by grace. They are then made free from the law of sin and death, and are under the new covenant of grace. (Rom. 8:10). Under this covenant God puts laws into their minds and writes them in their hearts. This law of grace condemns sin in the flesh, causes the soul to hate evil and love righteousness. They pray in the spirit, *"Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner."* No sooner had Saul been quickened by

grace than *"Behold, he prayeth."* This change was wrought in him and he passed from death unto life, not by works of righteousness he had done, but according to the purpose of God in Christ before the world begun. (2 Tim. 1:9). *"In this the children of God are manifest."* The children of God are also manifest by being His disciples, followers of God as dear children. *"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."* They are said to do righteousness when they love God and keep His commandments. His manifest children are they who trust in Him and love the brethren. *"Lord, help us to manifest thy Sonship."*

J. Harvey Daily.

Psalm 9:1-3

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

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

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

For thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right.

Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

HOPE

Webster defines hope as *"The desire for good accompanied by expectation,"* and it takes these two elements to constitute hope. Desire without expectation is not hope, neither is expectation without desire. We desire many things we have no way of obtaining, and we expect many things we do not desire. This is common to humanity, and wherever there is hope there is uncertainty also.

We never hope for things that we already possess, nor do we hope for things we have a perfect knowledge of, but in order to have hope we must first desire something and then have some reason to expect to receive it.

Now, do we hope to live in heaven with God and all His redeemed children? If so we HAVE A DESIRE to that end, and then there must be a basis upon which to found our expectation. The desire to live with God in heaven does not spring from the natural mind of man, nor can that mind ever be educated up to the point of this great desire. One must first know something of his own sinful condition and be made to hate sin before he will ever desire things righteous and holy, and this knowledge comes ONLY by the Spirit of God in the heart. This is the result of regeneration, and regeneration is a PERFECT work-the work of God. All men DO NOT desire to live in heaven because all men do

not have the Spirit of Christ formed in them, and preachers cannot give them this Spirit. All men would desire to escape the terrors of eternal destruction, but many would be satisfied to remain forever on earth, or else pass into eternal oblivion when they die.

There are two spirits manifest on earth, one of them hates God and godliness and loves sin, while the other one hates sin and loves God and godliness. These facts are proven by the walk and conversation of many people with whom we come in contact every day. Some folks never go to church, while others think and talk about it as a painful duty. Why? Is it not evidence that they do not love the church and the things it stands for? There are other people who eagerly look forward to an opportunity to attend the service of God, they never seem to get tired of listening to the gospel and of greeting fellow members in fellowship and love. This is their meat and their drink. They did not make themselves come to love the worship of God. It is the work of God's Spirit alone.

Many people say that a hope is not worth much, that people can know that they are children of God and that they are saved for heaven, but I have noticed that the people who enjoy the service of God the most are those who do not know so much, they ONLY HOPE they are children of God; And so hope is just as much a part of the Christian ser-

vice of God as being baptized, because without hope there is no baptism, no communion with God and His children, and no real church membership.

Hope does not save people for heaven but saves them in time, from despair, fear and many gloomy doubts. The unregenerated do not need hope in Christ, because they have never felt their need of Him, and they do not feel their need of Him because they have never seen themselves as lost and ruined sinners. The law of God brings to the hearts of men and women the knowledge that they are vile, corrupt sinners in the sight of God, and after this knowledge comes the blessed hope that Christ has done for them what they could not do for themselves saved them from the just consequence of their sins.

The reason God's children need a hope in Christ to comfort them while in this life is that they DO NOT have perfect knowledge, but only know in part and see in part. So many conflicting evidences come into their lives that they can never be as sure of their salvation as they would want to be, but they never finally love hope until it ends in reality. They have many emotions in their hearts that they cannot define; they love things that they once hated, and hate things they once loved. No, hope and faith are not CAUSES of men and women being the children of God, but are sweet evidences that they are His children.

