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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

*THE cross of Christ inspires my heart,
To sing redeeming grace;
Awake, my soul, and bear a part
In my Redeemer's praise !*

*Oh I who can be compared to him,
Who died upon the tree?
This is my dear delightful theme,
That Jesus died for me.*

*When at the table of the Lord
We humbly take our place,
The death of Jesus we record,
With love and thankfulness.*

*These emblems bring my Lord to view
Upon the bloody tree;
My soul believes and feels it true,
That Jesus died for me.*

*His body broken, nailed and torn,
And stained with streams of blood;
His spotless soul was left forlorn,
Forsaken of his God.*

*'Twas then his Father gave the stroke
That justice did decree;
All nature felt the dreadful shock,
When Jesus died for me.*

*My guilt was on my surety laid,
And therefore he must die;
His soul a sacrifice was made
For such a worm as I.*

*Was ever love so great as this ?
Was ever grace so free ?
This is my glory, joy and bliss,
That Jesus died for me.*

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 EDITORIAL

CHARITY



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Cor. 13:13.

Why is charity the greatest of these? Because when we depart this life we will no longer need faith nor hope, but charity will follow us across that river of death and remain in eternity. What is charity? Most of the world says it is gifts to help the poor and needy. This is true in a carnal, natural sense, yet Paul said,

"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Some say that it is simply love. However, there are several kinds of love: the love of money which is the root of all evil: love of the world, which John says if any man have this love, the love of the Father is not in him, (1 Jn. 2:15); the natural love of family and friends: and the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Rom. 5:5. If we have not this love we are none of his; if we have this love it is because he first loved us. Jesus said unto certain Jews, ***"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.--But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."*** Jn. 5:40 & 42.

God is love. Because of his love he chose a people in Jesus Christ 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. If not deceived, I have a little hope that I am included. These are the mystical body of Christ who is the head of the body, the church, which is called his bride. Of this body we read in Ps. 139: 14-16, ***"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Thine eyes did see my sub-***

stance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." When God made the first man Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden, Eve and all the posterity of Adam was in him. God did know that Adam would transgress his holy law and die, therefore a covenant had been made between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; these three are one. This covenant was made that the Son might redeem his bride, and he stood as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. When Adam fell from his upright, innocent estate into sin and death all of his posterity fell in him. *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* All of us are sinners without any strength of our own, but, *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."* *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* Rom.5:6 & 8. Jesus said. *"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for a servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."*

John 15:12-15. Jesus was asked, Which is the great commandment in the law? And Jesus said, *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."* *"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* Matt.22:37-40. Paul said, *"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."* Rom.13:10. Man in the flesh cannot fulfill the law. He must have charity within his heart, being led by the Holy Spirit working in him to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Charity. Godly love. Brethren, how can we show forth charity if we bite and devour one another? Paul said, *"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."* We are not doing this when we follow after the lusts of the flesh. Let us carefully examine every thought and action to see if we are in the Spirit or the flesh. Then let us seek the Lord in prayer. But let us ask in faith, not wavering, for we shall not receive anything of the Lord. There has been much following after the flesh in the past among the brethren, and there is evidence of such now, that has divided churches, and association of churches, throughout the land. This has caused much sorrow and heart aches among the brethren of the Old Primitive Baptist churches. Brethren, Paul beseeches us to walk together, *"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." If we do this the God of love and peace shall be with us. *"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth."* 1 Cor. 13:4-8. Brethren, let us follow after charity.

Our God is love. Because of His love he gave us life in his beloved Son; and Jeremiah said, *"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."* Jer. 31:3. The word lovingkindness is in the book of Psalms 21 times, many of which are in the prayers of David beseeching God for his loving kindness. In John 3:16 we read, *"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."* The word "so" in this scripture means, in a very particular manner, not "so much," as many advocate. What is this particular manner? In the 89th Psalm God speaks of his Son, saying, *"My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his chil-*

dren forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." His children have ever forsaken his laws, walked not in his judgments; ever brake his statutes, and kept not his commandments; therefore, because of his great love for them, he suffered the rod and the stripes that was theirs. *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."* Isa. 53:4-5. Verses 10-11, *"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."* If Jesus had not suffered and died for our sins, and rose again for our justification we would still be by nature the children of wrath even as others. *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quick-*

ened us together with Christ." Eph.2:4-5.

If we have been quickened into life, then are we the children of God and he deals with us as sons. Surely David was a son of God, and he said, *"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."* In 1 John 3:1, *"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God."* In Heb.12 5-8, there is an exhortation as unto children saying, *"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth ever son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."* And the 11th. verse says, *"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."* And the 14th verse says, *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."*

May we ever be blessed with hearts of charity, and to walk in the way of peace and holy righteousness. I desire to be remembered in your petitions before the throne of Grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

GOD'S LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (John 3:1-3)



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

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

him, in making himself known to them as their Saviour and King.

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

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

This love is bestowed upon God's children sovereignly, and independent of any conditions met by them; in the same manner as the rain and snow falls upon all the earth according to God's own pleasure. They realize that something wonderful has been done for them, and they sing, "**Amazing grace, how sweet the sound.**" Or they read, "**Behold what manner of**

love the Father hath bestowed upon us ;" and rejoice with joy unspeakable, because they now have a hope that they are included with this people. This also causes them to understand the scripture, "**Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.**" They feel to be, indeed, a new creature since this change occurred.

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

Their desire to be with the brethren, and hear them talk of these things, and sing the beautiful songs of praise; and to hear the gospel of God our Saviour proclaimed to their comfort and understanding. They love to hear of the power, predestination, foreor-

dination, and purpose of God in saving his people from their sins, according to the good pleasure of His own will. How wonderful it is to believe a doctrine such as this, and then to have a hope that you see things in your travels that indicate God has so looked upon you!

As they continue to travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, reading the experiences of others, hearing the gospel preached, reading the Scriptures, and, finally, after all attempts to be better (in their mind) as a child of God, they are made to acknowledge that it is not in man that walks, to direct his steps; and to acknowledge that it is only through the loving mercy of God that any will reach that heavenly home. All through this uneven journey they never lose sight of that hope that was set before them, when they were turned from their former ways. Though they will continue to have trials as long as they live in this world, in them all they will never lose that hope. ***"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither our forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."*** There is no foundation to which their hope could be anchored, to be more secure. It is as sure as God is God, and that Jesus Christ the Son was sent into the world to redeem that which was lost. This is the hope that purifieth the man in whom it dwells. (1 John 3:3)

This love that is bestowed upon the children of God, causes them to love

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

Yes, what wondrous love is this, O, my soul! May it ever fill the hearts of God's children while they travel this wilderness of sin. This love is what lifts them up above the things of this life, and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and feast on the tender riches of God's grace. As it is written, ***"And now abideth faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity (love)."*** The greatest gift is love. This is a beautiful gift, for nothing except good comes from any actions prompted by this love dwelling in the hearts of His children.

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

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

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

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

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

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November 24, 1998

Dear Elders and Editors: this is, for your consideration:

We believe there to be a true and Holy principal; embraced by the one true and ever living God and Creator, of all things; wherein, does declare of "God", having absolutely Predestinated all things; whatsoever does be or come to pass, in all time and eternity; and that all mankind, and devils, on earth or in hell; could never alter or change, one iota, of any part or portion, of all its entirety. Be it the thinking one thought; speaking one word; moving one

muscle or taking one step in any direction that could be contrary to that which were in both His mind and purpose from before the foundation of this world.

We feel it to be a true and certain fact that in the life of mankind; much of the time; his weak and feeble mind is shifting from one thing to another and is often perplexed, confused, disappointed, surprised and ever wanting of something. In his carnal ways of thinking and reasoning there are accidental mishappenings, could have been, if so and so's; etc.

While, with the "God" none of those uncertainties could ever exist. For all that has to do with His operation of His government (which does include all things and doings) are, of an absolute unhindered certainty. For all whatsoever does; has already been, in both His mind and purpose. Which purpose being the fulfilling of His will; for so bringing all things and beings and time and times and places and spaces and beginnings and continuations and endings and consummations into existence. And every scintilla of all its entirety was and is appointed weighed, and measured. Confirmed and unalterably established, by Him. The very devil himself, and all his angels can do no more nor less; than to fulfill that exact purpose for which they were put here to do. For The Lord and God in whom I hope is my hope, my faith and my trust; could never make a mistake never be surprised; never be in want of anything nor in need of anything and most assuredly not from any poor, self-helpless, member of humankind

who's very fleshly nature is to deny, of His every attribute; transgress His every Holy and Righteous Law; and even to deny of His very being or existence. Now there we have some idea of that complete self untrustworthiness in and of all mankind in and of his or her own self. As much as be in accord with His will let it be imprinted in our heart and upon our mind and within our soul this very truth; It is "God", who doeth All the Good and it is mankind who doeth All the Sinning. So, let us give thought upon these things with a pure mind and find a true answer, to this question; Is it the God? or is it man? Who is deserving and worthy of All praise, honor and glory; both now, and forever more? My answer; God alone.

For, I feel to praise or honor man of himself or of herself is an attempt at the robbery of God and the dishonoring of His great and Holy name. For, as I feel it to be should any good, as be good in His sight, ever come forth through any of mankind such came about only through and by the God having worked in them both to will and to do of it.

For, within the very nature of mankind there is no thing or nothing that could cause them to even desire to please God by words or actions. The Lord God be willing; To furnish my every ability to that end; I shall relate here some of what I feel to be some of those points of truth which constitute or involve a true and pure belief in the Absolute Predestination of All things by The "God", and Creator of All things:

First of all; how does such belief come unto one? only through and by God the Holy Spirit coming into the heart of one removing its hard and stoney part and placing in its stead a softness, which does prepare that heart to receive those things of a Spiritual nature with an understanding of their true Spiritual meaning. Which is that process of being born again; Wherein the Holy Spirit is born in one, the hope of glory. Which hope, is the gift of God for them to live by throughout the remaining days of their life here upon this earth; which hope, is an anchor to their soul that they might avoid utter despair.

But it is through, and by, having received those blessed gifts or experiences one is given to see and feel his own self lowness, self helplessness and nothingness and sinfulness all the day long. That one is also given, as a free gift of God an eye of faith; whereby, he can, begin to look upward and see from whom all his blessings does come. And then at God's appointed time; that one, becomes fully persuaded that The "God" holds all things there in the palm of His hand to do with it all as be His own good pleasure and that none other can stay His hand or say what doeth Thou.

Whereby one becomes convinced that the absolute Predestination of "God" of All things does convey, that the exact same pure and Holy truth; as to say; God is absolutely sure and certain of all things. Or that He does all things well and good. Or that all He does is done for His own good pur-

pose. Or that He is of infinite wisdom, power and glory. Or that He did see the end from the beginning; and from ancient times the things not yet done; saying - My council shall stand and I will do all my pleasure; both in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Or all whatsoever He does is done forever. And so it is to deny either one of the above is to deny them every one. Of which would be a denial of His very existence.

In order that we believe His truths; we first must believe that He is; And, in order that we in truth believe that He is, as He in truth be we must and shall, believe His Holy truths. For therein, exists no difference for He plainly is; Holy truth itself, Himself. God is not a man He is a Spirit; the very Holy Spirit of truth; of goodness; of mercy; of grace, of almighty power and glory. Heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool. His almighty power, shall be known by all. If not before surely when He plants one foot upon the sea and one upon the land and declares, that time shall be no more. Then will come the end. When shall that be? None but He knoweth; no, not even the angels in heaven.

Yet, for some cause I feel that will come whenever His last chosen one is brought to the knowledge of His truths.

In hope, I could be one among them who are placed upon His right hand.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

PLEASANT WORDS

"Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24)



None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God's love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal Life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God's sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace; all have a peculiar sweetness which the unregenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: ***"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."*** According to Proverbs 16:21— ***"The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning."*** Both

bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, ***"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."*** (Matt. 12 :34-35.) Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said ***"That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."*** If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body you may change your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has disheartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you.

There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: ***"PEACE be to this house."*** Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is more satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence that everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, ***"Peace be unto this house."*** Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, ***"The full soul loatheth a honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."***

Pleasant words are as an HONEY-COMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his constant search for the sweet nugget of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is—, Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the

bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey; may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits the honey into the honeycomb set in the hive, may I be able to feed wisdom words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey; may I be endowed with special gifts to gather, properly speak, and store in the church special honey-drippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honey-drippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and make her dwelling place to be theirs; the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers I am

including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church dying. Sometimes ants or other insects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreasing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows!!! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb

dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown; one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God's rich providence and amazing

grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will; yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over-emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and purity. On the other hand —: preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is

limited to stress the point. It is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand — : it is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both: the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart; as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization

could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said God is love. If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would choose THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like unto the first in that they both began with: Thou shalt love. Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where

there is ease of conscience there is happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after awhile, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those - sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessings.

AMEN.

E. J. L.

ROMANS 2:1

Elder Beebe: - Dear sir, as I have received much consolation in times past in reading the *Signs* and especially your expositions of portions of scripture, I would humbly request, although personally not acquainted with you, that you give your views through the *Signs* upon a portion of Scripture found in Romans 2 chapter, 1st verse, particularly what it is to judge another.

Yours, G. W. H.

Reply:—The text proposed for consideration reads thus, "*Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, who-soever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things.*"

The apostle had been speaking of his calling as an apostle, and as such, of his indebtedness or obligation to preach to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, to the barbarians as well as to the Greeks, and of the common level

of guilt and condemnation to which mankind had fallen. Those who were of the circumcision had made manifest their depravity by sinning against law which had been given to them as such, while the barbarians unto whom the Sinai law had not been given were also convicted of the same depravity of their fallen nature in that the clear manifestation made of the eternal power and Godhead of Jehovah displayed in the visible things of the creation did not secure their veneration or worship of him as God. Had they not been depraved in their nature every manifestation of the power and Godhead would have filled them with reverence and love, but their aversion to the rational contemplation of the power and all pervading providence of God seen in every blade of grass, and in all the works of God, was indisputable evidence of their guilty state. They did not like to retain God in their thoughts, for when they know him, that is, as displayed in the things that are made, they worshipped him not as God, but grew vain in their imaginations and ran into gross idolatry, for which severe judgments were visited upon them. It is a thoroughly demonstrated truth that no amount of knowledge that a natural man has ever attained to, or ever can attain unto in their natural or unregenerated state, can ever lead them to love to retain God in their thoughts or tend or qualify them to worship him as God. And it will remain forever true that "*Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" While such was evidently the deplorable condition of the Gentiles, the Jews were making their boast in the law, in that law which

had been given specially to them as the children of Israel, and trusted in the law. They inferred from the peculiar privileges which they enjoyed over the Gentiles that they were more holy in the sight of God, and that they, being of the circumcision and the descendants by immediate generation from Abraham, were fully justified before God; under this delusion they did not hesitate to judge the heathen, or the Gentiles. Hence their prejudice against the Gentiles was so great that they concluded that there was no salvation for them, and the prejudice so frequently manifested by the Jews, when our Lord condescended to associate with publicans or sinners, and against the apostles when they were charged with bringing Greeks into the temple, and thereby defiling the holy place. Now the apostle is showing the obligation resting on him to declare, even among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ, makes the declaration of our text, and confirms it by arguments and testimony throughout the chapter. ***Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man***—Who? What man? Whosoever thou art that judgest another. The Jew in judging the Gentiles as being sinners, heathen, idolators, barbarians, and under the wrath of heaven, were condemning themselves for notwithstanding all their boasted advantage of the law dispensed to them, the apostle says they were also guilty of the same things. Did they judge the Gentile guilty because they worshipped idols? They, the Jews, also committed sacrilege. Therefore while they judged and condemned the Gentiles for idolatry, steal-

ing, adultery, etc., they condemned themselves in the judgment they gave against their neighbors because they themselves were guilty of the very things which they judged others to be guilty of. Indeed this is expressly given in the text, as the reason why they were inexcusable, ***for thou that judgest doest the same thing.***

And it is also true if the Gentiles judge the Jews, in condemning them as sinners, if we are found guilty of the same things, we condemn ourselves. Hence the general application of the rule, ***O man, whosoever thou art,*** whether Jew or Gentile.

Rivers of blood are now flowing in defense of the various kinds of religion of the earth. The war between Russia and Turkey, involving France and England and nearly all of Europe, is a religious war. Each party has judged the other heterodox. The Mohammatan, the Papal, the Protestant and the Grecian religions are all involved and each party in defense of what they regard their holy religion. While both parties in the Celestial Empire are fighting for their religion, and in every instance, in judging each other, each party named condemns itself for all humanly invented religions are of a piece, and all are wrong. None but the religion of Jesus Christ, as revealed from heaven, is approved of God. To those who possess that religion which is from above, judgment is given. The saints shall judge the world; yea, he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

Middletown, N.Y., April 15, 1854
G.W.H / Elder Gilbert Beebe

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

(The last article on the subject by Elder Gilbert Beebe, written not long before his passing -- published in the Signs October 1, 1880.)

The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all-pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preachings and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve.

While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the *author of sin*. They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation he must not extend his government, without subjecting himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable

is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when

"The vain race of flesh and blood Contend with their Creator, God; When mortal man presumes to be More holy, wise or just than he."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of *godliness* and of *iniquity*, have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on his adorable perfections, or withhold from him that which he has ordained for the manifestation of his glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of him and of his government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and his name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out.

He keepeth back the face of his throne, the place and power of his government, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of his own will and pleasure does he himself conform. ***"He worketh all things after***

the counsel of his own will."—Eph. i. 11. "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."—Isa. xlv. 10.

In this connection he says, "I am God and there is none like me." And in the revelation of the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat upon the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 10, 11. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, an it shall be recompensed unto him again For of him, and through him, and by him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Romans xi. 33-34.

When God created the heavens and the earth no other power than his own was employed, no wisdom but his own was consulted, nor was there any other than his own will to dictate what honor for what purpose anything should be created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to

form his vessels as he pleases; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so?

The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Rom. ix. 21-23. Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, "Hell is naked before him (God), and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts

of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"—
Job xxvi. 6-14.

Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that he has condescended to let us know of his great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of his predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events?

Are death and hell and all things naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom? Has he stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in this thick cloud, and "*given to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment,*" (*Prov. viii. 29,*) and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When he set his throne above the heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that "*The heav-*

ens (thus) declare the glory of God, and the firmament showing his handiwork?"

But, say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure: We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that he has predestinated all things which come to pass. Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the heavens, we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly to their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? what would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God?

To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass his bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if he has left murderers and blood-thirsty men or devils unrestricted by his predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that "*the wrath of man*

shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

*"Pains and deaths around us fly—
Till he bids us we cannot die;
Not a single shaft can hit
Unless the God of heaven sees
fit."*

For death and hell can do no more than his hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make him a sinner, or charge on him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is he amenable to any law above himself? If so, by what law can he be indicted, in what court can he be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is his eternal right to do all his pleasure, *"Nor give to mortals an account, of his actions or decrees."*

It savors of atheism to deny that he is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for his own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that he had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that he had a right to create them according to his own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge him with error because he did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge him for not creating them angels, nor angels because he did not make them Gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the

most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made.

Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but because they were precisely what he intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made has been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything he has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided-for event with him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could or can possibly transpire, or he would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."* —Acts xv. 18.

But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny his determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has

made certain by his determinate counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, The living know that they must die; but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of himself, for he has challenged the universe to tell with whom he has taken counsel, or who has instructed him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of his people, "*Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son,*" (Romans viii 29); but that the well beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by his murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God.

Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life, "*I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*"—Acts iii. 17, 18. "*For of a truth against thy holy child of Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy*

counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28.

The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of his garments, and the lot cast for his seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated.

Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in his all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with food by his determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that "*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.*"

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the gov-

ernment of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to the good deeds of men, then is his *absolute government totally excluded; for "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that 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."* — Rom. iii. 10-12. We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend his designs, dare to say he has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells, Performs his works, the cause conceals;

But, though his methods are unknown,

Judgment and truth sustain his throne.

"In heaven, and earth, and air, and seas,

He executes his firm decrees;

And by his saints it stands confess'd That what he does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not

have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer; therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that he can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of his people and for his own glory. And thus also, *"God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction,"* as in the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharaoh until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and his own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. *"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou*

that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Romans ix. 17-22.

The apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of his pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity, between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose long-suffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of his own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by his own determinate counsel wisdom and power, according to that eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in himself before the world began, without subjecting himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgressions of a law under which the transgressor was justly held amenable, and to the penalty to which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of his own will and pleasure, and therefore he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or be

the will of men. As he is in one mind, and none can turn him, his purposes are eternal, like himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If he had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before he created the world, we ask what right has he acquired subsequently to execute the orders of this throne? If it had been his pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt his power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to his will, or because he had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of his being and attributes, to believe that God had a purpose worthy of himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us "***Be still, and know that he is God.***" To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at

any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if he has today the full control, had he not the same control yesterday and forever? If he has not the full control today, is there any certainty that he will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of his own will, and that he is immutable, then we must admit that he has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny his universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that he is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny his eternal power and Godhead. If he has not the power and wisdom to determine events, how can he cause all things to work together for good to them that love him?

But while we hold that he is supreme in power, and that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, we are certain that he reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with him. To admit the universal government of God, is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undeter-

mined in the purpose of God, how could the apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, of apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places?

But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and spirit of our God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe -- October 1, 1880.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

DRINKING FROM A SAUCER

*I've never made a fortune
And it's probably too late now,
But I don't worry about that much,
I'm happy anyhow.
As I go along life's journey
I'm reaping better than I sowed. I'm
drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.*

*Ain't got a lot of riches,
Sometimes the goings rough,
But I got a kid that loves me,
That makes me rich enough.
I just thank God for his blessings,
And the mercy he has bestowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.*

*And I remember times when things went
wrong,
And my faith got a little thin,
But then all at once the dark clouds
broke,
And the old sun broke through again.
So Lord, help me not to gripe,
About the tough rows I've hoed.
I'm drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.*

*And if God gives me the strength and
courage
When the way gets steep and rough,
I won't ask for other blessings, I'm
already blessed enough.
And may I never be too busy
To help another bear his load.
I'm drinking from my saucer
Cause my cup has overflowed.*

Sent in by Sister B.G.

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 EDITORIAL

THE LOVE OF GOD



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

According to the writings of the Apostle Paul, the most important ingredient in the life of the child of God is love, for he said (I Cor. chap. 13, vs. 1) "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling symbol. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and*

though I have all faith, so that I could move mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all of my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

Paul has listed here the characteristics of those things which are the evidences of the spirit in a child of God's life in his journey through this low ground of sin and sorrow; and he says that they are all worthless unless they are accompanied by charity, yea prompted by charity in the heart of the individual. Love is the basis of all that is good and well pleasing in the sight of God. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him and from there proceeds all of the good works that adorn the household of faith.

Love is the most beautiful and wonderful evidence of the grace of God in the heart of the children of the most high. Faith and hope are also evidences of that grace, but they vary in the different seasons and times in the experiences of the elect, but, love in the earlier days of their spiritual life is never forgotten, and will always be the most constant reminder of the change in their lives and the reason for the hope that dwells in their breast. They will ever remember and long for those happy days when love was new and fresh in their lives as they travel down the pathway of life, and as the faith and hope seem to dim from time to time; they will recall those seasons of pure joy and ecstasy as they viewed, for the first times, the glory of the kingdom of God and the experiencing of the love

and the fellowship with those of like precious faith. David's cry was at one time (Psa. chap. 51, vs. 12) "**Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me by thy free spirit.**" Though faith and hope may fade or wane in this life, the memory of those days when faith hope and love, all three, were so sweet and present in their life, the memory causes them to pray unto God that they will not be taken from them; as Paul went on to say and now abideth faith hope and charity, and the greatest of these is charity. Faith and hope are for our lives, in this world, but love continues with God's children on into that better world and life. Love is the single most important characteristic that holds it all together, take that away, and you have man with the word but without the spirit. God is a spirit and God is love and the spirit of love, (charity) is the difference between, the elect and the non elect, because even though men did all of the works required of them under the law, but had not love, he was nothing. You can just sense this love in the heart of another simply by beholding their countenance and observing their walk; charity suffereth long, is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, rejoiceth in truth, beareth all things, endureth all things is patient and never fails. This demeanor sets them apart from the man of the world and causes them to seek their own kind, for love and fellowship in the things that are so precious unto them, and these are the things that matter most to those who have once tasted this love in the depths of their heart and soul.

All of the above experiences are the results of love in the hearts of God's children and it is beautiful to behold and experience; but how much greater is the love of God for his children. (1 Jno. Chap. 3 vs. 1) "**Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.**" All of the above effects upon the heirs of promise is because of that love, of the Father, that was bestowed upon them, so how much greater is that love than the one that man experiences. Of course, God's love inspires the love that is in the heart of the believer but how much greater is love, at its source, than the results of it in the hearts of his children, who are also flesh. God's love is pure and undefiled and transcends the barrier between the holiness of the Father and the corruption of the flesh; it manifests that great gulf between those in the bosom of Abraham and those confined to the depths of hell. Its presence or lack of it in the heart of man is the thing that determines the place to which every man will spend eternity, and its presence is the gift of God.

The most beautiful, wonderful and magnificent attribute of God, in the hearts and minds of his children, is his love for them and the complete and eternal characteristics of that love. He loves them with an everlasting love, and time and circumstances do not alter or diminish that love for them at any time, they are ever the objects of that love, regardless of their standing insofar as righteousness in the sight of

God is concerned at any given point in time: as David said (Psa. 139 vs. 7-8) ***"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or wither shall I flee from thy presence? if I ascend up to heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there."*** David was acknowledging that he was ever present before God, wherever he was, and ever under the watchful care of his tender love and mercy, even in his most trying times. God did not cast him aside when he went in to Bethsheba and had Uriah killed and took her to him for his wife; David was punished for his sin and made to acknowledge his wickedness, but from this union came forth Solomon and Solomon was greatly blessed of God and was of the lineage to Christ. This is a demonstration of the depth and unchangeableness of God's love for all of his children; all are blessed to see that there is nothing that they can do that would cause God to cast them away, if they are indeed his; just as there was nothing that they did to cause him to love them originally. If they were ever in that chosen generation, they always will be, and they have been given a reason to believe that they are, and that what they have been given is the earnest of the inheritance that is laid up for the saints of God.

In the beginning when he formed man of the dust of the earth, after he had created all things, he beheld his work and said it was very good. He had a very special love for man, as he created him, and sin entering the world and contaminating the man did not change that love. Man changes regu-

larly, daily, but God does not; he knew what man was and what he would do from the beginning and made provisions for the restoration of his chosen generation, and peculiar people unto their promised possession. When man fell and judgement was pronounced upon him, there was a distinction made between those whom God had chosen, those created in the days of the creation, and those that were of their father the devil. This chosen generation is the one to whom all scriptures are written and to whom all of the promises were made; they are the ones upon whom the love of God was bestowed, and as are all of his works, they are perfect and eternal. That love had no beginning and will have no end, for the scriptures record (Mal. Chap. 3, vs. 6) ***"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."*** and this being true, his love for them is as old as he is and is as eternal as he is or else he would have had to have changed at some time and begin loving them or to change at some time and cease to love them and this is simply not in harmony with all of the other attributes of the Lord God. He is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient and therefore does not change, for to do so, he would have to become better or worse by the change and therefore would not be perfect in all his ways.

One of the first testimonies, in so many words, of God's love for his children, is found in Deuteronomy when God declared to the children of Israel how they should conduct themselves

when he had delivered their enemies into their hands; they were to utterly destroy them, tear down their altars and enter into no covenants or marriages with them. Then in explaining the reasons for this he said, (Deut. Chap. 7, vs. 6-7-8) ***"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye are more in number than any people; for ye are the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of Pharoah king of Egypt."*** Because they were a special people unto God, they were to keep themselves separate from the nations around them and not to be in any way contaminated by their cultures and idols; they were to keep themselves holy unto him, they were not to have any god before him and they were to refute the world and all of the fleshly pleasures that it offered and give themselves wholly unto him.

All down through time the Lord has manifested the love that he has for his people by leading them and directing them in all their ways. He would deliver them into the hands of their enemies for their sins, then when they would repent and return to him he delivered them out of bondage to their enemies and restored them into the land that

he had given them for an inheritance; they would rebel again, and he would deliver them again into the hands of the nations around them for their iniquities but he always forgave them and returned them to the fold when they repented of their sins and turned to him again and prayed for deliverance. Solomon, when he dedicated the temple, prayed unto God that when the nation of Israel were in bondage and afflictions for their sins and turned toward the temple which he had built, and prayed unto God that he would hear their prayer in their distresses and deliver them from their enemies or their oppressions, this he promised to do, and this thing he did. He would chasten them and punish them for their transgressions, but, he was longsuffering and full of mercy and never forsook nor despised them.

He never utterly destroyed them because, they were his own peculiar treasure that he had formed for himself and because of the everlasting love that he had for them and in accordance with the promise that he made to Abraham, that in him all nations of the world would be blessed. He told them on one occasion that he did this not for their sake, but, for his own holy names sake; he had sworn unto Abraham and was bound by that promise to preserve them for his own names honor and glory. This is love eternal and it is without bounds; no matter what they did God loved them just as much as he did when he created them in his own image, and placed them in the garden to dress and keep it. God

knew what man was, and all about him, and loved him in spite of his faults.

You have seen this demonstrated in nature, when the parent would give everything they owned to deliver a wayward child from the deserved consequences of his actions and still love him in spite of his faults. Some might say that is foolish and spoiling the child and adding to his problems, but in nature, sometimes love blinds the eye to the error of their ways. The love that the parent has for the child will cause them to do things they would not do otherwise because of the love that they have for them. God's love is many times greater than the love of man in nature, for their own children, and much more sure and certain; the natural man will reach the end of his strength, or die, and be unable to continue to support and care for their children. God is eternal and will never leave nor forsake his children. he will never reach the end of his strength and certainly will never die; he will ever be there to care for and supply their every need, not necessarily their every want. (II Pet. Chap. 5, vs 6-7) "***Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.***" There is no place more secure and permanent than to be in the sheepfold where the shepherd, the Son of God, is watching over you, for good, because you are his sheep and because he loves you with a love that is beyond description; insomuch that he laid down his own life that you might have

life eternal. (John Chap. 13, vs. 13) "***Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.***" This is the ultimate in love, that God gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life, and he did this for them when they were dead in trespasses and sin.

(Rom. Chap. 5, vs. 10) "***For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.***" The Apostle Paul was called when he was in deadly pursuit of the children of God, with every intent of bringing them bound unto Jerusalem for trial and possibly death, and yet he was one for whom Christ had laid down his life; he was certainly an enemy of Christ, as he said, speaking of himself, that he was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious to the cause of Christ, but he obtained mercy. This is the only way that one comes to Christ, and that is by the mercy of God. The world says you must repent and turn to Christ; Paul didn't, he was changed in a moment of time from being a persecutor to being a preacher of righteousness, and not because he made the decision: the decision was made for him and that decision was made a long time before that day on the road to Damascus. His repentance was when he was made to see his actual condition before a holy and just God worthy of death and the confines of hell and not, as some have said, when he began to see the error of his ways at the stoning of Steven: his change was when he met Christ and

experienced the calling and the power of his calling, and saw himself a sinner before God whom he thought he was serving, til that moment in time.

The world quotes John Chapter 3 verse 16 as evidence that God loves everyone, and if they will just let him, he will save them. This 16th verse is just one sentence in a conversation between Nicodemus and Christ, and the first statement in that conversation, by Jesus was that, Ye must be born again and certainly verse 16 agrees with the statement made in verse 3. (I John Chap 5, vs 1) states "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." This seems to link the two statements together irrefutably and is written by the same author that recorded the two verses in the book of St. John. To believe that Jesus is the Christ, Ye must be born again and this is the sovereign work of almighty God, not the irresponsible decision of man in the flesh. Paul says (I Cor. Chap. 12, vs. 3) "*Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*"

(John Chap. 15, vs. 16) "*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: the whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*" This statement declares beyond reproof that the salvation of the

children of God is of God and not man. God declares, by the prophet Ezekiel, the plight of Israel when he first loved them as being this way (Eze. Chap. 16, vs. 6) "*And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.*" This was illustrating the nation of Israel as a child that was just born, whose naval was not cut neither was it washed in water to supple it, not salted nor swaddled. Then he said, it was the time of love and, he washed thee with water, and he said, yea I throughly washed thee, and entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Pray tell me how much did this infant contribute to that covenant or how did he accept or reject the terms of the agreement. That infant was no more instrumental in his being loved of God than any of the individuals of the nation of Israel were in being the chosen nation; he contributed nothing to it, but it was bestowed upon the infant representing the nation of Israel, in the same manner that it was upon the Apostle Paul, and he said, "*But by the grace of God I am what I am;*" It is all of grace and not of any merit due to the creature.

God is love, and all love emanates from him; man loves only after he is first loved of God. In the flesh, man loves the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life and these things are not of the Father. John said (John Chap. 2, vs. 15)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The love of the Father is that which separates the man in nature from the love of the things of nature and replaces it with the love that Jesus spoke of to his disciples after washing their feet; (John Chap. 13, vs. 34-35) **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."** This love is that which shows forth in the countenance of every child of God as they come forth asking for a home with the church, it is the most precious possession that they have. It has caused their brethren in ages past to bear torture, cruel scourgings, being sown asunder, slain by the sword, afflicted, tormented, to wander in deserts, mountains, caves and be counted as the offscouring of the earth, but, yet it has enabled them to endure to the end. It was not that they were stronger than you, they were just blessed with a dispensation of that love that would not let them deny their faith and their calling. You would be too, if occasion required it.

(Heb. Chap. 12, vs. 1-2) **"Wherefore seeing we also 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." In this day and age, the children of the heavenly king have that same cloud of witnesses in their life, they walk by faith and not by sight, they trust in God to lead them and enable them to do those things that are required of them as their brethren did in ages past. We read and learn of the sore trial and afflictions that the prophets endured and feel that we could not stand the test, as they did, but they could if it was required of them because the scriptures state that he will not let them be tempted above that that they are able to stand. That promise that was made in those days is still as true today as it was in the day that it was originally written; God gives his children strength sufficient for the day, when much is required much is given. The love of God supplies the strength, courage and ability for that which is required of you; for it is God working in you both the will and the do of his good pleasure.

(Isaiah chap. 41, vs. 17-18) **"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys, I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."** The Lord God, the one who because of the great love that he has for his children is ever watching over them for good; when

they feel to be alone and there is no one to care for them, and they are in great distress, they are made aware from time to time in their experience that their God truly does not ever leave them or forsake them: but is always their keeper and their guide. He supplies their need when it seems impossible that there is a way out of the dilemma that they have gotten themselves into. This is why the love of God is so sweet and precious to the hearts of his chosen people and then to think that it is everlasting.

May the grace of God be with us all throughout our journey here on earth, and may it always be accompanied by a special dispensation of that love that first appeared to us in our experience and bring the same joy and sweetness that we experienced then. If that

be true we could live out our days in peace and harmony with our brethren and depart this life without fear or apprehension. The love of God is the very essence of his being and the most cherished characteristic in the minds and hearts of the elect. It is the bond that binds them unto him closer and stronger than any of the ties to nature; it will not let them follow after other idols because they know there that is no God other than the one who created the heavens and the earth and all things for their sake. We love him because he first loved us and therefore that love has all of the power of the Godhead behind it and cannot fail because all things are upheld by the word of his power.

In bonds of love
Richard H. Campbell

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH

LAUREL RIDGE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

L laurel Ridge Primitive Baptist Church is located at 5601 Roselawn Road in the Cave Spring area of Roanoke County, Virginia. Our regular meeting times are each third Saturday afternoon at 2:00 (singing at 1:30) and third Sunday morning at 11:00 (singing at 10:30). Our communion service is the third Sunday in May. Our pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, has served us continuously and faithfully for over forty-one years, and the Lord has blessed him to proclaim the doctrine of salvation by grace, the sovereignty of Almighty God and the total depravity of man.

Our church records date back to October, 1825; the records prior to that time were lost. The first meeting house was a small log structure with a balcony inside. The church stood in a grove of trees near the location of the present building.

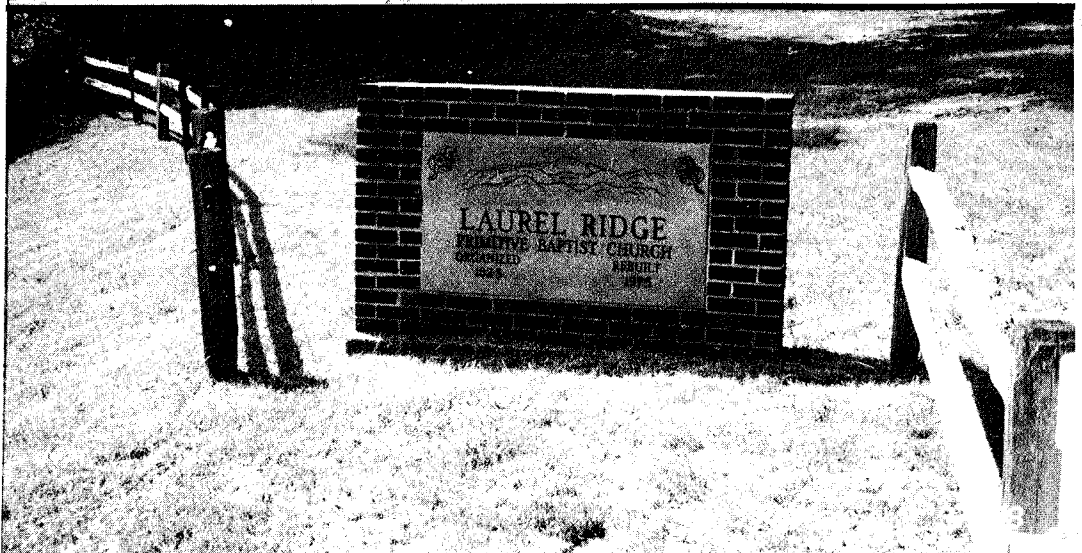
A frame building was built around 1897 and the name of the church was changed from Laurel Ridge to Bellview at the request of the deacon, George M. Bell, who deeded the land to the church for the new building.

In 1975, the new brick building was built and the name was changed back to the original name of Laurel Ridge.

We are blessed with sweet meetings and we pray the Lord will see fit in his infinite mercy to continue to bless us and all those that are given a mind to come worship with us. We

have twenty-two members at present and many friends who visit us from time to time for which we are very thankful.