They find many things in themselves that they despise, many things that they often mourn over, which things are caused by the weakness of the flesh, but then again they find themselves thrilled in their very souls at even the mention of the name of Jesus. Their confidence is in Him. They KNOW that He is a COMPLETE Saviour, that all for whom He died will be ultimately housed in heaven, and they HOPE THEY ARE IN THAT NUMBER!

Talk about hope being worthless! It is the most precious possession the child of God has. Without it life would be miserable. There would be no soothing balm to dry up the fountain of his tears in times of sorrow and despair, nothing to keep him hoping in the grace and mercy of God when he takes a look at himself to learn again just how sinful and unworthy he is. Yes, he looks to the worthiness of Christ, whom he has been made to feel died for him upon the rugged cross. And he longs to meet together with others who cry for mercy in the night time and shout for joy in the day, and who base their hope of heaven upon the perfect work of a perfect, sinless, holy and righteous God, who, for some reason they cannot understand, loved them before they had a being in the world.

Their cry is, *"Let others know they are children of God if they can, but let me continue to abide in that precious hope that Jesus died for me."* For the child of God

remembers a time when he had no hope, and the misery and darkness and fear of that hour is something they have no desire to experience again. They were contented once without hope, but now they are happy with it, and would be miserable and wretched without it.

R. K. Blackshear.

2 COR. 6:14

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”

If it was not for many of us doing this, the apostle would not have given us this instruction. He had found all kinds of irregularities in the church at Corinth, as well as most of the others. These letters of the apostle were sent in lieu of his visits. He had found many hateful sins among them when he had visited, and now he is writing to keep up the objection that had been previously raised against these things. It is a well balanced charge to them. Three things are brought to bear in this charge to them, to wit, in yoke together, in fellowship with, and communion at, the same table.

If a man or woman is a believer in Jesus Christ his whole mind is aflame with service and devotion to

Him. The kingdom and the subjects of it will be the first thought in regard to all things. Will it promote the welfare of the subjects? Will it glorify Him who has called us out of darkness into light? To serve God and His people will be the most absorbing thing in all the world to a believer. His traveling will be toward the light, for he is a child of the light and of the day. He will be going a different direction than an unbeliever will go. A believer will always want to go up; an unbeliever will always want to go down. A believer, regardless of the steepness of the hill, or the fierceness of the combat, will want to press on toward the prize of the mark of his high calling that is Jesus Christ; an unbeliever will shun the way that calls for going upward and meeting foes.

What a struggle to be yoked with an unbeliever. Regardless of the effort put forth for the welfare of the subjects of the kingdom, it will all be nullified by being yoked to one who is doing all he can for the destruction of those subjects. As long as one is thus yoked with an unbeliever, it will be a standstill battle. Nothing can be gained in a march like that.

If we, through the weakness of the flesh, have succumbed to such an uneven yoking, let us strive to break apart from it. Your words will be denied, and mocked, and misconstrued; your walk will be belittled; your conversation will be intermingled with the odors and marks

and likenesses of this ungodly world; your feasts will have green and wild gourds in them, with drink that is polluted. Moreover, a yoke that is pulled in two directions will gall and cause a lot of unpleasantness.

“What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” Do you know what fellowship is? Have you ever come to the church of the living God and found them all walking as a unit? Have you come on a long and tiresome journey and found a good place to rest? If so, it was fellowship to you in the same things. If you had come on this journey and had stopped to rest and had found everybody in an uproar about starting on a trip, I assure you that you would not find what you were looking for. Your whole thought would be that they would *let* everybody rest. Then why do we join in with such things? What do we find there? It is not fellowship. That is, it is not fellowship, unless we too are workers of unrighteous things. The apostle is not writing to those who have a common tie here. That is not his concern, and it is not mine. I do not want to enter into such dens of unrighteousness, nor do I want my brethren to be found among them. A child of God does not have any business, nor do they have any right, in such stink holes of sin. I do not know what it is that possesses a child of God, one that has been given to see the righteousness of the Lamb of God, to be found hanging around a

place like this. These places are two kinds but they are both unrighteous. One of them is the place of vice; the other is the place of false doctrine. How can you associate with those who drink the wine of fornication, while you desire to drink living water; how can you eat with those who eat stale bread, while you are famishing for living bread? How, oh, tell me how, can you go arm in arm with one whose whole tending is toward liberalizing the work of Redemption to include all men? Do you have any confidence in such falsehoods? If, so, do not try to travel under the auspices of the banner of Christ. Do you have any fellowship for these unrighteous characters and their acts? If so, do not palm yourself off on the church of Jesus Christ as one who is trusting in the righteousness of Him.