Humbly, Mary Ann Conner



VOICES OF THE PAST

January 13.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. — I PETER iv. 12.

THE "fiery trial," then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord's family, but is more or less the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to his Zion, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction?" All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affliction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. **"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."** Thus they suffer with him, **"that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy."** And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affliction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

Elder J.C. Philpot

SALVATION

"I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." (Isa. 43:11, 12)

In the last forty-five years I have been writing to various publications. During the last thirty-five years I have been speaking from the pulpit to the children of God. My course during this time has been strange indeed.; Much of the time I labored in much fear of not been called, and yet had a sentence or woe upon me that I felt the terrors of death if I did not speak. (1 Cor. 9:16) I have had my share of fault finding with what I have written and preached. Too many times, I did not accept that criticism in the right spirit. Of late years, I have quit defending myself against those that objected to my opinions. I would much rather have the good will of one and all, but it would be my ruin if I did have (Luke 6:26), therefore I desire to leave everything in the hands of the Lord. I am sure that it will give a man itching ears when every class of people are acclaiming him as a great preacher.

I do not think that I have a desire to reach everybody, but I hope that I have a desire to reach all that my text applies to from time to time. I hope that I am not ashamed of the truth, of the

gospel; and I hope that I am ready to preach among those that have a hearing ear. I do not know, by looking into faces, or by looking over the list of subscribers to any periodical, who has ears to hear. I am sure that I cannot give them hearing ears, and I hope that there is not a desire about me to try.

My subject, and the text on which I hope to lay a good foundation, are pertinent matters for our consideration. However, the recipients of this gospel, are limited. None but the children of God can enjoy and witness to what God has said, and only they are witnesses to it. Not all of God's children are witnesses to this singular salvation.

"I am the Lord." If, from the moment of the creation until every trophy of God's grace is housed in heaven and immortal glory, things take such a turn that God can not say what He said to Israel in the present tense, then the "I AM" has not been in control. If there was ever any likelihood of salvation failing, then God knew it from all eternity, and He has not been our "I am" at any time. It is "I AM" that sent Moses; He is today the Lord our "I am that I am" and as He sends minister to hearers, it is as effective today as it was several thousand years ago when it looked so uncertain to Moses. The one of whom I write IS the Lord; I do not write (If I am called of God) about a dead or "has been" gospel; it is the power of God to believers, to witnesses of it. Unbelievers do not necessarily mean that hearers and readers are not children of God. The man

that got the hands of Jesus applied to his eyes the first time saw men as trees, walking. Thomas was certainly a child of God, but he could not believe until he had evidence. I do not write about a "has been" Lord; nor do I write to people that think thus of the Lord. He is alive forevermore, and will always be "the I am that I am."

"And beside me there is no saviour." Not all of the Israelites were witnesses to this declaration, nor are all of God's children witnesses now to it. Whatever their name in the world might be, the ones that were witnesses of these things believed what the Lord said relative to salvation. Come, dear reader, and let us take a little journey down into the garden where the "I AM" is the only gardener. In this garden He is the only Saviour. In fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, the Spirit of the Lord came upon the Saviour and He alone performed all of the work to make every plant a tree of righteousness. (Isa. 61:3).

Mary did not have twins. Only one Saviour was born; no other maiden, even though virgins romp the landscape ever, have given birth to another Saviour. Yet, even though an angel heralded the coming of the Saviour, the masses were not witnesses to it. I say that had Herod and Pilate seen in Jesus what the centurion did (Luke 23:47) they certainly would have witnessed as did he, but not having known Him nor His Father, they could not witness to what they had not witnessed. Following the same line of reasoning, one who has not been a witness to the Lord's testimony con-

cerning salvation, he or she will be found trying to lend a hand in salvation.

Those that have witnessed this "only salvation" will lie down in the green pastures of salvation; those that have not, will always find another salvation besides that one that Jesus saves always to deliverance home to glory. These witnesses have a right to sing, *"Amazing grace how sweet the sound,"*

and as they have it declared to them, and they are saved, and they have salvation shown unto them, they continue to sing,

*"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."*

For centuries the saints have sung this high and lofty theme of salvation by grace with out another salvation standing in the offing, waiting for them to work out. This is what I endeavor to preach and write, to wit, Salvation, from God's eternal design to save, to the triumphant bringing home to glory every chosen vessel of mercy, and all of it being given to us, and we witnessed to it, if we have indeed been saved by this One and only Saviour.

Regardless of the cavelling of men, this salvation is known only in time. What heaven is, none of the witnesses to this salvation know at the time of it being presented to them. They know (as taught of the Lord) that He is the, only Saviour, that without His salvation, we do not have salvation. I hope

that I am writing to many witnesses of this "only" salvation, but I do not believe that with the church in her time state a single witness will be found that has witnessed *"that salvation is further than a time state."*

The Lord is the only Saviour. The attributes of God are all engaged in this salvation; the seven spirits are all surely and gloriously working in the children of God to save them. This is a present salvation. He was the Saviour before the Red Sea; He was the Saviour in the Red Sea; He was the Saviour in the wilderness road, and in our journeys on that road in our experience, He is our Saviour. At the time of the prophet, there was not any Saviour save the word. I call for an answer to this statement: Did Isaiah know the truth? Did he tell all the truth? Did the Inspiration of God mislead the prophet? Did He withhold something that is vital to the welfare of the chosen Israel of God? I hope that I desire to be right. I think.

I know the certainty of death, and if I am hanging precariously on a high cliff with impending doom below me, and Israel was mistaken — all these witnesses misunderstanding God, and there is a Saviour beside the Lord, I certainly need to know it.

I do not want to be extreme. I do not want to go beyond the scriptures in comparing truth with error. I do not want to say hurtful things toward those that bring some other saviour other than the Lord. But my brethren and sisters, my dear perishing readers, I am as I hope, being undressed of what I thought I had. I hope that I am being

made ready for a lovely and much desired transition. I do not want to be unfaithful to Him that has called me out of nature's darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. If His brethren bring something among us that is not in keeping with His testimony, it behoves me to point out the fallacy of that thing. Someone is going to be wounded whenever error is preached among us. I had much rather wound my brethren than to wound my Saviour; I had much rather (since error demands that somebody be arraigned) rebuke my brethren sharply than to let my silence rebuke my Saviour. This does not mean that I am to declare non-fellowship for them; it does not mean that I am to step on their toes purposely, but it does mean that I must not step on the toes my only Saviour.

At the expense of being trite, I desire to point out that this Saviour was the only Saviour of Israel all the way through from Eden to the end of the legal dispensation; that this salvation was all timely; that it was saving at the flood; it was time saving at the Red sea; that it was time saving at the water of Garah, that it was time saving in giving manna, that it was time saving the whole wilderness through, that it was time saving in giving bread in Egypt, in causing fire to be reversed in its nature to burn away bonds but not to consume the bound. If this is not the picture of Israel and the Saviour, the only Saviour, then I freely confess that I do not know what I am writing.

This God, this Saviour, stands alone to His people Israel. Israel witnessed to this doctrine that I would, were it not for a dreadful fall that I got, declare to one and all. God declared this truth to them, but His care for them did not cease in a mere declaration. Oh, no, for men declare, and do not, and God is not likened unto men. God made manifest the singularity of this "only Saviour" by saving them. That is not all - Oh no, dear saint, there is always something more that is in reserve yet to be served to Israel; it always has been, it always will be. He showed this salvation to them. He showed it to them Oh yes, tried soul, He shows unto you the tenderness of His saving power. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter and teacher and keeper of God's people, is sent unto you (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7). He also shows His people the things of Christ, the only Saviour of sinners.

This showing to the children of God, Christ as their Saviour, is under peculiar and trying and singular circumstances. When this is done, there is not any strange god present. This strange god, whom men in ignorance would present, is not found in the experience of these witnesses. He is the work of our deluded minds; he is the god of whom our souls would dare rely until the show begins. The children of God made them one out of a calf, but the calf-god was vanquished from sight, from show; Peter would have made a man as another saviour, but God, the only Saviour, vanquished him from sight, and He showed them in the most dazzling show that has

ever been brought to sight of poor sinners that no name, no god, no man could ever share in the honor and glory of the Holy One of Israel. I love these scenes of divine saving; my soul is enraptured, my pace is quickened, my attention is called heavenward, as I am shown the care of God for His people. If I am not mistaken, the text has grown; its beauties have been enhanced, my spiritual faculties have been weaned from every false God, every false saviour, and I am standing at the giving up and turning the kingdom over to another Joshua. At this time, I know what those people knew, to wit, that God my Saviour has not failed to keep every promise that he has made, and that as the show was put on, there was not a strange god to assist in making the screen of my soul straight, nor to adjust my sight and vision that I might see better than I see by the work of this only God, this only Saviour. (See Joshua 23)

I do not mean to separate Christ and grace. Paul's letter to the Corinthians was based on what Christ did for them, and he thanked God (through Christ) for the grace that He had given them by Christ. In substance, Paul did write Amazing Grace. It was his theme in the beginning of his experience; it was his theme in all of his preaching and in every letter that he sent to the churches. It was in time that all these gracious deliverances took place; it was the experience of Paul that the grace of God was sufficient. That which is sufficient, will not allow a strange god or a different saviour. When he wrote that heavenly experi-

ence to the Ephesians (Eph. 2:1,10), there was not a part works and part grace system lingering to be heard. It was not with doubt and reluctance that he told them how that they were saved; it was not that grace was present and a strange system, a strange god, in the offing ready to bolster the failure of the grace of God.

This grace is as much in the present tense, as God, the only Saviour was Israel. In the presence of two or three witnesses shall every word be established; One of those witnesses is God, and He witnesses to His people Israel when no strange god was present, when no Egyptian was there. (Gen. 45:1) God witnessed to them, and He made them His witnesses. God witnessed to Saul, in that witnessing the law was not present; Gamaliel had lost all his ability and charm; all of the things that had kept him until that time were gone. God made him His witness to the Gentiles, and his witnessing was that salvation is by grace.

There are different aspects of this salvation, but there is only one salvation. To bring up any other way, is another way to say that there is a salvation other than the grace salvation, is, to say the least of it, a strange saying, a strange doctrine, instigated by a strange god. This grace salvation will not permit me to deny nor ignore scriptures that the strange gods would have us to believe set forth some other salvation, some other saviour. God has not witnessed to us, nor has He sent witnesses to us, extending to us one way to be saved and another

way to stay saved. I have enjoyed the testimony of God's people in their minutes (not that I can ! trace their history back to the setting up of the kingdom) showing forth that God had witnessed to them. I am sorry to have to report, that some of those that accepted the doctrine of the imputed righteousness to us; that have accepted the doctrine of God's preservation of the saints to glory, are, like the Galatians, finishing as they think, in the flesh what grace started in them at the out-set.

God's children are presently working out their own salvation. This is their salvation. The salvation is in the work, but by no means for the work. This salvation is in the work of God working in them. It is an effectual work of God.

It is a perfect work of God. Moses is not on hand to give a helping hand; Elijah is not on hand to reach a helping hand when the grace of God fails; no strange god, no strange saviour is present, but a perfect work, is being done (Heb. 13: 21), and this perfection enables us, the witnesses of God, to walk well pleasing in His sight, and let us remember, dear children of God, that He has a desire toward the work of His own hand. (Job 14 :15) And let us remember that God does not work at something; let us remember that He does not talk at His people to get them to be witnesses, but that He talks to them by the effectual, the mighty workings of His Spirit in them. (Eph. 1:19, 20; 3:7; 4: 16; I Th. 2:13)

This Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord, through His grace, enables the wit-

nesses to this saving grace to save themselves from every evil and false way, from every strange god and doctrine. This effectual saving grace enables Paul to write about taking heed to oneself and to the doctrine, and it (the same effectual grace) enables the recipient to take heed to both, to continue in them, to save themselves and those that have a hearing ear.

Where this grace is preached, where this Saviour is showing us how it is, here is health in the body. When it is not preached, it is a strange fire that has come into the camp of Israel, a strange god is present that the witnesses did not know in the time of which saiah was speaking; that was not present when Jacob had that singular experience in the wilderness and in the desert (Deut. 32 :9,12); that was not present when Jesus was transfigured before His disciples; that was not present when Saul had no man (no strange god) to stand with him. (2 Tim. 4:16)

W. D. G.

CHARITY.

"AND we believe," says the *Christian Watchman*, "the time is not far distant when a man's standing as a christian and a good citizen will be measured by the amount of his charities." The *ross and Journal* enquires, "Is it correct?"

REMARKS.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., January 7, 1836.



WE are mistaken if these learned editors, in their use of the word *charity*, do not wish to be understood

in a popular and not scriptural sense. The bible connects charity with faith and hope, and ascribes to it the pre-eminence; and as the less important are the fruits of the Spirit of God, and utterly beyond the command or control of mortals, so of course the greatest can only be possessed and enjoyed by such as receive it as a sovereign favor from God, who is the giver of every perfect gift. By charity, in a bible sense, we understand the love of God, and in this view of the subject it is easy for the christian to conceive the comparative superiority it holds over faith and hope, the former being the cause, and the latter being but effects. And again, God's love in its nature possesses a superior excellency; it is eternal, immutable, almighty and sovereign; eternal, it had no beginning, and can never terminate; immutable, fixed from the ancients of eternity upon its objects. "Neither life nor death, 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 them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. vii. 38 39. It is invincible; nothing can withstand the power of the love of God, many waters cannot quench it, floods cannot drown it, sin, death and hell combined could not subdue it. It is omnipotent in its operations; the stoutest hearts in all Adam's wretched family have bowed in subjection to it; yea, we are told it is stronger than death. It is sovereign, who can command it? Who can produce it Surely no one. Jehovah has

set his mercy on whom he would, for he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. He says, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." View the love of God in any other light than sovereign, and where would be the obligation of gratitude to God for it. If the possession of it in our hearts does not depend exclusively on the sovereign pleasure of God, then we must possess and enjoy it, if at all, independently of God, and who would not tremble at such an idea.

This charity or love of God is communicated by the Holy Ghost to the redeemed of the Lord in their new birth, and in its operation on their hearts produces love to God. "We love him because he first loved us." It produces love to his truth, love to his ordinances, his laws, and to his people, and makes them kind and affectionate one towards another. This charity, or love of God, when shed abroad in the hearts of God's people, gives them bowels of compassion and mercy one towards another; it is not productive of ostentatious shows which are common among the Gentiles; it does not blazon the liberality of its possessor through the press to earth's remotest bounds, but rather teaches and enforces the command of Jesus, not to let the left hand know that the right has performed. It leads its possessor to visit the widow and the fatherless, and to do good as much as in them lies unto all men, but especially to the household of faith. The love of God does this and more; hence in answer to Mr. Stevens, of the Cross, we an-

swer: The Christian is to be measured by the charity he possesses, but we see no connection between his christianity and his qualification for good citizenship in this world.

But we are led to conclude that the editor of the *Watchman* intends popular or modern charity. This is altogether another thing, very different in nature and in effects. It is any principle that will lead men to appropriate their money, wealth and influence to the service of the institutions of modern benevolence. If a man would in a popular sense be charitable, let him join all the fashionable religious societies of the day, let him patronize every scheme which men have devised and still are devising to convert the world, and if he has funds he can become very charitable. This kind of charity is very splendid in the eyes of an adulterous generation; it is sounded far and wide; it rings from the pulpit; it is echoed through the press. This charity regards no other qualification on the part of its patrons than a well-filled purse, and an open hand to deal it out at the call of the clergy. This charity will also visit the widow and the fatherless, not to relieve their pressing wants, but to extort for proposedly pious purposes the "widow's mite," and the hard-earned dollar of the orphan boy. If the widow or the fatherless are in distress, and pinched with hunger, or chilled for want of clothing, modern charity will perhaps send her agents to the sick haunts of wretchedness, commissioned to say unto them, "Be ye warm, and be ye clothed," and perhaps in the plenitude of their kind-

ness they will give the despairing widow or the starving orphan—what A loaf of bread, a bushel of grain, a suit of comfortable apparel

Oh no ! They will give them a tract, from which they may learn that these pious agents are about evangelizing the world, and are in want of money to carry on the enterprise.

Yes, verily, this popular charity will creep into widow's houses, and lead captive silly women, as saith the scriptures of truth.

If we understand him, this is the kind of charity the editor of the *Watchman* intends, and there is perhaps more truth in what he says than his brother editor is willing to admit; indeed the time has already arrived in which "the vile person is called liberal, and the churl said to be bountiful," while every one who refuses to acknowledge or patronize their schemes are denounced as illiberal and covetous. It is considered charitable in these days to be in fellowship with all denominations of professors of christianity, who will unite in the common cause of modern mendicancy, to persecute non-conformists, to brand with infamy, if possible, the latter, and sure the christianity of the former by the amount of his charity measured in-dollars and cents.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

ROMANS 15:13.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

FRAGMENTS

How clearly every thought and feeling and word and incident comes before me now, after so many years. How much I felt I knew, and how little I knew. On Sunday morning of the day I was baptized, Elder Harding said while preaching, "A minister of the gospel may not only be left to doubt his call to preach, but his call by grace." At the dinner table where he and other ministers were, I called attention to this, and said to Elder Harding and the others, "Do you think it right for one who has such hope as we have to talk that way? I feel that I am done with trouble. The only trouble of any account is because of sin, and I am done with sin." Elder Beebe quietly remarked, "You will know more some time than you do now," and they all smiled, but I knew that I was done with sin. Oh, if I could only have seen along the terribly dark and crooked path I was to walk in the years that were then before me, but now have gone by, how could I have lived! But they were right. I do know more now than I did then. It seems to me a wonder that I have been kept from outbreaching transgressions, and have retained the fellowship of the church.

During the few days at Middletown my mind was as one in a dream. I was talking or singing all the time. The scriptures were in my heart and in my mouth, but I do not know that I opened the Bible during the two or three days. On my way to my father's home I stayed all night at a friend's. When I lay down I saw a Bible on a stand and

took it up, saying to myself, "Well, I will see what this says." I opened and began to read where it first opened: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream: then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

"Why," I said to myself, "this is just what I have been feeling for three days, and here it is in the Bible." Then I knew the Bible as I had never known it before. From that time I had it whenever I could, and in six weeks I had read everything that was in it, not in order, but as I felt, first the Psalms, then the Gospels, then Isaiah, and so on. Once during that time I called upon two sisters, members of the same church I had before been with. One of them asked, "What are you reading now?" I hesitated a moment, then said, "To tell you the truth I am not reading anything but the Bible." "Oh, you are trying to be very good, now you have got to be a Baptist." "No," I said, "I am reading it because I prefer it to any other book." "Oh," she said, "I do not believe anybody would rather read that than a novel. Of course I read the Bible night and morning because it is my duty, but I would rather read a novel." "Why," the elder one said, "I like to read the Bible sometimes"; and even then I was hungry to get to reading the dear book again.

The subject of salvation by grace, and my wonderful experience of it, were uppermost in my mind nearly all

the time, and I cared little to talk of anything else. It was all so new and so wonderful. And the scriptures were constantly showing me some new and wonderful thing. I had read a great deal in the Bible all my life, but now I was reading it with a new feeling, as being personally interested in what it contained. It was mine. The precious things it told about were for me. Sometimes it seemed as though some one was talking to me out of its pages. I kept on reading it as one would dig and work over the soil in his garden if he knew there were diamonds hidden all over it within six inches of the surface, or as a hungry man would watch for crumbs of bread that lay scattered about.

In the office, on the street or in the parlor, this was the one thing I cared to talk about. I remember saying to a company of friends once, "You undoubtedly think it strange that I should bring forward this subject of religion here. I know it is not customary, and is deemed out of place in a social company like this, but your preachers tell us it is the most important thing in the world, and now it is so to me. Compared with this subject of Jesus and his salvation, I cannot think of any other subject as of any special importance." How little I knew then of the possibility of such changes in my mind as I have since then experienced. But I am thankful for that sweet childhood season of joy and confidence in the dear Saviour.

I could find few in my town that seemed to fully understand and respond to my experience. There was

one, an Episcopalian woman, to whom I could talk freely of what I had felt. But all were very kind and friendly, and many seemed to feel that I had met with a great change in my mind. I tried to find any throughout the surrounding country who understood how I felt, and was very glad when I found some I enjoyed visiting.

I went on in my business as a lawyer, but seemed to have little interest in it. I tried to do well what I had to do, but my Bible was at hand all the time, and open before me a good deal of the time. I also read in old volumes of the "Signs of the Times," which my father had sewed together, and also in the hymn book. I was often surprised to read my own thoughts and feelings in letters published years before, and also in the Bible. One night, alone in my office reading in the scriptures, I all at once realized, as I read, that Abraham had felt as I did then, and that I had the experience of Abraham. Those old patriarchs and holy men, it had always appeared to me, were far above where I could even hope to reach, and now I felt that I was sitting down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in gospel experience and rest. That unspeakably holy feeling I can never forget.

I expected to continue all my life in the practice of the law, and am not conscious of any thought that I would ever leave it. I do not remember that it ever occurred to me during those two months that I should ever have to preach. Yet the subject of preaching was much in my mind. A few days after my baptism I rode a short distance

with Elder St. John, who was going to an appointment. I asked him if a preacher of the gospel now ever could feel as Paul did that he was sure he should come unto them in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. I do not remember that he answered. The Sunday night of the day I was received in the church, they had a conference meeting, and I remember with comfort now the joy I had in being there with the church, and the sweetness I felt in speaking to them of Isa. 26:1-4, and telling them that for years I had tried to trust in the Lord in order that I might feel that perfect peace, and I had never been able, and that now the Lord had given me that trust, and had staid my mind on him, and I was kept in perfect peace.

The next week was the meeting of the Chemung Association with the Asylum Church, to which my father and mother, two brothers and sister Bessie then belonged, and of which, a year after, eleven members of our family were members. At the close of that session of the association I was called upon to speak in conference. I felt a comfort in speaking to the dear brothers and sisters of what the Lord had done for me. I learned long afterward that Elder Conklin, a name never to be forgotten by those who knew him, said to my father, "Brother Durand, your son will have to preach." How little I then thought that such a thing could be. But the subject of preaching was much in my thoughts. As I drove an elder from our house to the meeting, I said, "Elder _____, how does a man feel who is called to preach?" His reply

startled me. "Now don't be thinking of that. There's too many preachers now." Less than two years after that he left the Old Baptists.

July 50th I went to Middletown, about 150 miles. I had questions to ask Elder Beebe about many passages of scripture as we rode on Sunday morning to meeting at New Vernon. His answers were very satisfying. The last question was concerning the rest that remaineth to the people of God. Before he could answer that we were at the meeting house. To my surprise he took that for a text. I wondered because I thought a preacher must have his subject well thought out and arranged in his mind before he could venture to preach. His sermon seemed to me very clear, and I was lost to present things as I listened to the glorious truth of salvation, and saw how contrary to that truth were all the religious societies and systems with which I had so lately been connected. When he concluded his sermon he asked me if I had anything to say. My mind was full and I was instantly on my feet, telling how clearly I saw that the modern missionary system was contrary to the Lord's word, and that the Lord would in his own way, by his own power and grace bring all his chosen ones to himself. In a short time I came to myself, and hurriedly and in a good deal of consternation and confusion of mind sat down. It seemed to me I had brought a reproach upon the sacred cause I so much loved. Riding home with Deacon Hiram Horton, who was one of the best and most spiritual of men, I tried to find out whether he thought it was wrong for

me to have spoken. His reply was to remind me of what I had said to him seven years before of Elder Beebe's preaching, that it was like apples of gold in pictures of silver. I concluded he thought I had disgraced the church by speaking. It was some days before I was relieved of that painful burden. In the afternoon Elder Beebe called on me again, but I had resolved not to speak any more.

My peace and comfort continued from the day before I was baptized unbroken for three or four weeks. The sins which had so long weighted me down were gone, and I looked for no more trouble of that kind. But one day in an instant I saw that I was a sinner yet. My nature all at once appeared to me most vile and hateful. My thought was in this form: ***"My hope is not good, for I am a sinner yet; and I can never have another hope, for there is no other way of salvation."*** My feeling was as though I was over a bottomless abyss, and about to fall.

Instantly the words were in my mind, ***"Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."*** Salvation was in that precious word. I was saved by it. But oh, how humble I was; how lowly, how self-loathing. What a wonderful change that short experience had worked in me. My self-confidence had received a terrible blow. I have since then had more terrible experiences of the awful power of sin, and longer continued before deliverance came, but none stands out in my memory more distinctly than that first conflict.

I called one evening on a former school friend, who was recovering from an illness. He was a most intellectual man, and a thorough scholar. He asked me to tell how I came out of the Presbyterian Church. In reply I told him much of my spiritual exercise of mind which had the effect of separating me from their doctrine and order and institutions, so that I had no difficulty in separating from them, still retaining their esteem. He listened with such interest, and made such responses that I thought he had the same experience I had. So I began to talk of the Bible, which was so dear to me. Soon he became listless, and finally said somewhat excitedly, "I believe in election as much as you do, but God elected those who he foresaw would be obedient." "But," I replied, "that would be according to their works foreseen. And Paul says: 'Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.'" "It does not mean so," he replied. "If I thought it meant so I would not believe the Bible." I went away with my head down I felt such sadness and wonder that I could not make him see what was so plain to me. I had not yet learned that I could not tell the Lord's secret to any one who had not learned it from him already. When Jesus healed any he said, "See, thou tell no man," but the more he charged them the more a great deal they published it. Yet not one of them has ever disobeyed that command, for while those who are healed desire

to publish and tell abroad the good news, no one understands the blessed truth but those to whom the dear Saviour has himself told it. His sheep hear his voice and his alone.

At one time during the summer I had a great trial of mind concerning my right to be a member of the church of God. I felt so vile, so lacking in every grace, so unworthy of any favor from a holy God, I was tempted to believe I had deceived myself and the church. The next time I met Elder Beebe I took him aside and said, "Did you have fellowship for me when you baptized me?" "Why, my child," he said, "I should not have baptized you if I had not." I was greatly encouraged. I thought I was alone in that peculiar temptation. I did not then know that almost every one, if not all, who are called by grace have some such seasons of doubt concerning their experience.

Copied by S.H.D., March 2, 1915.

Silas H. Durand

fall, we look out of ourselves for a salvation which we could not find in our fallen nature or in our deeply corrupt and unbelieving heart. When, then, we obtain by living faith a view of the Son of God as a Mediator between God and men, when we see by the eye of faith the blood of the cross, and the full and complete atonement which he, as the Lamb of God, made for sin, then we heartily embrace him as "of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (x Cor. i. 30). We see and feel that there is salvation in him and in no other (Acts iv. 12); and as this salvation is seen to be worthy of God and suitable to us, as it answers all the demands of God's holy law, and glorifies it by rendering it an obedience as far excelling ours as heaven excels earth, and God surpasses man, we embrace it as our justifying righteousness and covering robe, from the eyes of him who, out of Christ, is a consuming fire (Heb. xii 29).

Elder J.C. Philpot

Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.—PROVERBS

xxxi. 6.



HE wise mother of king Lemuel gave her son gracious directions when she spake these words. It is when we begin to feel the misery into which we have been cast by sin, and thus become ready to perish, and of heavy hearts, that the pure wine of gospel grace is suitable to our lost condition. As the holiness and justice of God are discovered to the conscience, and we are made to see and feel the depths of the Adam


CONTRIBUTIONS

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Mr. & Mrs. James W. Huber, MD	2.00
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G.T. Newman, TN	2.00
Mrs. Dannie Strickland, AL	10.00

OBITUARIES

FRANK WATERS PILGREEN

 In November 19, 1914, Brother Frank Pilgreen was born in Marion, Louisiana, where he resided for most of his life. After an extended illness, he passed on to that better world above on July 8, 1998, at the age of eighty-three years, seven months, and nineteen days.

Brother Pilgreen was added to the membership of Union Primitive Baptist Church in May, 1966. He was ordained as deacon of Union Church on August 31, 1969, with Elder David E. Turner moderating, Elder Eulie E. McCool wording the prayer, Elder R. W. Rhodes delivering the charge, and with many other Elders and Deacons participating.

Brother Pilgreen was loved and respected by all who knew him. He was known afar among the brethren for his depth of wisdom, his knowledge of the scriptures, and his unswerving loyalty to the principles of the doctrine of Christ. He loved the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things, saying that the harder the doctrine was preached, the better he liked it. His favorite scripture was Jeremiah 1.5: *"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."*

His counsel was often sought after by his church brethren far and near,

and they were never disappointed in his guidance.

He was well known for the humility he manifested before his God and his brethren. It was said of him that there was only one person who ever had anything bad to say about him, and that person was Brother Frank Pilgreen himself. He often freely confessed his unworthiness and dependency upon the grace and mercy of God, as provided by the Lord Jesus Christ, for needy sinners as he felt himself to be.

He loved and was loved by every member of his family. It is perhaps one of the greatest proofs of a man's good character and lovely reputation when those who know him best love him the most and mourn his passing most keenly. His love, goodness, and quiet sense of humor are perpetuated in and by those who survive him.

Brother Pilgreen is survived by his wife of fifty-nine years and seven months, Wreather Pilgreen; two daughters, Lizzie Belle Price of Broussard, Louisiana, and Louise Towns of Shreveport, Louisiana; one sister, Christine Beasley of Monroe, Louisiana; six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

On July 10, 1998, Brother Pilgreen's funeral service was conducted by Elders C.C. Wilbanks and C.C. Morris at Kilpatrick Funeral Home in Farmerville, Louisiana. His mortal remains were laid to rest in Union Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, just a few steps from Union's meeting-house, there to await the resurrection at the return of his Lord.

In loving memory submitted,
Elder C.C. Morris

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

***THOU great incarnate God !
Behold thy children stand;
Warmed with the fire of love divine,
They bow to thy command.***

***When buried with the Lord,
May they his presence find,
Proving that pleasures from thy
throne
Are with obedience joined.***

***When rising from the wave,
Lord, show thy lovely face;
May sacred joy from heaven de-
scend,
And glory fill the place.***

***Then may these happy saints
In thy commandments run,
Till they shall reach the realms of
bliss,
And mount Emmanuel's throne.***

***There may they sit and sing
The once baptized Lamb,
And make the courts of heaven
resound
With his beloved name.***

***With what ecstatic joy
They'll tune the Saviour's praise!
While millions join the sacred
theme,
And swell the heavenly lays.***

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EDITORIAL

HEAR YE HIM



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

Jesus took three of his disciples up into a high mountain and was transfigured before them, and there appeared unto them

Moses and Elias. Not knowing what he was saying, Peter desired to build three tabernacles; one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. But, *"While he yet spake, behold a bright cloud overshadowed them: and, behold, a voice out of the cloud,*

which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

Hear ye him. Many people would have us believe this to be an invitation, that God is pleading for us to open our hearts and let Jesus come in and save us: just open your ears and hear and answer his call and everything will be great for your soul. I have no stones to throw at those people, for I was one among them in time past, and many of them are still my friends; but their doctrine is a false doctrine, and there is not a speck of truth in it. If God must plead with puny man in this way, and we have the power to accept or reject his call, then we have no need whatsoever for a Saviour; for we have the power within ourselves to save ourselves; for if we have the power to reject his calling and salvation then we also have the power to keep him from casting us into everlasting condemnation and hell. But, *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."* If his people are not now willing, and if this is not the day of his power, please advise us as to when this will be. We will note the scripture says, "Thy people." These are the ones to whom and for whom the scriptures are written, and not to the world at large. These are the children chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Jesus prayed, *"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I*

have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scriptures might be fulfilled." When Jesus shed his precious blood on the cross of Calvary for the sins of his fallen people, the debt was fully paid, God's justice was satisfied and their salvation was secured forever. ***"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."***

Hear ye him. Before the coming of Christ, the Jewish people had only the law and the prophets. Moses represented the law, for by him it was given to the people; and Elias represented the holy prophets of God. The Jews were unable to keep God's holy laws: but under the law they were required to make sacrificial offerings for sins yearly; which made none of them perfect; for if the blood of sheep, bulls, goats, doves, etc. could have accomplished this there would have been no need for Jesus to have suffered. Those sacrifices were only emblems or types of the perfect sacrifice that was to come. The law could make nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better covenant did; Jesus Christ being that better covenant. He kept the law, and fulfilled it to a jot and a tittle, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. By this he broke down the wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles: for until that time the Gentiles were without hope, and without God in the world. Not only did he fulfill the law, but all the prophecies of old that were written in the holy scriptures by God's holy prophets and in

the Psalms. Now that Jesus was come, there was not further need of handwritten ordinances nor the prophets, therefore they were taken away. They did not just die and fade away. Remember that Moses, being the embodiment of the law, was buried of God that he was found no more; and Elias, representing the holy prophets, was taken away in a chariot of fire in a whirlwind. These were taken away of God for they were no longer in force or needed. Christ is the end of the law for every one that believeth, and he is our Prophet, Priest and King. It is he that we must now hear. ***"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son."***

Hear ye him. He who hath an ear to hear let him hear. All men have natural ears, though some be naturally deaf. When Jesus was on earth he made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the poor had the gospel preached unto them. And even now is Christ performing these same miracles for his bride, his church, in a spiritual manner. Yet for those who are blind but say, "We see," their sins remaineth; the deaf hear not, for they are not his sheep; the lame walk not in the way of righteousness, for they hear not the voice behind them saying, "This is the way. Walk ye in it;" and they do not hear the gospel, for they are not poor in spirit, but rich in self-righteousness, and the gospel is foolishness unto them. Some of the Pharisees said unto Jesus, ***"Are we also blind?"*** ***Jesus said unto them, If ye were***

blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sins remaineth." (Jn.9:40-41). Certain of the Jews said unto Jesus, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, *"I told you, and you believed not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."* (Jn.10:24-28). *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way which leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth to life, and few there be that find it."* (Matt.7:13-14). Left to themselves, all men would enter at the wide gate and walk the broad road to destruction: but God's children are blessed to hear that voice behind them saying, *"This is the way. Walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."* (Isa.30:21). There are also those poor deluded souls who believe their works will get them, as well as others who are enticed to follow them, to heaven. These are the ones who are rich in self-righteousness, and are not poor in spirit nor broken-hearted. *"They profess to know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."* (Titus 1:16). *"Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not*

prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? in thy name done many wonderful works?" But how did Jesus answer their boasts of self-righteousness? *"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity."* (Matt.7:22-23).

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. How then does one hear the beloved Son, for all we are natural men of flesh and blood, descendants of our progenitor Adam, who fell into a state of condemnation and death by his transgression of God's holy law, and all of his posterity fell with him? Therefore all of us were at some time dead in trespasses and sin and were the children of wrath even as others. Since natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, there must be a new birth, a spiritual birth: *"Ye must be born again."* Every child of God has an everlasting life: this life being in Christ, but it is not made manifest until a man is born again. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* (Jn.5:24). Everyone with a sound, natural mind understands that we must pass from life to death in this world, but there are few who understand the passing from death unto life; for they do not know they are spiritually dead. Jesus is the

Way, the Truth and the Life, and he gives life to as many as the Father hath given him. Though they be dead when their Lord speaks to them, they hear and live. ***"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."*** (Jn.5:24). The dead cannot go forth seeking Christ, neither can they reject a sovereign call; ***"for in him we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."*** ***"Without me (Christ) ye can do nothing."*** But, ***"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."*** (Phil.4:13.)

Hear ye him. Jesus spake many parables to the people, but only unto his disciples did he expound them. His disciples asked him why, and he answered, ***"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given."*** We find here a division of the people: to his disciples an understanding was given, but unto all others it is not given. ***"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."*** We cannot understand these parables, other than the ones expounded in the scriptures, until they are revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit. Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear: if you are the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. You

will always hear him, though you may feel much of the time that you do not: ***"For in a dream, in a vision of the night, when sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."*** (Job 33:15-17). Though a man may believe that he is working all things according to his own purpose, he is in truth fulfilling God's will and purpose; for God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Did he not say, ***"I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it?"*** If we be the chosen children of God we will keep his commandments, ***"for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*** Truly, if we love him and keep his commandments we are born of God: ***"for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."*** And Jesus promised, ***"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."*** (Jn.14:23). Jesus also said, ***"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my***

Father`s hand. I and my Father are one. Oh, how comforting it is to feel his glorious presence from time to time, even if it is only for a few moments.

Submitted in love to all who have heard the voice of the blessed Son of God.

Eld. C. C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

Rejoice evermore, I Th. 5:16 Part II
(continued from Part I, Signs Nov. 1998)

In the beginning of time all the sons of God shouted for joy when the morning stars sang together, Job 38:7, Prov. 8:22-30. I believe the sons of God are the children of light and the morning stars are the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Rev. 22:16. In the eternal day hereafter the Redeemed will have life about the throne of God and they will sing the songs of Moses and the Lamb and rejoice evermore, Rev. 15:3. While the children of light dwell in the flesh of the mortal body there is a journey required for their sanctification and perfection during which they shall also rejoice from time-to-time. If God permits and helps let us now consider the earthly journey.

Jesus, the light of the world, is the Great Shepherd of promise, Ez. 34:23; Is. 40:11; John 10:11. The children of light are his sheepfold. Being conceived in iniquity they are initially children of wrath traveling upon the broad

way even as others. They are called out of nature's darkness in conviction under the laws of Moses, Ex. ch. 20, and are delivered to escape from the broad way that leads to the wide gate and destruction, Matt. 7:13-14. The saints (children of light) are taught and are led by the Holy Spirit to find the narrow way that leads to the strait gate, that leads to Jesus, to his imputed righteousness, to his redeeming blood, and to his resurrection which is the reason for their hope of eternal life at the throne of God, I Pet. 3:15; I Cor. 15:12-24. Born again of the Spirit, lambs of the sheepfold confess Jesus publicly with the mouth before men, Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9. The Holy Spirit teaches them to follow their Great Shepherd and leads them to find the old paths of the narrow way.

The narrow way is for walking. The saints do not ride in chariots of ease as those do who travel the broad way to destruction. The narrow way is unique for each child of the sheepfold of Christ. It passes through conflicts, through trials and tribulations, through fiery afflictions and chastisements that try faith, I Pet. 1:5-9; James 1:2-4. It is a way that perfects the soul "*as silver is refined and as gold is tried,*" Zech. 13:9, (See also Ps. 18:32; Rom. 12:2; I Th. 3:10-13; Heb. 13:20-21; Pet. 5:6-10; etc.) "*Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be re-*

vealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy," I Pet. 4:12-16. The promise of the Lord given to Jacob, Gen. 28:15, is likewise a promise to every sheep of the fold; namely, **"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5.**

But I read that the sheep "shall go in and out, and find pasture," John 10:1-9. Dear reader, do the sheep go in and out of the fold as they walk the narrow way for trials of their faith? Though the Lord, Jesus, is never far away there are times and seasons for the trial of your faith and for your perfection. These, I believe, are the times when Jesus hides his face, Isa. 8:17 and 54:8, and does not manifest his presence. Children of the sheepfold are thus given up **"unto their own heart's lust"** and **"they walk in their own counsels,"** when they are out of the sheepfold in search of pasture Ps. 81:10-16 (v. 12) and Rom. 1:24. (Are your own counsels, and mine, acceptable before God?)