“What does light have in common with darkness, in that they commune together?” Does light and darkness come from the same source? Is one fountain the cause of both? If so, but ONLY IF SO, then communion is to be had between darkness and light. Communion, in the very nature of it, is between that which is at an unity. Two parties, in order to commune together, must have a primary likeness between them. If not, one of them is eating with one thought in mind, the other with another thought. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. I must say that HE IS the light of the world, It is not a case of

He being the greater and another being the lesser. No, sir, not that. He is the light of the whole world. Moreover, He lighteth everyone that cometh into the world. If you have come into this world, which He loved and gave Himself for, you have been initiated into light, as He is the light. God is light, and He was made flesh and dwelt among us, and if we are children of light, He dwells in us. Are you trying to mix darkness and light? Are you trying to blend them together, shamefacedly saying that there is no harm in this little thing, or that we are almost together and therefore ought to live in peace, or that we are all going to the same place and ought to work and live together here? If so, you are trying to do that which Paul is condemning. If you are trying to live in the light and in the darkness at the same time, you are proving most conclusively that something is wrong. There is NOT ANY darkness in God at all. God is our God in the light and the darkness, but HE IS NOT THE CAUSE of the kind of darkness Paul is writing about. If so, he would not have needed to stress the difference. In fact, there would not be ANY difference.

God is the true source of the light. The Satanic powers are the true source of the darkness under consideration. Are you a child of the light? If so, how much fellowship and communion and enjoyment do you get in communion with the things of darkness?

Now once more. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness? If the answer is none, then may I ask, where are your affections in the matter? And if they are, really set on the things of a believer, of one who is righteous, one who is in the light, may I admonish you, to kindly examine yourself as to whether you are walking in the light, and in the fellowship, and as a believer. In an abiding hope,

William D. Griffin,
511 Kent Ave.
Cantonsville 28, Md.

THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF CHRIST AND HIS ZION

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; Isa. xxvi, 1, 2.

The prophet then continues his description: "*Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone [Christ], a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation;*" Isa. xxviii, 16. "*For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;*" I Cor. iii, 11. "*Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citi-*

zens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together [by a Master Workman, God the Father] groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit;" Eph. ii, 19-22.

Who built this city? I say God Almighty. Who did he place as King over the city? He says, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion; I will declare in the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen [his people among the Gentiles were the heathen spoken of] for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;" Ps. ii, 6-8. "Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death;" Ps. xlviii, 14. "For God will save Zion [he is the only one who can save] and will build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell

there, and have it in possession. "The seed [this is the seed that is counted to him for a generation] also of his servants shall inherit it: and they that love his name shall dwell therein." "His foundation [Christ] is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come. * * * When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread [that bread that comes down from Heaven, like the manna which he fed the Israelites in the wilderness]. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David [Christ] to bud.

I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed [Christ]." "The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord;" Ps. lxix, 35, 36; lxxxvii, 1-4; cii, 13-17; cxxxii, 13-18.

We are told: "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without

number." "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother [Jerusalem, which is above, is her mother]; she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning-, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners? Hear this wonderful description: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley. As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love". Solomon's Song.

"Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." How sublime these declarations! "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." "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy

upon his afflicted. But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands (alluding- to his hands being pierced with nails on the cross) and thy walls are continually before me." "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like the Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him [Christ] that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace (made by Christ's blood alone); that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion: Thy God reigneth! He hath redeemed Jerusalem." See Isa. xii, 6; xxvi, 1-2; xxxv, 10; xlix, 13-17; 1,6; lix, 21; lx. Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a "wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."