I am thankful that God, the creator of the earth and the fullness thereof, has provided a variety of pastures along the journey of life of each of his children of the sheepfold. Though they walk through dry places, there are "good" pastures, "fat" pastures, and "green" pastures. Let us rejoice and praise the Lord God with thanksgiving for his pastures. In Ezekiel, chapter 34, the promise is that the Lord God will search his sheep, and seek them out and bring them out of all the places where they have been scattered to a land of their own where he, God, will feed them in a "good" pas-

ture shall they feed, verses 11-16. I believe the lambs are called to a good pasture where they are made to "lie down" and cry **"have mercy on me, a sinner."** I believe further that as the lambs journey onward in the narrow way - they are brought to the "green" pasture beside the still water where they are made to go down in the watery grave of baptism, following in good conscience the example of Jesus, the one and only Great Shepherd, verse 23. It is an occasion for great rejoicing. Further onward they are brought to "fat" pastures of the militant church where two or three or more are gathered in Jesus' name hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, which has opened their eyes to see and ears to hear, they shall be filled, Matt. 5:6, for they feast on spiritual food and drink of the gospel which renews faith, heals the sick, and binds up that which was broken with renewed strength. It is a joyous occasion when sheep of the flock, having a mind like unto the mind of Christ, witness together and edify one another in bonds of love and sweet fellowship. How sweet it is. Praise the Lord alone and give thanks to him for every blessing.

But in his infinite wisdom and purpose God also has pastures in a worldly wilderness out of the narrow way that are overgrown with thickets of briars and thorns. It is here that the great deceiver, that lying devil, Satan, goes **"to and fro in the earth,"** Job 1:7. The sons of God, who have, in

their own will and counsel, gone out of the sheepfold in search of pasture encounter Satan who speaks with enticing words to provoke warfare - the lust of the flesh against the Spirit, Gal. 5:16-25. Their faith in Jesus and the promises of God are tried, James 1:12-17. If it be possible Satan will deceive the very elect with divers temptations. It is to be noted from James, ch. 1, v.i.-2, that he advised the brethren to ***"Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience,"*** and in v. 12, ***"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."*** Paul declares, 2 Cor.7:4 ***"—I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations"*** and in Rom. 5:3-5 ***"—we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed."*** It is the anchor of the soul by which the saints persevere, Heb. 6:19. Thus, I believe that tribulations that try faith arise from the lust of the flesh and the temptations of Satan. We may lament and complain of our material disappointments, but oh, how much more painful are tribulations that impact the soul! Oh, may God deliver us from temptations and sin. We shall glory and rejoice in him and his grace!

Faith which is a gift of God is received in daily heavenly bread. As

faith weakens under tribulations the lambs of the sheepfold who fail to persevere may forget the Lord. When Jesus has hidden his face, Hos. 13:8, they wander into pastures of temptation. Satan is there ever ready to guide sheep upon mountains of self-righteous pride, into horrible pits of despair, and into the wilderness of sin. Now, ***"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," I John 1:8.*** In our outer man we sin when outside the sheepfold when we fail to persevere and overcome. We are tempted to venture into the thickets of sin where we receive thorns to carry in our flesh - to carry in our soul and conscience. But the Lord has set boundries for the habitation of his children. He will not cast off his children forever, Ps. 94:14; Lam. 3:31; Rom. 11:1-2. Though his children transgress the Lord's perfect laws, the compassionate Lord does chastise his sons, Heb. 12:5-11, to renew their inward man day-by-day, 2 Cor. 4:16. He says, ***"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them," Hos. 14:4.*** Chastisement yields a broken heart, meekness, and a contrite spirit. The penitent child, having nothing of merit to plead, looks to the Lord for help crying in its troubles and begs in prayer for mercy and forgiveness.

Eugene F. Osborne
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VOICES OF THE PAST

CHAPTER III

EXERCISES ABOUT PREACHING



In the 14th of August I heard a man preach in the Presbyterian Church where my membership had been. The congregation was large. I wanted to get up and tell the people not to believe what he said, that if they knew the truth concerning that text it would comfort them. I thought if they felt as I had felt before my hope came he was distressing them greatly. I could hardly keep my seat. I went home with my head down. As I entered my room I spoke aloud, as though another had spoken in me, "I must preach." Then I was startled. I wanted to go to the ends of the earth to tell everybody that salvation was by grace, and that what that man preached was not true. But the word "preach" was too great a word for me.

Soon after that I wrote to Elder Beebe, telling him of that wonderful experience, and asking what it meant. In his reply he said the brethren had thought I had a work to do in the church, and were waiting till the Lord should let me know it, and that they had appointed a certain night, September 4th, for me to exercise my gift. Then I was afraid. It did not seem possible that I could preach; and I could not yet think it possible for me to leave my business. This caused me great anxiety and some distress of mind. I find in my diary of August 14th,

the evening when I had first had the thought that I must preach, this sentence: "I am certain I must engage in another work than the law."

A few days after this, a large coal operator came to my office and asked me to take charge of the legal work connected with his business. I looked it over, and took time to think of it. All that day I worked hard and enjoyed the work. Much business was brought to me, and during the day I hardly thought of anything but the work. During the past winter I had done but little, having been much with my two brothers, one in Washington and one at my father's home, both very sick. Since my baptism I had not cared much for legal work, only to do my duty. And this was really the first day in many weeks that I had been devotedly engaged in work. All other things were put out of my mind, and the thought of preaching was gone, so far as I can remember. I had during all of my practice been preparing for the line of work which appeared now to be coming to me in such measure as to animate me much. I must, however, have remembered my thoughts about preaching, for I told the coal operator that possibly I might not stay there, and if I arranged to go away I would turn the business over to a friend, H. W. Palmer. He said that man would be his next choice.

That night I went into my room with very peculiar feelings. I had spent evening after evening there with the Bible, the hymn book and the "Signs,"

in unspeakable comfort. Now, as I entered the room, I realized that something was lacking. I looked around and the room seemed empty. I took the Bible, but there was nothing for me. I was not at rest. I sat down but instantly rose again. Unrest! It was terrible, distressing. It seemed almost as though I were going to die. All at once I thought of the day just closed, and the work I had done, and the enjoyment of it. Then I said to myself; "On Sunday night you felt that you must go to the ends of the earth and tell the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and what have you been doing today?" Then I said, whether aloud or only in thought I cannot tell; "If I were sure of making fifty thousand dollars by the end of this year I could not and I would not stay." Oh, what a sweet peace and rest and a feeling of holy solemnity came into my soul. From that day to this, nearly forty-four years, there has been no going back in my mind from that decision. I have still had times when it seemed impossible for me to preach; one so unworthy, so poor in spirit, so ignorant. Qualification has seemed utterly lacking, but the thought of business and money has never since been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly given to me given to me by the dear Saviour: "***Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.***" From that day to this my needs have been all supplied, and I am sure they will be to the end, but not all my wants.

One night about this time these words were in my mind all night:

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." All night the meaning of them kept unfolding in my soul, and the inexpressible sweetness of them was tested in my spirit. Whether I slept I do not know. I did not need to sleep. I had a more satisfying rest than sleep could give. Not long after this I was at a conference meeting at Vaughan Hill, perhaps Sunday, August 28th. On that day my next older brother James was baptized by Elder Schoonover. My next younger brother Warren had been baptized in July, when I was not present. Both had been extremely ill during the past year, and both had received a hope, each in a most wonderful manner. At the conference referred to I spoke concerning the words of the dear Saviour which had been so blessed to me during one whole night. After this they seemed to pass away from my mind in a manner, though not by any means forgotten.

Now I began to think with trembling to try to prepare myself for the trial of my gift at Middletown at the meeting appointed for the evening of Sunday, September 4th. I thought if I could preach at all I could preach from those words: "***Come unto me, etc.***" So I carefully laid them up in my mind for that occasion, occasionally thinking them over, and arranging my thoughts concerning them. The Sunday came and I was present at the Wallkill Meeting House in the morning. It rained and few were out. Elder Beebe said I must preach. I was in consternation. I had but one text and that was for the

meeting in Middletown at night. Elder Beebe and all the rest insisted that I must go forward. Just then I remembered the peculiar language of Isa. 29:11, 12 and 18 about the book which the learned could not read because it was sealed, and the one that was not learned because he was not learned, but the deaf shall hear the words of the book, etc. I spoke a little about that, and one of the deacons, an old man, said he was edified by what I said. I looked at him sadly for I thought he had said what was not true in order to encourage and comfort me. I knew it could not be that what I had said could have been of any benefit. But perhaps at night I might preach. Elder Beebe was called from the morning meeting to attend a funeral and told me I must preach at the afternoon meeting in Middletown. I urged and begged to be let off from that; said I could not do it. The thought of trying to preach in the afternoon was frightful, and especially as I had only the one text, and that I must use at night. When I found it was inevitable, I looked around in my mind and finally thought of the text used by the Presbyterian preacher the night I felt such a strong desire to contradict him, and when afterward I, for the first time, thought I must preach: "*As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" But to use that I must speak upon the subject of the resurrection, and I knew that one prominent person would be present who had told me she did not believe in the resurrection of the body in the same way that some of us did and I feared I would offend her.

My mind was in a tumult. However, the time came and I tried to tell what I thought of the text, and declared the resurrection of the body. Though I will say here that I did not then, and do not now, believe that the body, which is sown a natural body, is raised a natural body and then changed into a spiritual body; but "*it is raised a spiritual body.*" Well, I got through the afternoon, and was spoken to very kindly by the one referred to, as well as by the rest of the friends. I did not, however, in my own mind, call it preaching. But if I could preach at all (which I began to doubt very much) I thought I could do it at night. My text I had kept laid away, and neither in the morning nor afternoon had I interfered with it.

At night there came together a large congregation, and I took my text. But what work I made. I talked, it is true, for near forty minutes, but I felt as though I had my hands full of dead, dry leaves, rattling them. There was no life or light or feeling, except a feeling of self-abasement, helplessness and distress. One followed me, the one I have already referred to, who afterward left us, and said some surface things in a smooth, cold manner, with no help or interest to me. I had tried to get down into the depth and sweetness of the text. "*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,*" and I could not. I felt that I had absolutely said nothing, and worse than nothing. The church gave me license to preach, but I am convinced they could not have seen any gift in what I said that night. If it had not been for the morning and

afternoon meetings, and what they had heard before, they could not have thought I had a gift.

The night was a distressing one to me. I tossed sleeplessly till morning, writing bitter things against myself, feeling sure that I had made the church mourn on my account; that I had no gift, and that I ought never to have allowed them to have an appointment for me. How my soul cried unto the Lord for mercy, that he would direct me and uphold me in the right way. Toward morning I became somewhat quiet, and promised myself that if the Lord ever had anything for me to say I would try to say it if he would give me ability, but that I would never lay up a text again, nor try to arrange beforehand what I should say. I had been humiliated greatly and my pride had been broken down, and now I did feel humble. But I have not kept my promise. Many a time I have tried to arrange a sermon for a future occasion, and have as often been shut up, and three or four times during the first year I had to stop and sit down.

The next week I went in company with several brethren to the Lexington Association, and enjoyed the meetings and the preaching very much. I was called upon to speak, and felt very much at liberty in my soul. It seemed to me then that preaching the gospel was an easy and most delightful work, but I soon found that it was so only when the Lord filled my soul with the comfort of his love and gave me to feel at the time the power of his word. But when left to myself to de-

pend upon the power of my own mind, preaching is the hardest work I ever did.

When my sister Bessie received a hope ten years before I was brought into the church, she received in her own mind an assurance that I would have to preach. When I wrote her that I had united with the Presbyterian Church, she was so deeply affected that for a time she almost lost her power to breathe. Soon, however, the remembrance of the power with which that assurance had come to her that I must preach quieted her, and she rested. I knew nothing of this until the church had liberated me to preach.

I still have times of soul searching, and of crying unto God as a little child, that he will lead me and guide me in the path of duty, and uphold me by His spirit, and I must acknowledge with humble gratitude and thanksgiving that the dear Lord has not been unmindful of my petitions. And I would love, if enabled by his grace, to recount some of his blessings, and tell of his goodness to me. I can say with the Apostle, *"Having obtained help of the Lord, I continue unto this present, trying to preach as with the ability that God giveth, the unsearchable riches of Christ."*

The terrible afflictions of soul I cannot describe. I cannot tell of the sorrows on account of sin in thought and word and deed, of the going down into the depths, when deep has called unto deep in my soul, when I have felt that *"the bars of the earth were about*

me forever." But so far the Lord has showed me his delivering power and grace, and out of every one of these deep and heavy afflictions the Lord has brought me into some deeper and more glorious understanding of his goodness.

Elder Silas H. Durand

MARK X. 14; LUKE XVIII. 16

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

We are unable to discover anything in this passage inharmonious with the views expressed in the twenty-third number of our last volume, on the subject of the salvation of infants.

To our mind this text, when properly understood, will confirm the sentiments therein expressed. The occasion on which these words were spoken by our Lord, was not one in which he was setting forth the way of salvation. The people which gathered around our Lord, were bringing their little children or infants to Christ, not to have them baptized nor rantized,—but we are informed in the context that the object of those who brought their children to him was that he would touch them. Who they were who brought their children, or what benefit they hoped to secure for their little ones, from his touching them, we are not informed; but we presume that, like the diseased woman who sought to touch the hem of his garment that

she might be healed of her infirmity, they believed that a virtue would be communicated by the touch which would secure to them some blessing either temporal or spiritual. But the disciples rebuked them. From this circumstance it would seem that those who brought their children were not disciples, but whether they were or not, they were rebuked by the disciples, who seemed to regard it as an annoyance, and rebuked them. Mark says, "When Jesus saw it," (that is, when he saw the conduct of the disciples,) "*he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me.*" It was somewhat presuming in the disciples, in the presence of the Master, without any authority from him, to rebuke those who brought their children to him.

This may serve as an admonition to us all as disciples of the Redeemer, to avoid the assumption of authority which he has not vested in us. It becomes us as his disciples to always remember that it is his to command, and ours to obey. In the text we have two express and positive commands laid down for the government of the disciples of Christ, for unto them as such the text is addressed. Both of these commands enjoin the duty on the disciples to be passive, in regard to children's coming to Christ; and the reason why they should be passive is given also, namely: "*For of such is the kingdom of God.*" It would be exceedingly difficult to infer from these words a duty to interfere in the matter of bringing or preventing

them from coming, much less to infer an obligation to baptize or rantize them. Christ has informed us that no man can come unto him except the Father, which sent him, draw them; and all such as are drawn to him by the Father, he will raise up at the last day. Hence it is a matter over which his disciples have no power or control. They can neither facilitate nor hinder any from coming to Christ, either infants or adults, who are drawn to him by the Father, for the same power is displayed in drawing them to him that was displayed in sending the Savior into the world. As none but God the Father had the power and the right to send his Son into the world to save sinners, so none but God has the power or right to draw sinners, old or young, unto him. And as they have no power to draw them, they are equally destitute of power to oppose their coming to him, when drawn or brought to him. It is indeed a matter in which they are not allowed to interfere. There can be no danger that any of God's chosen people should fail to come to Christ, for he has positively assured us, that **"All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."** The work of salvation is so ordered and established in the counsel and decree of God, that neither men nor angels shall share with God in the work, nor divide with him the glory resulting from it. He will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one of them

that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory; I have formed him, yea, I have made him.

The reason assigned by our Lord for commanding them to be passive is, when duly understood, a very weighty one. **"For of such is the kingdom of God."** If he had said to them, For of such shall be the kingdom of God, they might have inferred that the kingdom of God was not yet established, that the subjects of it were not yet known, and that there was some blank in regard to its establishment, yet to be filled up. But the kingdom of God was prepared from the foundation of the world. God's King is set upon his holy hill of Zion. His throne is forever and ever. It is from everlasting to everlasting. All his subjects were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. **"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."** And as he only, knoweth them that are his, or them that are of this spiritual kingdom, none others are qualified to decide who shall or who shall not come to the Redeemer. The disciples can only know who they are as he makes them manifest. They could not therefore be competent to supervise the matter by forbidding any, whether old or young, to come unto him. But as the words of our Lord are full of wisdom and instruction, we may learn that besides impressing the disciples with a sense of their incompetency to judge and decide who may or may not come to Christ, or who are

and who are not of the kingdom of God, we learn two other important truths:

First, that there are some such children in the kingdom of God, as those whom he had taken in his arms, laid his hands upon, and blessed. **"For of such is the kingdom of God."** Those whom he has blessed are blessed for evermore; and, on this occasion at least, he blessed some who were literally little children. As in the article in the twenty-third number of the last volume, we proved by the testimony of the Scriptures, that all the human family, young and old, are by nature children of wrath; that all have sinned, and are therefore mortal; that if they were not sinners they could not die, neither could they be saved by the mediation of Christ, if they were not sinners, for he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. His name is called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins; it is therefore fully demonstrated that infants, in order to be saved, must be redeemed by Christ, and born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever. And we now reiterate the declaration we before made, and which cannot be successfully contradicted, that the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists is the only doctrine preached among men that can possibly embrace the salvation of infants, or of any others.

Second, **"Of such is the kingdom of God."** All who belong to the kingdom of God, are brought experimen-

tally into it by being born again, in which birth they are converted and become as little children. **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."** And in connection with our text Christ said, **"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."**—*Mark x. 15.* **"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."**—*John xiii. 17.*

Let us seriously consider this important asseveration of our Lord Jesus Christ. What awful considerations hang upon these words. No man can enter the kingdom of God in any other way than as a little child. Then, instead of infants being debarred from salvation because they are infants, and unable to do anything to procure salvation, all adults, in order to be saved, must become as little children. What is there then peculiar to little children, which is so very important to qualify us for a reception of the kingdom, that none without it can in any wise enter without it? Is it free will, free agency, or human ability to comply with terms, conditions and overtures? We think there are none who will take that position. Little children are helpless, artless, dependent, without wisdom or ability to help themselves, and therefore entirely dependent on protectors for support and safety; let it be remembered that all who are born of God, taught by his Spirit, and brought by grace into the experimental enjoyment of the king-

dom of God, must be reduced to a sense of their entire inability and helplessness, with no more power or wisdom of their own to rely upon, than the little child has for its own protection or support. As we are all by nature under the infatuation that we have sufficient power to determine our own destiny, we must be converted from that delusion; be slain to all our confidence in the flesh, and taught of God to know that we are poor, guilty, condemned sinners, totally destitute of ability to will or to do anything towards our own deliverance. They are made to feel, to know, and to confess that if they are not saved by a strong, sovereign and almighty power, they are lost forever. When born of God, that meek, quiet, confiding, childlike spirit, which is peculiar to all the saints of God, is implanted in them, and under its benign influence they seek for a lowly place in the kingdom of God. They do not feel to enter the place of broad rivers and streams as a galley with oars, propelling themselves along by works, nor as the gallant ship in full trim, with canvas all spread out to the breeze; but stripped completely of its canvas, spars and rigging, of all its oars and self-propelling instruments, as the little, passive, helpless, dependent child enters into natural life, so enters the heaven-born child of God into the kingdom which is, and was, prepared for him from the foundation of the world. Now we ask, Is not this method of salvation alone by grace, perfectly adapted to all the redeemed family of God, whether infants or adults? The

tall, the wise, the noble and the mighty men of this world, are quite as helpless and dependent for their salvation as the infant, the heathen, or the idiot. What other doctrine except that held by the old fashioned Baptists, and advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, presents any hope for the helpless, the lost and the ruined of mankind? This childlike condition not only qualifies Zion's converts to enter, but also to dwell in the kingdom. *"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."*

When the disciples of our Lord were at one time inflated with vain ambition, and inquired which of them was to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, our Lord set a little child in their midst, *"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."*—Matt. xviii. 34.

Middletown, N.Y., January 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

I CORINTHIANS III. 16. 17.

"KNOW ye not that ye are of the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple is holy, which temple ye are."



A poor sinner seeking for the truth has asked us to write on this Scripture and we should love to be able to do this in such a way as to satisfy the longing soul, but the Lord himself is the only source of all wisdom and knowledge, and it shall never be said that any man has been able to teach his brother to know the Lord. This present inquirer has told us that in reading the Bible everything seems to condemn her, and even those passages which seem to hold forth some precious promise carry with them a qualification which seems to cut her off. If we have experimentally known anything of the truth ourselves, we have fellowship for her condition of mind. There was a time with us some years ago when to read the Bible meant for us to see our own condemnation in every line of it. It is a sore experience, and cuts the poor sinner down to the ground, but like all the things in the lives of the children of God, it is altogether needful in order that we thereby learn the way of salvation more perfectly, and realize that no flesh can glory in the presence of the Lord. It is said in the Psalms that blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Have you ever

thought what it means to walk in the light of his countenance? The light reveals, or discloses, and among the things which light shows are the nakedness of self and the hidden evils of the human heart. We want to say, therefore, to our inquirer that the very exercise of mind she is now undergoing is proof that she is walking in the light of her blessed Lord's face. How otherwise could she be filled so with mourning over her weakness and sinfulness? How otherwise could she have so tender a conscience that the slightest vanity or selfishness pains it so keenly? "*The tender herb*" mentioned in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy is undoubtedly this tender conscience made tender by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of truth shall come upon this tender herb as the small rain. Thus shall the tender conscience grow up into knowledge of the way; that is, by being fed with the doctrine. Therefore we shall now turn to the text, hoping to bring forth by the Lord some instruction in righteousness to this very tender conscience. It is true from the teaching of the Scriptures that the church as a body is one and indivisible and that, as a unit, it is the temple of God. The Almighty dwells not in temples made with hands, but in his church composed of lively stones, builded up through the Spirit for the habitation of his honor and glory. However, in the text at the head of this article it is not the church as a body which Paul is considering, but each individual member of the church. Each member is himself or herself the

temple of God, and lives and has his being in each believer. This cannot be otherwise than true, because each believer is born of God, else he could not be a believer, for belief comes by the operation within of the same power which raised Christ from the dead. It will be noticed in the text that it says "ye," and not "you," are the temple of God, and again in the seventeenth verse it says "ye" instead of "you." "Ye" is the singular number and "you" the plural number in the ancient form of the second person. The fact, therefore, that Paul uses the singular form proves to our mind that while it is true that the whole church as a body is the temple of God, the writer in this instance is maintaining that each single individual member of that church is a temple of the Lord. Truly the tabernacle of God is with men in this very day, and all who are subjects of the new or heavenly birth are partakers of the divine nature, and so have the very God of heaven dwelling within them. No wonder the Savior said to his followers that the kingdom of heaven was within them. In each true believer is the King ruling by his love and the power of his grace. Since it cannot be otherwise than true according to the Scriptures that the power of the Lord dwells in our mortal bodies, then it must follow that the mortal body itself is the temple of the living God, and that whenever the believer takes his mortal body and commits uncleanness with it, he is thereby defiling the temple of the Lord. This brings us to the matter in the seventeenth verse, that whoever defiles the temple of the Lord, him shall God de-

stroy. This, too, is the part which worries our inquirer after truth. In this passage she reads her own condemnation, for she has a fear that she has defiled the temple, and is thereby headed for destruction. Dear child of God, you who fear the Lord so solemnly and so reverently, this does not mean you. The very fact that you are dwelling with fear and trembling is your preventative against defiling the temple; that is, your mortal body. Godly fear is the hatred of evil, and so long as this hatred of evil dwells actively within us, there can be no defiling of the temple. Defiling the temple results from a heart grown cold toward God, and from a conscience seared as with a hot iron so that it cannot feel the pain of sinfulness. When a believer uses his mortal body to satisfy the lusts of the flesh in committing fornication, or other baseness, he defiles the temple of God. In this same first Corinthians, sixth chapter, Paul establishes this as follows: "*Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid! What! know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 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." Both the body and the spirit of the believer are God's by right of redemption, and it is proper that God should be glorified both in the spirit and in the body of the believer. Therefore, to use the mortal body to commit fornication with it would be to join that which is a member of Christ's body to the body of a harlot, which would be to defile the temple of the Lord. "*Him shall God destroy.*" Such a one would be unfit for the company of the saints, and could not be admitted into the fellowship of the kingdom of heaven here on earth, nor if he were already in the kingdom could be retained there, but would have to be excluded from the fellowship of the church here in the world. Not that the believer would be destroyed eternally from the presence of the Lord but he would be destroyed so far as the kingdom here on earth is concerned. "*Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*" By the "*kingdom of God*" here is not meant the eternal world of glory, but the visible organization of the church here in the world. Such believers as take their bodies to commit any of the above offenses do thereby defile their mortal bodies, which are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and such shall be destroyed from the love

and fellowship of the church here on earth. Our inquirer, who has asked us to write on this, and whose conscience is so tender that the least vain thought and foolish imagination pains it, is not of those who defile the temple of the Lord, rather she is possessing her body in patience and without blame unto the coming of the Lord; but how subtly the tempter takes these very blessed things and twists them so as to torment God's little children, and so tries to wrest them from their faith. Thanks be to God, the adversary shall not succeed, but when the Lord shall appear to relieve the anxieties of our inquirer, Satan shall hold his peace and slink away defeated into everlasting destruction.

We hope what we have here written is unto the glory of God and to the comfort of his little ones.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

1 CORINTHIANS 13:11-13.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

PSALMS XII. I; ISAIAH LVIII. I.

SISTER Mary A. Haines, of Kenilworth, N. J., has called our attention to two expressions, one found in Psalms xii. 1, and the other in Isaiah lviii. 1. The first reads, "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth," and the other, "Cry aloud, spare not." Our sister does not say in her letter why these two Scriptures are at the same time in her mind.

In reply we will say, first, that there is no contradiction between the first, which is a prayer of the writer of the Psalm, and the second, which is a command from God to his servants. Both relate to a state of alienation from God, which to the psalmist caused grief and distress and fear, and to God gave offense and displeasure. It is good when that which is offensive to God is also offensive to ourselves; in this appears our union and fellowship with God. There are blessings pronounced in the word upon those to whom the reproach of Zion is a burden, and the reproach of Zion, or that which causes her to be a reproach, is always her transgression.

In this twelfth Psalm the writer deplores the vanity of the people, their deceitfulness, the pride which was apparent in their mouths, their disregard for the commandments of the Lord, speaking loftily against his authority, their oppression of the poor and the needy and the increase of the numbers of wicked men because the vilest of men are exalted. All this evil appeared in Israel, the chosen people of God. All such vile things might be

expected among the nations that knew not God, but how vile, passing all conception, must they be who, having God's laws and his prophets and teachers among them, and claiming to the Lord's own heritage, could yet indulge in all the ungodly practices named in the Psalm and quoted above.

The writer of the Psalm sees all these things with grief, he deplores them with all his heart, he abhors them and laments his association with such ungodly men, and in his distress he is driven to prayer. We may not doubt that he had warned and reproved and rebuked faithfully those who were guilty of all these things, but, so far as he could see, to no avail. After all his faithful warning and rebuking of them they still went on in their ungodliness. In his trouble and indignation against all these things he is driven to turn to God as the only source of help; God alone could give true repentance, both of heart and life, to the people. He implied in his prayer a confession of his own inability to turn the people from this their folly by any exhortation or effort of any kind of his own; he had planted and watered, but must learn that God only could give the increase.

We learn from this Psalm, and from the words to which our sister has called special attention, that in times of declension the Spirit of God alone can revive the work of God. We also learn that all who are truly spiritual will mourn at the departures of those who have named the name of the Lord, and we learn that through bitter experience we come at last to see that in

God alone is our help, and so the cry is heard, "*Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth.*" How sorrowful to see those who did run well departing or dallying by the way. How sad to find such as these apparently deaf to all ell-treaties and exhortations by the faithful servants of God. How such things discourage the heart of a faithful pastor, and often cause him to feel that his ministry is in vain. Such a faithful servant at such times will be put upon great searchings of heart to see whether he has been faithful to set the right example as well as to preach. What great fears that servant will have lest as Paul also feared after having preached the gospel to others he himself should be a castaway. Know that faithful servant will be compelled to come again and again to God, laying the case before him and asking for personal grace to be faithful in his testimony, and then to walk in the way, as well as to point it out. How often he will fear that his preaching has not been faithful, and then that his life has not measured up to that which he enjoins. It was not without reason that Paul said to Timothy, ; " Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." " Thyself first, and then the doctrine. It is sure that a man cannot be a good minister of Jesus Christ unless first of all he himself be a good man. The grace of God lives in men before it lives in their preaching. All this view of self, and of the coldness and ungodliness of Israel, led the psalmist to the prayer of the text. Whatever might be the result with the

people, it was a good place for the psalmist himself to be in.

The people of God are just as much exposed to being led away by the deceitfulness of sin to-day as they were then. Not only did literal Israel thus depart, but spiritual Israel also has often thus gone astray. We need not go to the ranks of false religionists to find all these evil things, we shall find them in the true Israel. All these things did indeed exist in all the heathen religions of that day, but it was to Israel only that the psalmist was looking with such earnest crying to God for them. Among Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Romanists, all these things of evil are found, and indeed they belong to them; but this does not concern the godly man so much, it is when these things appear among Old School Baptists that the truly spiritual will be troubled. Has godliness ceased in any degree among us ? Do the faithful fail among us ? Are any among ourselves speaking vanity, and using flattering words, and acting with a double heart ? Is there flattery or falsehood (for all flattery is falsehood) and pride in the speech of any of us ? Are any of us saying by our practice that we have the right to dictate to others, and that none have any right to call in question whatever we may say or do ? Are any of us causing the poor to be oppressed and the needy to sigh. These are the things which marked the ungodliness of that time, and against which the psalmist warned the people, and because of which he entreated the help

of God. It is a solemn question, Have we, any of us, life enough in our hearts to even deplore these evils when they are found, and to cry to God for help that they no longer may prevail? The gracious answer of God in the Psalm is, "*For the oppression of the poor [or because of the oppression of the poor], for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.*" This word "puffeth" means literally to blow with the mouth, as one who would blow away some trifling thing, and the thought is that God will protect those who are, in the sight of these ungodly men of so little weight that a blow of the mouth would drive them away. God cares for these who are of no account to the ungodly, and from this gracious answer of the Lord the psalmist draws consolation, and faith springs into lively exercise, and his confession is, The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever. How earnest and pitiful the cry! How instant the gracious answer! How confident the faith springing forth to receive the answer!

Now there is no contradiction between the prayer of the Psalm and the commandment in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. It is not probable that the same time is referred to in both places, but the connection shows that much the same condition of things existed when both the psalmist and the prophet wrote. In both cases iniquity

abounded in the land. In the one case the psalmist turned to God in prayer (so we need not doubt that prayer also was in the heart of the prophet to God); in the one case the prayer is made prominent; in the other case the word of the Lord, and the commandment of the Lord to proclaim it, is made the more prominent. But we may be sure that he who prays to God will also warn and rebuke and reprove. On the other hand, he who warns and reproveth according to God's command, will also be found often in prayer. Prayer and preaching go hand in hand; if there be no praying there can be no spiritual preaching. He who seeks to deliver God's word must and will find that he needs God's strength to deliver it in, and he who is benefited by the word of God is that man who so feels the need of it and realizes the blessedness of it that he will have a heart to pray for it. One of God's ways of answering the prayer for help against the inroads of all ungodliness will be to stir up the hearts of his servants to cry mightily against it. So the prophet was bidden to cry aloud and to spare not; it was his duty to shew the people of God their sins and transgressions. Is the heart of any servant of God exercised, as was that of the psalmist, to cry for help against the prevailing carelessness and ungodliness among the people of the Lord, then also the heart be that one will feel the power of the word which says, "Cry aloud, and spare not," declare to the people their sins. Exhortation and warning to the ungodly are the wreath of which prayer to God is

the life. Prayer against sin which does not lead to warning against that same sin is but a lifeless form indeed, and warning against sin which has not come out of a heart that cries to God for help against it is as the Dead Sea fruit, which is said to be fair in the eyes, but in the lips only dust and ashes. God has thus joined these two things together in his word, and these two texts to which sister Haines has called attention clearly set forth these solemn and gracious truths.

Elder F.A. Chick

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." —ROMANS v. 10.



WHAT a fearful spot it is to be in — to feel and fear oneself an enemy to God! I think it is one of the most painful feelings that ever passed through my breast, to fear I was an enemy to God. For what must be the consequence, if a man live and die having God for his enemy? In that warfare he must perish. If God be his enemy, who can be his friend? Such sensations in the bosom are well-nigh akin to despair. Let a man fully feel that he is God's enemy, where can he hide his head? Hell itself seems to afford him no refuge. But he must be exercised with something of this before he can prize reconciliation. He must see himself to be an enemy of God by birth—that he was born in

what our Reformers called "birth sin;" and that his carnal mind is enmity against God. O the painful sensations of the carnal mind being enmity against God! It is bad enough to be God's enemy; but that every fibre of our nature should be steeped in enmity against God, that holy and blessed Being to whom we owe so much, and to whom we desire to owe everything; that our carnal heart in all its constitution, in its very blood, should be one unmitigated mass of enmity to God, O it is an awful thought! If you are made to experience that enmity in your bosom, and to feel more or less of its upheavings and risings — that will cut to pieces all the sinews of creature righteousness; that will mar all your comeliness, and turn it into corruption.

Now, when a man is thus exercised, it will make him look out, if he has any root of spiritual feeling, for a remedy. God has provided such in the sacrifice of his dear Son, in the blood of the Lamb; in the sufferings, obedience, death, and resurrection of the blessed Jesus. Now when this is opened up in our soul by the Spirit of God; when faith is given to receive it; when the Holy Ghost applies it; when it is received into the heart (for the Apostle says, "We have received the atonement"), then a felt reconciliation takes place; we are then reconciled to God; love takes the place of enmity, praise of sighing, and blessing his name instead of writing bitter things against ourselves.

Elder J.C. Philpot

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FOR DECEMBER 1998

Mrs. Dessie Goodman, AL	\$50.00
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Mrs. Charles Lovell, VA	2.00
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ST. MATTHEW CH. 13 VS. 47-48.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

OBITUARIES

**THE OBITUARY OF
BROTHER HOMIE CLYDE DALTON**

It pleased our Lord to call home Brother Homie Clyde Dalton October 19, 1998.

Brother Homie was born February 9, 1913; a son of the late James L. Dalton and Mattie Schwitzerlett Dalton. He was married to the late Elma Lee Yeatts Dalton.

Brother Homie was received by experience and baptism April 10, 1966 into Springfield Primitive Baptist Church.

Funeral services were conducted at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Julian Williams and Dr. Lynn Marstin. His body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

Those left to mourn Brother Homie are; two sons, Jimmy C. Dalton of Gretna, Va. and Wayne Dalton of Forest, Va. Two daughters Becky D. Bennett and Martha D. Smith of Gretna, Va. Two brothers, Oscar T. Dalton of Hurt, Va. and Ocie E. Dalton of Gretna, Va. Three sisters Alice Dove and Doris Creasy of Gretna, Va. and Beulah Hodnett of Rustberg, Va. Eleven grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren.

Brother Homie will be missed by all. He attended church as often as he could and always seemed to enjoy the fellowship. But most of his last years were devoted to the constant care of his invalid wife.

May God Bless and reconcile each one to their loss.

Written in Love and Hope,
Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Pastor
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

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SONG

*On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye,
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie,*

*Oh, the transporting, rapturous
scene, That rises to my sight !
Sweet fields arrayed in living
green,
And rivers of delight !*

*All o'er those wide-extended
plains Shines one eternal day;
There God the Sun for ever reigns,
And scatters night away.*

*No chilling winds, or poisonous
breath, Can reach that healthful
shore;
Sickness and sorrows, pain and
death, Are felt and feared no more.*

*When shall I reach that happy
place,
And be forever blest ?
When shall I see my Father's face
And in his bosom rest?*

*Filled with delight, my raptured
soul Can here no longer stay;
Though Jordan's waves around
me roll,
Fearless I'd launch away.*

Stennett.

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JOB 36:5.

Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom.

EDITORIAL

THE WISDOM OF GOD



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

them that believe.

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

There is a vast difference between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man. The wisdom of God is infinite, there is nothing that is not known absolutely by God, and there is nothing that is known abso-

lutely, by man in his finite wisdom. Man is of the earth earthy and knows only those things that he has experienced in the earth, that he can remember, and he has no control over them. He boasts of his wisdom and the things that he can do, but that is only in his imagination, he can do nothing in the sense that he can perform anything outside of the plan of God which was determined before time began. He can do only those things that God has decreed and put under his dominion and then only as they are according to the master plan which God has for all things. He is as the men of old who built an altar of the ashes of the tree that they had burned in the fire to cook their food, they fell down and worshipped it, declaring that it was the God that brought them out of the land of Egypt. The same intelligence was demonstrated back in that day that is exhibited by the natural man today; they determine what power God has and have decided that he needs assistance in accomplishing his stated intentions which were declared before time began. They say that they worship God that made the heaven and earth, when in fact they do not know him. Man, in the flesh does not know God and that is what the subject scripture is declaring; that it was the wisdom of God that determined this very fact.

The preaching of the cross is to the natural man foolishness, because it does not fit into any of the scientific laws of nature, with which he is familiar, nor does it agree with anything that he has experienced in the natural

realm. He has nothing that he can compare it with, and others telling him about it will not convince him of its authenticity because it does not harmonize with anything that he has been taught by the wisdom of this world. With the natural understanding man responds to spiritual matters in much the same manner that Nicodemus responded to Jesus's statement that ye must be born again; his reply was, how can a man be born again when he is old, can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born again? Regarding the subject of the cross, the natural wisdom of man would say, how can the death of one man pay for the sins of another? and why would God sacrifice his own Son to accomplish this. Each one is rationalizing spiritual things with the natural mind; and the things of the spiritual kingdom are not reasonable to the natural mind.