"For behold I will bring forth my servant, the Branch [Christ]. For behold the stone [Christ] that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone [Christ] shall be seven eyes: behold, I

will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day (the day Christ died on the cross),” Zech. ii, 3. “God sent a man to measure Jerusalem to see what is the breadth and length thereof;” Rev. xi, 1.

R. S. BANKS.

GOD SEEN IN CREATION AND IN CHRIST

There is a great deal said among the wise as to how God is to be seen and felt in his handiwork. True, the day speaks of his wisdom and power, but in his Anointed we see his grace and truth, and share his love. Men wonder at the sun, moon, and stars, but Christians rejoice in the sweet covenant of his word. Reason may teach us that he who formed the eye, who, likewise, gave the sense of hearing and reasoning, must see, hear, and understand all things, but the work of grace in the soul enables us to get a more exalted view of him. Sense and reason may harmonize in this; that God made and governs the world, but grace enables us to look back to the time when he called us from darkness to light, and enabled us to trust him by faith as our present help in every time of need. Faith enables us to trust in the promise made in Christ before the world

began; that when the world is no more, we shall be at his right hand, blessed for evermore.

He is to be regarded as wonderful, because of the mysterious workings of the different members of the natural body, all of which work in harmony; for we are his workmanship. But he is much nearer to us because of the union of our souls with him, which shall never be severed. He is to be loved and revered as our Creator. We have reason to love and worship him as the God and Father of our salvation.

Human philosophy claims that nature is the best glass to see the glory of God, and indeed it speaks in great force; for the heavens declare the glory of God, and the skies preach of his handiwork. But the glory of God in Christ Jesus endures forever. It takes poor sinners out of this low ground of sin and sorrow and fits them with his robe of glory, that they may rest in his presence forever.

Let others please themselves with their study of nature and their views of the replenished creation; but while I would not despise these, let me search the pages of the divine revelation and learn more of the plan of redeeming love, where the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost appear in the great work of man's redemption; how that all things in the divine plan work so harmoniously and result in the full accomplishment of its great purposes.

To be sure, the plan of redemp-

tion in Christ will not interest the world at large, because it is not of the world. The world will love its own. But they who are born from above, take delight in the cross of Christ, and rejoice in hope of the world to come.

J. Harvey Daily.
Greenfield, Ind.

IT SHALL NOT COME NIGH THEE;
PS. XCI, 7.

When Noah was shut up in the ark, Noah and the favored few, you know how they were tossed about, the rains coming down from Heaven, the waters rushing and dashing below. The windows of Heaven were opened and the fountains of the great deep were broken up; and while they were thus dashed upon the waters, not a drop came in unto them that *were within*. "*It shall not come nigh thee.*" So you see the believer may be surrounded with troubles, and yet. "*it shall not come nigh him.*" And there is something more in the expression used in reference to the making of the ark:

"*And shalt pitch it within and without with pitch;*" *Gen. vi, 14.* Now, it is a most remarkable fact that the word pitch in Hebrew (the word is Gopher) signifies also atonement. Now see, the slime or pitch with which the Ark was daubed within and without kept every drop

of water out. This very expression for slime or pitch in the Hebrew signifies also atonement; and is it not the atonement that keeps out the water? Can anything but the atonement keep the soul from the waters of God's wrath and from the floods of vengeance that shall sweep away the world with the ungodly? There is nothing but the atonement; and that bears up the soul, and keeps out every drop of rain.

J. C. Philpot.

EXPERIENCE OF GRACE.

Elder R. W. Thompson; Dear Brother: - I wish to write you my experience, or a part of it. In the year 1893, it pleased the good Lord to convict me of my sin and show me my dreadful condition. My sins justly condemned me and I could only say, "*God, have mercy on me, a poor, vile sinner.*" When I was in the house alone, my husband away at his work, I would close the doors and kneel down and ask the good Lord to have mercy on me, a poor sinner. O, my sins were constantly before me, when awake, it seemed. It seemed to me as if I could not bear the burden of them. But I could do nothing but beg God for mercy. When I retired at night I tried to pray, and the first thing in the morning called upon the Lord. It re-

ally seemed the more I prayed, the worse I felt condemned. It seemed that all my prayers were unanswered. I was deeply tried and felt as if I did not have a friend anywhere. It seemed as though I had lost all hope of forgiveness. I continued in this condition for a long-time.

I was sorely tried by old satan. He showed me my dark and gloomy grave. It was dismal to me. I felt as if I was not prepared to die, and I begged God so earnestly for mercy, if it could be his will. A door of hope opened to me and light came to my mind and I praised the Lord. I felt that my sins were all gone; but still I was not entirely satisfied. I attended church and heard the preaching, and it would relieve me, somewhat. I wanted to offer myself to the church, but was afraid they would not receive me. I have left the church house when they gave the opportunity for uniting with the church to keep from going forward for membership. I felt too unworthy to be a member with them. But the last time I went to Old Union church, in North Carolina, I asked for membership with them and they received me and I was baptized by Elder William Craft.

Yours in hope,
Mrs. D. F. Caudill
Penick, Ky.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union at its last session voted to hold our meeting on Saturdays only because of the age of our members.

Our next union will convene with Canaan Church on the 5th Saturday December 29.

Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Asso. Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moons Creek Church on the 5th Sunday in December. The Church is located about a 1/2 mile east of Hwy 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Rd.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sister Sue Blalock, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER

Andrew Agee, VA	5.00
Flay Mordeca, MS	5.00
Susan Shelton, NC	5.00
Lovie Thompson, NC	10.00
George Blalock, NC	10.00
Wilton Sutphin, VA.....	5.00
H. L. Knight, NC	75.00
Helen Pittman, TX.....	5.00
Clonetta Thompson, VA.....	3.00
Jennye A. Osbourne, MD	25.00

ISAIAH 42:10.

Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

OBITUARIES

JEREMIAH (Jerry) LEWIS, Jr .

Our dear brother in Christ was called by our Heavenly Father from his labors on earth to his eternal home Wednesday night, August 29, 2007. Had he lived another week, he would have been eighty-seven years of age. Brother Lewis was a kind and gentle person and

had much compassion and love for his church family. We at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will greatly miss his presence.

Brother Lewis, also known by some as "Pap" was born September 6, 1920 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia to the late Jeremiah Lewis, Sr and Bessie Ferguson Lewis. He was one of nine children and lived in Virginia all his life. For many years he was the owner and operator of Lewis Grocery before his retirement. Before this he worked with Holland Grocery in Axton, Virginia.

Brother Lewis was married twice. He and his first wife had five children. He and his second wife to whom he was married for thirty-nine years have no children.

Survivors of Brother Lewis are his wife, Juanita Hundley Lewis of the home. Other survivors are daughters, Linda Douglas and husband Keith, Jean Smart and Cindy Lewis all of Axton, Va.; Sons, Jeremiah Lewis, III and wife Sandy, and Leonard Lewis both of Ridgeway, Va.; Step-daughter Sheila Patterson Murray of Raleigh, N.C., sister, Ruby Dillon of Eden; brothers, James "Jim" Lewis of Cascade and Jacob "Jake" Lewis of Martinsville. Grandchildren are Donna Spence, Danielle Lewis, Joey Lewis, and Lori Lewis. There are also seven great grand-children.

Brother Lewis joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 23, 1986. He was baptized the following fourth Sunday by his pastor, El-

der Kenneth R. Key. He loved his church dearly and was a strong believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. As long as he was physically able you could expect to see him in church.

For the past several years he was in declining health and was brought to church when he felt able by his sister Ruby. Until the very end he was a faithful and dedicated member. We are left with many great memories and appreciate the fact that we had the privilege of knowing and being in fellowship with this dear brother.