Man, in nature does not even realize what sin is, who it is against and the consequences of it; because of the fact that only one that is born of the spirit can understand, feel and experience the depravity of sin and realize the devastating consequences of it. Man in nature does not feel the need for a mediator to plead his cause before a just and holy God because he feels that he is as good as anyone else and does not feel the depravity of the condition that he is in. The only law that he is acquainted with is the laws of the land and his remorse for breaking them is, getting caught, and being embarrassed and punished for his actions. Their knowledge is limited to

the things in the world around them, and the spiritual realm is something that they have never had any knowledge of whatsoever, and the apostle Paul is saying in the above scripture, that all of these facts were determined in the wisdom of God before time began.

The world believes that the man in nature must make a considered decision to abandon the ways of the world, determine to follow Jesus and enter into his plan of salvation to save the world; they must assist in spreading the gospel and employ ministers with degrees in theology, philosophy, psychology and the intelligence of the world's houses of higher learning to do a better job than has been done in the past. The scriptural response to this theory is (1 Cor. Chap. 1 vs. 20) ***"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"*** The worldly religions are based upon worldly wisdom and the the above text states plainly that God does not accept this wisdom; by their wisdom they know not God; or as horse racing terminology would state it, they are scratched at the gate.

(1 Cor. Chap. 1, vs. 25) ***"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."*** The foolishness of preaching is wiser than the natural man and, therefore, it takes an intelligence that the flesh does not possess to understand it; all of the degrees that the world can give, in theology, does not enable man to preach the

gospel, or, to believe it. God said by the mouth of Isaiah, (Isa Chap 35, vs. 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."*** God's thoughts are based upon absolute knowledge of all things past, present and future, and man's thoughts are based on theory, supposition and hearsay evidence, and this includes the thoughts of the wisest of men.

This is true of all men, in nature, and will continue to be so, unless the truth is revealed to the inner man by the giver of every good and perfect gift. The sum total of the knowledge of man, in the flesh, is based upon his experience in the things of nature, whether first or second hand, unless or until revelation makes known unto him the glories of the kingdom of God. That knowledge raises him above the natural wisdom which he possessed in nature and makes him desire to set together in heavenly places with others of like precious faith. As the old adage goes, man's wisdom is the ability to recognize his mistakes, when he makes them again, but it does not enable him to delve into the spiritual realm, or to find out God, and certainly not to make a rational decision of whether to worship God or not. How can they worship that which they do not know or understand?

The apostle Paul's declaration was, (I Cor Chap 2, vs 1) ***"And I brethren, when I came to you, came***

not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." His desire was that he should not appeal to them with the wisdom of this world, the intelligence of the natural man, or the intellect of a leader of the Jews under the law because this wisdom has no part in the kingdom of God; but his desire was that they would see the power of his conversion and believe and fellowship that. Man's wisdom is as the money which Simon offered to Peter that he might receive the gift that upon whom he laid his hands, that they might receive the Holy Ghost, it is of no value in the things of the spirit. Peter's response was; ***"Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."***

The only thing that is of any benefit to God's children is the conviction of the heart, that they are sinners before a just and holy God, and a hope that they have been delivered from the horrible pit and their feet have been placed on that rock. Their faith is that their eyes have been opened and they have been given wisdom whereby they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and be given the knowledge whereby they might understand the truth. Nothing but the truth is of any value here, and his desire is that he would not confuse them by using his eloquence of speech to influence them, because each one must be convicted in their own mind by the same one that taught him. Each one's calling is special and is the only thing that they can rely on for their hope of things eternal; it is

special in that it is always given in a way that is most impressive to each individual and in ways that they cannot deny.

Paul's preaching was as he stated in (1 Cor. Chap. 2, vs. 3-4-5) ***"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."*** The apostles' desire was that they would not be persuaded by his words, but by the power of his conversion, how that a man who was the chiefest of sinners could be made a preacher of righteousness by the appearance of Jesus in his life. Only those who have had a similar experience can believe this report; as Paul told Timothy, (II Tim Chap 3, vs 14) ***"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."*** The apostle did not teach anyone to know Christ, he could only testify to the things that he had seen and heard and trust that they would find a response in the heart of those to whom he was speaking. He said, on one occasion, that he was made all things unto all people if by any means he might save some. This conveys, to me, that he made no distinction between those to whom he spoke in his own mind, but trusted that the word would separate the wheat from the chaff, for wisdom is justified of all of her children, and wisdom's work is

always perfect. He could not add them to the church, because he could only speak those things in which Christ had appeared unto him, and trusted that Christ would add to the church those that should be saved.

As Paul said in his letter to the church at Rome, (Rom Chap 8, vs 35 & 37.) ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."*** All of these things are also in the hands of God and work together for good to them that love God; and all are according to, and are a part of wisdom's plan; as the scriptures say of the man and woman; whatsoever God hath joined together, let not man put asunder: in like manner whatsoever God hath determined and decreed, from the beginning, will occur as planned and all of the powers or forces that exist can, in no way, separate one of those chosen in Christ from receiving their inheritance. The entire effort of Satan from the beginning has been to deceive the elect and lure them into his group, but, he has yet to add one; because he does not realize that they are of the chosen generation until it is manifested in their manners and then its too late, he has no power over them at all. This is not to infer that he could have gotten them if he had acted quicker, but he did not know that they were not his until the time came that they were quickened and then he attacks them with all the fury of hell trying to de-

stroy them by causing them to doubt their experience, but it will never happen.

In the acts of the apostles, on the day of pentecost, when the gospel was first preached by the apostles there were three thousand souls added to the church, and they continued with the apostles, sold their possessions and had all things common; they continued daily with one accord in the temple, as. (Acts Chap 2, vs 47) says *"Praising God, and having favor with all the people, and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."* They were added according to that wisdom, by whom they were chosen before the foundation of the world, and at the time appointed of the Father they were brought forth, from under the law of sin and death and their heritage was made known; they had been under the law and were, by nature the children of wrath even as others and their change was just a manifestation of what already was true.

That was how they were added to the church, in that day, and I believe that it is still that way today. They do not join the church, they are added to it by the grace of God; given an experience of grace, a love for the truth, faith in God and a desire to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, and upon relating their experience and travels, as evidence of God's blessings in their life they are baptized into the fellowship with their brethren of like precious faith and calling. There are many who have been added to the invisible church that have

never joined the visible church. God adds to the church, and when he blesses them with the courage and conviction, of their heart, they request to be identified with the body of believers, here in time, to manifest that love that they have for the brethren and are baptized, with water unto repentance, from their former ways and wisdom leads them in the ways of peace. There is a set time for this and they cannot hinder or help it.

God's wisdom encompasses everything that there is, in the past present or future; his knowledge is perfect and there is nothing that has happened, is happening now, or will happen in the future that is not included in that knowledge; yea! and there is nothing whose being and occurrence is not determined by the counsel and foreknowledge of that wisdom. This is the wisdom by which the world was created, by which it still stands, and by whose wisdom the world knew not God. They know him not because in God's plan of salvation, it is by grace, through faith and that is not of man, it is a gift bestowed sovereignly upon each one. It is because that it was God's own good will and pleasure to give salvation to those chosen in Christ before the world began. Wisdom designed and executes the plan and the plan includes everything that is necessary to bring it to its planned conclusion. There is nothing in heaven, earth or in hell and all its fury that changes or alters that which God, in his infinite wisdom, has decreed should occur.

(Eze. Chap. 3, vs. 11) ***"He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."*** When God created the world and all the host of it he declared that it was very good and this scripture says that God hath set the world in man's heart so that no man should find out the work of God. Man may claim that he has of his own free will accepted Jesus as his personal savior, but the scriptures teach that the world by wisdom does not know him; so, how can he accept by faith something that he does not know anything about. Man, by nature is so in love with the world and worldly pleasures that he does not, know of, or, desire anything else. He is at home in the world; and as one of the writers said, they have had no change, they are satisfied and proud of the world in which they live as it is and believe that they are the only ones that can change it should they so desire.

James Chap 3, vs 17) ***"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, the peacable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."*** These are the beautiful characteristics of the wisdom that comes down from above; it is sovereignly bestowed upon the heirs of grace and they are made new creatures in Christ. The world, and all of the things of which it consists, loses its luster and appeal to this new man; for the first time, he beholds the beauty of the heavenly kingdom and realizes how

Paul must have felt when he said (Phil Chap 1, vs 23) ***"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."*** Their desire is to search more and more into the depths of the wonders of the spiritual realm and find more evidence of the earnest of the inheritance which they hope to possess; They can see but dimly while in the flesh; but what they can see and feel is far away, above and beyond, the joys of this world with all of its fleshly pleasures. Their prayer is to experience the fullness of joy that they believe that they shall receive when they enter into the presence of God in heaven. When lifted up and made to sit together in heavenly places with those of like precious faith they sometimes, would, if they could, rise up and ascend unto the bosom of their heavenly Father and be at rest in pure joy and peace. As one of the writers of a song in Gobles hymn book says;

If thus to meet on earth below
So fills our hearts with love
What raptures shall his children feel
When they shall meet above

This will be joy beyond description, even to the vessels of mercy who have had a small foretaste in this life who were afore prepared unto glory; those who have seen it as through a glass darkly but even that is sufficient to cause them to continue to press on, the rest of their lives, to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. At that time the beloved of the Father will

know as they are known, they will understand the mysteries that have plagued them in life, and they will behold the beauty of God in all of his glory. They will be like him and, for the first time, will understand the awesome beauty and magnificence of that city which wisdom has built: and that planned and executed this marvelous scheme of salvation. They will realize, to the fullest extent, the absolute surety and perfection that it provides for those for whom it was designed; those who were chosen in Christ before the beginning of the world, sustained by his grace here in time, and delivered unto possession of their heavenly inheritance without the loss of a single one.

In bonds of Love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

PART III

"REJOICE EVERMORE, I TH. 5:16

Rejoice evermore" 1 Th. 5:16, for he Lord hears the cries of the righteous but his face is against them that do evil, Ps. 34:15; 1 Pet. 3:12. Oh, woe am I for there are none righteous, no not one, certainly not I! Dear reader, do not despair for It has pleased the Divine Trinity that each child of light shall be "*born of water and of the Spirit,*" John 3:5-7; and that the perfect One, the Christ, shall

dwell within the inward man of each child of light. Thus His righteousness is imputed to them and their prayers are heard In heaven for Jesus, their Advocate and Mediator, sits at the right hand of God, the Father, making intercession for them, 1 John 2:1; Heb. 7:25, Rom. 8:34. "Rejoice evermore" with thankfulness for if God be for you who can be against you?

Well, the answer is: Satan's messengers will come against you to quench the Spirit of Christ within you, if it be possible, that your prayers waver so that "*ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts,*" James 4:3. Shall anyone weak in faith and subjected to the lust of the flesh question what can be achieved by prayer, knowing that God is immutable - that he has determined the end from the beginning and changeth not? Well, Satan will have gained an objective "*For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord,*" James 1:6-7.

Children of the light and of the day pray in faith for they love the Lord, who first loved them and called them, and they desire to obey his commandments and give thanks and all praise and glory to God. "*— when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly,*" Matt. 6:6. Indeed, "*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth*

much," James 5:16. The answer to an effectual fervent prayer is received from God at a time appointed by Him. The answer is always beneficial to the child. The child of God may rejoice in the revealed knowledge ***"that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*** Rom. 8:28.

Though the praying child cannot change the immutable heavenly Father, the prayer does accomplish much for the penitent child:

1. The prayer does praise and glorify God. It is an act of obedience of the elect child to God's will and commandments I The. 5:17; I Cor. 10:31.

2. Through the mediation of Jesus the prayer brings the penitent child into submission to God's purpose and will, Col. 1:21-23.

3. Though "we know not what we should pray for as we ought," Rom. 8:26, the heavenly Father knows what we have need of, Matt. 6:32, Luke 12:30. Rejoice dear child for the promise is that "God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus," Phil. 4:19.

4 Through faith and humility the prayer invokes the blessings promised in the Beatitudes, Matt. 5:3-6, 8.

5. At times chosen by God, the penitent child who does hunger and thirst after righteousness is answered with renewal and a

strengthened faith, wisdom and greater understanding of the sacred word, a measure of filial fear of the Father, and a strengthened will to resist, to persevere, and overcome the devil who will flee, James 4:7. The child grows in grace with refinement of the soul as it is led further in the narrow way, being perfected and preserved for arrival at the strait gate rejoicing and giving thanks that the Lord is its Savior and King eternal.

Therefore, pray in faith without ceasing for it is the elect children of light that prayer changes as they grow and are enabled to endure and overcome temptations. They are taught of the Holy Spirit to know that the ***"old serpent,"*** Satan, is a cunning deceiver who will, if it be possible, lead children of light into a wilderness of sin by his subtle strategies: a) Satan can transform his colors, 2 Cor. 11:14, to appear as an angel of light misquoting precious scriptures with clever errors he introduces to mislead; b) Satan comes to the child of light displaying a warm pretence of friendship with claims of fellowship to deceive and tempt sin; c) Satan promotes sin as being good - a pretense of virtue in the Lord's service; d) Satan tempts sinful acts as acceptable solutions to the child's mere wishes and presumed necessities which have not been immediately supplied by God (who knows and will in time supply true needs of his children); e) Satan declares convincingly that a compassionate God will not condemn anyone

to hell and eternal damnation for they are told falsely that God loves everyone in the whole world, John 3:16; Rev. 20: 12-15; f) Satan excuses sin blaming God for the sinner's transgressions; g) Having failed to tempt sinful acts, Satan will whisper that you have not been humbled enough so as to drive the soul to despair. He tells you that you can never be saved. Dear children, pray without ceasing, rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for his counsel. Wait for his gifts of strength, will, and wisdom to recognize and overcome temptations of the wicked messengers of Satan for God will not forsake you.

Now, dear reader, has Satan whispered to establish doubts in your mind and soul that you are a child of light or that you will ever escape the broad way that leads to destruction? The new covenant of the Lord is: ***"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 brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," Heb. 8:10-12.*** This promise is to the "house of Israel." I believe it is to the spiritual Israel, i.e. the children of light, rather than to the total humanity descending from Abraham and Jacob.

What are the "laws" that will be put and written in the mind and hearts of God's people? The minds of multi-

tudes throughout much of the world have been exposed to the Ten Commandments, Ex. ch.20, but we know not what is in the hearts. Only God knows the secrets of the heart. I believe the cardinal laws given to the children of light are the two great commandments: first, ***"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind,"*** and second, ***"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," Matt. 22: 37-40.*** ***"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."*** I believe that when these two commandments of love are in both the mind and the heart the child does ***"know the Lord"*** as its merciful heavenly Father, for ***"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," 1 John 3:14.*** Loving the brethren cannot happen in the absence of love of God who did in eternity first love his children. But the scripture of the new covenant reads that ***"all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."*** I do believe that sometime before death of the mortal body, in some marvelous way, by the sole work of the Holy Spirit, all mankind will be made to know the Lord, perhaps on the deathbed if not before. The children of light will know the Lord as their merciful Saviour and Father - the children of the devil will know the Lord as an Almighty God of judgement and wrath for ***"the devils also believe, and tremble," James; 2:19. See also Matt. 8:28-33.*** While yet upon earth the Sons of God will receive an earnest of the inheritance to come.

I cannot close this very inadequate writing without acknowledgment and reference to that great effectual prayer of Jesus recorded in John ch.17. After praying for the apostles Jesus continues: "*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: -- Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory — And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou has loved me may be in them, and I in them,*" read all verses 20-26. In our journey of earthly life, Jesus has declared that "*Ye shall know them by their fruits,*" Matt. 7:16.

Dear beloved Children of light: "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,*" Rom. 8:1. Therefore, "*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord.*" "*Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" Th. 5:16-18.

"Praise the Lord" "for his name alone is excellent."

Eugene F. Osborne
3000 Old Taneytown Rd.
Westminister, Maryland 21158

VOICES OF THE PAST

TRANSCRIBED FROM A SERMON
PREACHED BY
ELDER D. V. SPANGLER
Snow Hill Church, October 23, 1975

May we turn to page 156. I would like for us to think about the sentiment of this hymn as we sing it. If you sing it without taking note of what it says, it is worthless:

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace!
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above:
Praise the mount! O, fix me on it!
Mount of God's unchanging love.

*Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me, when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed his precious blood!*

*O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be:
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!
Prone to leave the God I love!
Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above!*

I am thankful to be with you. We had two things happen since arriving that

has, you might say, made my trip worth-while; if there was nothing else. Some time ago I received an invitation to spend our time at this meeting in the home of one of the young members, Linda Adkins. Now I have a reputation, in this country, of writing short letters, when I write. So I wrote, she said, in maybe two lines, "The Lord willing, I'm coming". As I said to her yesterday morning, "I am going to write you a long letter now, and the letter will say this, that if I hadn't received your letter, I don't think I would have come." So you all might take that as you want to. The other thing is I visited an old friend in the nursing home yesterday morning, Mr. Clarence Robinson, who attended my services many years ago. He is blind now and he didn't recognize my voice. When I told him who I was, the reaction was worth my whole trip. Oh, the reaction of joy he showed for a poor sinner like I am. It surely meant something to me.

In the 17th chapter of the book of John, I shall begin reading with the first verse.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glo-

rify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

These are the words of Jesus. And the occasion was the approach to the cross and the laying down of His life for His people. I think the message begins with His summing up in the 14th Chapter of John. You know, Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us about the birth of Christ, the virgin birth, the geneology and the events surrounding His natural birth. But the Apostle John soars away in his bringing Him to us. He loses sight, you might say, of His humble birth, His geneology, as he said, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." All the ministers here and elsewhere could never expound the expression, "The same was in the beginning with God." For the unity of the Godhead is there. The covenant relationship is there, in the description, "The same was in the beginning with God." And much of this chapter is bringing to us the relationship and the unity of God the Father and God the Son in the realm of salvation. Embraced in that unity is the people of God. Jesus in God and God in Jesus, and He in them, and them in Him, etc.

In the 14th Chapter of John, Jesus begins to tell His disciples that He is going away. They are puzzled often concerning His going away. In the 14th Chapter He tells them, "If ye believe in God, believe also in me. Let not your hearts be troubled. 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". As the time would open and develop and be brought to pass they would see and know more about it. "I go and prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also." He tells them they know the way. Yet there is an inquiry in the mind of Phillip, and he said to Jesus, "Show us the Father". Show us the Father. You have talked about Him. Jesus said, "Have I been so long with you and yet thou hast not known me, Phillip?" "Has all the work that I have unfolded as the eternal will of God in my life been unnoticed and unknown?" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The word of God says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." How many? Everyone! Everyone under consideration. So the 14th Chapter is laying the foundation of His coming again. We are still holding that forth to the people. If it has not become the key to hold, it never will be. I am looking for the coming of our Lord. If I wasn't, I wouldn't be here this morning. I anticipate the event because He said, "I'm coming again." You can say it in the gospel, or however you please, but there is a second coming of the Lord.

Then Jesus brings the matter a little closer as He comes to the 15th Chapter of John regarding the unity of the Father and the Son. He said, "I am the true vine. My Father is the Husbandman." And He didn't forget to say in that chapter, "Ye are the branches". That is bringing into view in a lovely

way, the unity of the Father and of the Son and with His people. "Branches". And in connection with that expression He said, "As I live, ye shall live." Just as certainly as I am alive, there is your life. "Ye shall live". There are about five occasions where the expression is used in these three chapters, "These words spake Jesus". It seems that there was a special significance in what He was saying at certain times. "These words spake Jesus" unto them.