The funeral for Brother Lewis was conducted on Saturday, September 1, 2007 at the Fair Funeral Home Chapel by his pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key. His body was laid to rest at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville, Virginia.

May the Lord bless this family and give them comfort and strength to bear the sorrow. The Church, the family and the community have suffered a great loss, but we know we must submit to God's will, for he doeth all things well.

Humbly submitted by,
John Collie

SISTER LEMANTHA LOWE

To know Sister Lemantha Lowe was to love her. She was blessed to bring forth the fruits of the spirit; love, joy, peace, long

suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance because she was born of the spirit. We miss her greatly, but feel our loss is her gain.

Sister Lemantha Lowe asked for a home with Fisher Gap Primitive Baptist Church on September 9, 1962. She was baptised the first Sunday in October, 1962 by Elder J. C. Dunbar.

She moved her membership to Coleman Primitive Baptist Church on June 7, 1970 where she remained a loving and faithful member until her death on Saturday, July 14, 2007.

Funeral services were held at Moody Funeral Home Chapel by Elder Kenneth Hopkins on Monday, July 16, 2007 at 11:00 AM. Sister Lemantha was laid to rest beside her husband, Brother Spencer Lowe, in Fisher Gap Church Cemetery. Survivors are her loving nieces and nephews who were her "Special Children", having no children of her own, and a host of friends and church family.

Sister Lemantha's passing made me to realize "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" Ecclesiastes 3:1. This is a wonderful and great truth of God that there is an appointed time. She believed God controlled all things and none could stay his hand. I was blessed to spend several enjoyable months talking and rejoicing together with her in the Lord's Word, Humbleness, Love and Hope with association with

her brothers and sisters to sit in peace with all was her desire. She also loved to hear our Lord's Doctrine preached in the Predestination of all things. Now she sleeps at peace, awaiting the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Copies of this obituary to be sent for publication and for the church record.

With loving memories,
Carlton Brown

Elder Kenneth Hopkins, Moderator
Carlton Brown, Clerk

SISTER MILDRED A. MARTIN

On April 25, 2007 the Lord of Glory called home the soul and spirit of our dear sister in Christ, Mildred Axsom Martin, just a few days before her 86th birthday.

Sister Martin was born in Vesta, Virginia on May 4, 1921 to the late Joseph and Ella Thompson. Early in life she moved to North Carolina, where she was united in marriage to Mr. John Lloyd Axsom. To their union were born one son, John L. Jr.; and one daughter, Mrs. Joe (Norma A.) Zanetti, who died in 2006. Some years following the death of Mr. Axsom, she was united in marriage to Lonzie L. Martin of Patrick Springs, who survives her. Sister Martin was a beautician by trade about 30 years in Spray, N. C.

On the 1st Sunday in December 1986, Sister Martin requested a

home with, and was received by, Liberty Church. She was baptized by our pastor, Elder John Wingfield. She was a loyal and faithful member, and attended her meetings as long as her health permitted. She was much afflicted by health problems the last several years of her life. She was strong in faith and thereby laid hold on a solid hope of eternal life.

In addition to her parents, her first husband and her daughter, Sister Martin was preceded in death by one brother, Curtis Thompson; one sister, Ruth Thompson; one stepson, Mike Martin; and one great-grandson, Blake Clark. She was survived by her son J. L. and his wife Shelby; Her loving son-in-law Joe Zanetti; two sisters, Mrs. Bill (Annette) Habeski and Mrs. Mary M. Pulliam; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Her funeral service was held on Saturday, April 28th, at Howell Funeral Home by Pastor Palmer Lowery and her pastor. Her mortal body was laid to rest in Patrick Memorial Gardens, to await her summons from the Lord in the day of His coming.

We live in hope that one day, we shall meet with her and all the redeemed of the Lord at the feet of our dear Savior. May all who knew and loved her be reconciled to their loss, and comforted by her eternal gain.

Submitted by her pastor.
Elder John T. Wingfield