I especially delight in the 15th Chapter in the words of Jesus when He said, "These words have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full." We will never know what salvation really is until we know the joy of our Saviour in saving us. Our cup will never be full. It will be half empty, until there is in our heart the knowledge that it was just as great a joy for Christ to save us as it is for us to be saved. Paul said, "For the joy set before him". It was always set before Him, and every movement of His life, He endured the cross despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name. Not only while Christ walked upon the earth, but in every phase of the salvation of His people did He have the preeminence in all things. But His place in heaven now, this morning, is as our Intercessor. He appears in the presence of God for us.

I remember the time I read that scripture in the 15th Chapter. It was at night

and I was setting in my room. Whatever He had been telling in the 14th Chapter, and coming on down to the 15th, "Ye are the branches," etc., it seems now, He said, "These words He spake". He says, "I spake these words unto you that my joy might remain in you; that your joy might be full." I don't think that we would detract anywhere from God's grace and His mercy and His everlasting love for His people to say that even the Father in bringing many sons to glory through the work of His son will take pleasure in it, also. And in connection with that; there is something about the doctrine of grace and the wonders of God's grace that presents these two thoughts. When this world has been brought to a conclusion, and is over, there will be a people in heaven that God won't be ashamed of. And the only reason there will be a people that He won't be ashamed of is because He will prepare them for it. And we also, my hearers, won't be ashamed. Christ was not ashamed to call His people, "Brethren". God was not ashamed to be called our God, He says that in the book of Hebrews. God was not ashamed to be called the God of the people pictured in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. It is the only way God could have a people in heaven that He wouldn't be ashamed of. He prepares them for it. And one of the great blessings of Grace is that God prepares us for what He has prepared for us. Have you learned that in your life? That same hand must prepare you for what God has prepared for you? Whether it is either joy or sorrow, it is the same

thing. One is no different than the other. God must prepare us for joy as well as sorrow.

And now, Jesus in the 14th and 15th chapters has been preparing them for His going away. He has stressed to them that "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name it shall be given to you". That used to be a great puzzle to me. But when I found that the various names of Christ and the titles of Christ was found over 100 times in the Bible, I said, "His name must embrace every need of His people." Whether He is the Advocate, the Intercessor, or whoever He is, it must embrace it all. His Name! These Great Right Reverends, so and so's might think they have a right long handle when they have two or three words attached to their names. But think of the Lord Jesus Christ having over 100 names and titles in the word of God, and each one suited to each characteristic of Him. Oh, my friend, isn't it a wonderful thing? I would travel thousands of miles to see Him one moment. He is the Kings of Kings. He is the Lord of Lords. Everywhere!

I have been in the city of Washington a few times, and they say every avenue leads to the Capitol. You go down Pennsylvania Avenue or Massachusetts Avenue, or any other, and they lead to the Capitol. But think here, every name of salvation, every phase of salvation of the people of God embodied in the Name of Christ that leads to Him!

You can have a dozen avenues in the city of Washington, and they would be crowded thoroughfares, wouldn't

they? But there can be over a hundred names and titles of Christ pointing to Him and the virtue of Him and there is never any congestion in the way. There is always a way to see Him, and there is always a desire in the heart of those at the throne of God to say, "I would see Jesus."

Paul admonished Timothy to preach the word: to reprove, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. I said not long ago that if the doctrine of exhortation wasn't in the New Testament I had been preaching a lie over 50 years. It is there and it is for the minister as God directs him. If it is preached in blind zeal it is just as terrible as he is, but if it is through the constraining grace of God, then it is, as recorded in the New Testament, "Exhort the church of God with all longsuffering, and doctrine." "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears". You know, I used to wonder what that was, "Teachers having itching ears". I said, "I have heard of the nose itching, but not the ears itching". Probably I shouldn't say this, but I say a lots of things I wish I hadn't said, and lots of things I don't say that I wish I had said. But not long ago I heard a minister speak, and when he got through he took out of the pulpit like he was in a race with somebody. And he looked like he was itching to hear what somebody was going to say about the sermon he had preached. He must have had itching ears, do you suppose? I don't know. I will leave that for you to decide.

But these words, now we are coming to the hour of Christ. We are coming to Him and the hour appointed in eternity that our Saviour must die for us. And now His prayer. His people come first. The awful hour is approaching that He must pay the debt that all mankind couldn't pay. All the blood of all Adam's race from Adam's day to today couldn't pay it. The blood of the Son of God only, could. And the hour, He recognizes very well. He says, "Father". "These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come. Glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee." That is the unity of the Godhead. There is the husbandman and the true vine. "As thou has given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." That's what we preach! Christ had power over all flesh for one end. To give eternal life to as many as thou has given Him. "And this is life eternal; that they might know him". That is what it is. God has a sure and certain and definite way of bringing that life to them. The only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. "And now, O Father". There was a time that our Saviour couldn't call God His Father. There was a time when in His humiliation His judgment was taken away. There was a time that the literal words that were in the 22nd Psalm must be brought out of the lips of Christ. "My God; My God, why hast thou forsaken me." Now what was He asking God for? He calls Him Father, and I like the expression. "And now, Oh Father." We only hint at what is

involved. We can't tell it. What is He asking for now? What is the special request of Christ? "***Glorify thou me with thine own self***". That is what He wanted. That is what He was asking for. And the kind of glory that He asked God to give Him was the kind that He had with Him before the world was. Could He have asked anything greater? That in the hour of departure, the wonders of the covenant might be brought truly into view; that He who He entered into covenant with before this world was, there would be a continuation and a fulfilling of it in bringing Him from the dead. Paul said in the last chapter of the book of Hebrews, "The God of Peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Make you perfect, etc., and in every good work it was good. And now He asked God to glorify Him with His presence. That the fulness of the love of God in the moment when the covenant was entered into, and God's love for His Son and His Son for Him, and the love for His people and the love of the people of God for them. "***With thine own self***". That is the glory Christ is asking for. There is no question, is it? That is the glory He has asked God for. Glorify Him with Himself. "***With the same glory I had with you before the world was.***"

Some try to tell us now and try to bring us a saviour like one peddling something on the street. That isn't the God I worship. Our Lord Jesus Christ stresses in these chapters in John that

though He was going away, He wasn't going to leave them comfortless. "***Y will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit in my name, and he shall take the things of mine and show them unto you.***" That work is still going on. You talk about experiences of grace. Every time the Holy Spirit brings to the heart of a sinner the assurances of Christ's work and their need of it, it is an experience of grace. It is of grace, however it may come, and that which doesn't come by grace isn't of the Holy Spirit. It is of the flesh, whatever it might be. The Holy Spirit doesn't wander around at random looking for something to bring to the people of God. He doesn't bring just any thing. He brings the things of Christ. He applies every promise that a sinner has ever received in his heart of heaven and immortal glory. The Holy Spirit brings it. And there is no substitute for it. You can have a lot of substitutes, but not the Holy Spirit because He is equal with Jesus Christ, Himself "***And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory I had with you before the world.***" And an answer was given Jesus on one occasion from the Father, "I have already glorified thee". My beloved children, this morning, our Saviour is at the right hand of the Throne of God. He is as much alive today as He was when He was here, and He now in heaven appears in the presence of God for us. He is our Mediator; the only one between God and man that has the power of mediation. Every requirement of God

for His people, Christ has met in His death and His righteous life.

And as the hour approaches that He must depart, He said, "Oh Father". Have you ever felt you could call God your Father? Have you ever felt the sweetness of your Saviour's love that you could never tell anyone of? Oh, my friend, I wake up in the hours of night sometime, and it is like day. Some avenues pointing me to the virtues of Christ. Something I haven't seen will appear. I want to exalt His name. I sometimes think as the poet said:

"I want to praise Him while He gives me breath;

I hope to praise Him after death."

And in the 24th verse of the 17th chapter our Saviour prayed. Yes, my friend, He prayed, that those He died for would be with Him. And He didn't only pray for that, but that "They shall see my glory". I expect to see the glory of Christ. I expect to share in the glory of my Master. Will that be fulfilled? As sure as you are sitting there, this morning. And when the hour arrives, Jesus said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." But He tells us here, "I have finished the work". Before He died He said, "I finished the work". "All things that are written in the prophets and in Moses and the Law and the Psalms concerning me". As He approached the cross He said, "They have been fulfilled". Every one of them. There hasn't been a one left out. "And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, with the same glory I had with you before the world." Then in the next chapter when He leaves His dis-

ciples, He goes out to meet our great foe and His. As He approaches those that Judas was bringing He said, "Who are you looking for?" And then He said, "I am the one". "I am the very one you are looking for". His great love led Him to meet them. His great love for you, my friends, led Him to meet His enemy. The eternal relationship and the eternal love of God in Him led Him, and the enemy fell on the ground. I'm glad they didn't have to send after Him. I'm glad they didn't have to tie Him. I know that the lamb was tied for a time in the eternal covenant as a type of Jesus on the Jewish altar. He was bound with cords on it, bound to the altar, but here I see the Lamb loose, now. And He goes to meet them, and He opens not His mouth. "Dumb before His shearers". I said yesterday afternoon I had some thoughts the other day about Christ being dumb. I just touched it. I can't tell you about it. Dumb. Mute. Beyond speech! Carrying our sins to that cross. Oh, my friends, lift up your heads this morning. Many of us may never meet again here on the shores of time. Lift up your heads. Lift up your heads! Our redemption is drawing nigh! I thank you!

Elder D. V. Spangler

We can never be truly easy and happy until we are enabled to trust God for all things: and the more we are enabled to trust Him, the more gracious and faithful we shall find Him.

Toplady

CHAPTER IV ABOUT MY MASTER'S WORK

I was now having appointments made for me — it was quite a number of weeks I think before I could venture to make one for myself, which I did only by invitation. I attended the London Tract yearly meeting, and the Salisbury Association, and visited the church at the delightful old Woolford home at Church Creek, Md., and found preaching a stern necessity by the direction of the old ministers, without reference to my feelings in the matter.

But it still seemed strange, wonderful, impossible that I could be a preacher of the gospel. I, who had settled down to what I had esteemed my life's work; that I could be taken away from my business so well established, and that had been so satisfying to me. I tried to know the will of the Lord concerning it, and to pray and beg that he would lead and guide me, and not let me run without being sent by him. And such wonder and such crying in my soul unto God concerning this important matter have continued at intervals to this day, nearly forty-four years, and made me to enter more fully into the blessed truth that salvation is of the Lord. I have learned that only through great tribulation can one enter into the kingdom of God. All spiritual knowledge is a revelation and never the result of study. We must be hungry for the word of the Lord before we find and eat it; we must feel our nakedness before we can know and value the garments of salvation; our weakness before the law makes us

know Christ as our strength, and we must from day to day experience the dying of the Lord Jesus in our body in order that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

The ministering and other brethren were very kind and tender toward me in those days and weeks, and indeed they have been kind and tender all the way through. Elder Samuel Trott was the oldest one among those I met at that time. I may say something more about him and some others before I close these pages.

My ordination was appointed for December 7th and 8th. As my father and mother were unable to take the journey to Middletown, N.Y., about 200 miles, the church arranged to come to our home and have the ordination services there. We occupied a neighborhood meeting house, owned by the Presbyterian Church, where I had preached November 27th. I think that was the first time that my parents had heard me. The congregation was large, on the Wednesday and Thursday, December 7th and 8th. As I related my experience and my exercises about preaching, the questions of Elder Beebe, the moderator, led me over the whole ground of my life with the Presbyterian Church, and my reasons for being dissatisfied with their doctrine and order, so that I was kept talking about two hours. The church at Vaughan Hill, seven miles from our home, and those who came from Middletown, with a number from other churches of the Chemung Association, formed the council; and the Presbytery was composed of Elders

Gilbert Beebe, Hollister, Schoonover, St. John, Cox, and Smith. On Thursday Elder Beebe preached and incorporated a most solemn and impressive charge in his sermon. Elder St. John spoke in prayer, Elder Cox delivered the charge, and Elder Smith gave the right hand of fellowship. There were present of my own family father and mother, four brothers, two sisters and two sisters-in-law.

I had finished and closed up my legal business during November, and was now fully engaged in the work of preaching. I stayed at home the rest of the month, preaching on Sunday at Vaughan Hill, and a few times in the neighborhood of home. On the 7th of January, 1865, I was at the church meeting at Waverly, N.Y., with Elder St. John, the pastor. I was expected to preach on Sunday the 8th. As we rode to the meeting house I felt cold and no scripture was on my mind, but that did not disturb me, for I remembered a text which I had preached from at Middletown not long before with liberty, and I knew I could use that, and had no doubt of my ability to interest the people and do myself credit with that text. So I felt very confident and comfortable as we rode along, although I had no spiritual exercise of mind. When the time came I took my text and began to speak, but I found nothing to say, and in less than ten minutes I sat down confused and chagrined and ashamed. It was a terrible blow to my pride and all my doubts and fears revived. So soon had I forgotten my experience with a "saved-up" text at the time I was called upon

to exercise before the church four months before, and my solemn resolution and promise made to myself at that time never again to save a text, or arrange beforehand what I should say. But I have forgotten many a time since then, and indeed I never have been able to learn how to improve in preaching, nor to depend on my memory.

On Wednesday and Thursday, January 11th and 12th, I came with Elder Beebe, by invitation, to attend a council called by the church at Southampton. There had been some trouble which I did not fully understand then, and never have fully understood since. By the advice of the council, Elder Harding resigned his pastoral care of the church, and took a letter. The church numbered, I think, about ninety at that time, and seemed a very desirable place for a preacher to live. There was quite a strong feeling between the two parties. During the year I visited the church several times, and felt at liberty with the brethren. I was told by several of the leading members of both parties that they would agree on me if I could serve them. And the clerk, Brother Isaac Hellings, once wrote me that they desired me "to come, and go in and out before them." I considered the matter carefully, and I could not feel any leading of mind to do so. Father thought that I feared it would be only a natural desire that would influence me to come to a church so well fixed in a temporal point of view; and he said to me that he thought it right for a preacher to look out for a home. I said I knew it, but

I had no mind to come, or to settle down at present. I did not feel that the Lord had directed me to serve the Southampton Church except as a supply while they needed supplies. I could not see the reason of this then, but did afterward. Twenty years passed by; I had taken charge of my father's family, had served ten churches, six of them at one time, and then I was again called to the care of the Southampton Church, which was now less in numbers and in financial ability, and I felt that the Lord directed me here, where I have been serving the church twenty-four years. I was also called to be pastor of the church in Canada, but felt that my place was at Southampton.

I have written for the "Signs of the Times" since early in 1864, and some for several other periodicals which have been started since that time, and have told of my experiences and exercises of mind and of my work from time to time, but these things can never be fully told. It is my wish to recall and write down here a few of the many things of interest that I have met with and experienced during these forty-four busy years.

As I have intimated, when I closed my legal business I went to my father's home, which I had never ceased to call home, and took charge of the family which consisted of my brothers James and Warren, both invalids, with the wife and two children of the latter, three sisters, one of whom had been an invalid and hopelessly deranged mentally for many years, a sister of my mother near 90 years old, with my father and mother. Two older broth-

ers, John and William, lived near, each having a wife and several children. I had never seen a death up to December, 1865. Within eleven years from that time twelve of those I have named died, eight of them in our house. In connection with the sicknesses and deaths of these there are some most wonderful things which were referred to in their obituary notices. The most wonderful experience and last hour of my brother James, with the five beautiful poems he wrote the last year of his life, I intend to present to the friends in some way hereafter.

From this home I traveled far and wide, going only where invited. For several years I traveled sixteen thousand miles a year, and attended to our farm. The first call I accepted was to the Salisbury Church, Maryland, to come there as often, and stay as long, as I felt able to. That was given me October 27, 1867, and the relation has continued to the present time. The next call I accepted was to the care of our home church at Vaughan Hill, June 11, 1871. The next to Otego, N. Y., July 15, 1871. This church was then few in number, but was a spiritual church, and their meetings were regular and Balas Bundy was regarded by the members as called to the work of the ministry. He had resisted his impressions for nine years. I served that church about two years and three months, baptizing thirty-five, including Brother Bundy, who felt that his former baptism had been irregular. After his ordination I resigned the care. During the same time I had baptized

the same number in all the other churches I was serving.

February 17, 1872, I accepted a call from the church at Grover, which was organized within eight months after my first sermon preached there, which I understood was the first Old Baptist sermon ever preached in that neighborhood. About August 24, 1872, I accepted a call from the church in Waverly, N. Y.; October 30, 1875, a call from the church at Burdett, N. Y.; January 5, 1878, a call from the church in Utica, to visit them once in two months, while Elder Balas Bundy visited them also once in two months. August 3, 1879, I accepted a call from the Ebenezer Church, New York City, to serve there monthly, and as much oftener as I could. Marvin Vail was baptized November, 1872. Very soon it was evident to the church that his mind was exercised about preaching, but it was three or four years before he consented to say anything about it to the church. He was ordained in October, 1878, I believe. He was immediately fully engaged in the work. I resigned the care of that church in April, 1881, and of the church in New York City in March, 1883. I accepted a call to the Southampton Church, where I now live, April 12, 1884. I resigned the care at Burdett April 28, 1883, and at Grover August 17, 1884. For some time I visited the church at Vaughan Hill once in two months, and Elder Charles Bogardus once in two months. Afterward he took the entire care. I visit the place once a year. Only three members are left. I have for about fifteen years visited a small church at

South River, N.J., as frequently as possible, going often from Southampton after service, for a distance of about seventy miles to speak there at night. The Southampton Church has meetings every Sunday, and I am present most of the time. Also every alternate Saturday before the second Sunday, and every first Thursday. Every fifth Sunday and Saturday before, I am at Salisbury, Md. Have missed but seldom in twenty-four years.

Besides this I visit other churches in our vicinity occasionally and the associations we correspond with. I make at least one visit of nearly two weeks to the covenanted church in Canada, one or two visits a year of nearly two weeks to the churches of the Licking Association in Kentucky. I also still make some pleasant visits to churches in Georgia, in Florida, in North Carolina and Virginia. That is my work now at 75 years of age.

Elder Silas H. Durand

DEUTERONOMY 4:19-20.

And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.

LIGHT .

New Vernon, N.Y., May 1, 1842 .

" If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness ! "

THE MASTER.

We are informed by a prophet of the Lord, that men have put darkness for light, and light for darkness, and do we not see this fact abundantly exemplified in the present age ? The terms, *light* and *darkness*, are metaphorically used sometimes in the scriptures, and decidedly so in the passages above referred to . Intellectual acquirements in the sciences of this world are esteemed, by the general consent of mankind, as light, and justly so, when confined to their appropriate spheres; but when attempted to be applied to the things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, they cease to be light, and are denounced by divine authority as darkness of the most sable shade. However profitable and desirable human erudition may be in qualifying men for eminence and usefulness in temporal things, it never can enable the mind to understand the things of the Spirit of God. God has made foolish the wisdom of this world, and it has pleased God in his wisdom, that man by wisdom shall not know him: he has hidden the things of his Spirit from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because it has seemed good in his sight so to do. And ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men, &c., are called; that God has chosen the weak and foolish

things of this world to confound the wise. The admonition of our Lord, Take heed that the light that is in you be not darkness, implies that there are characters of that description among men, and that we are liable to be mistaken in regard to what we denominate light. While this is the deluded condition of every natural man that flatters himself that he knows anything about spiritual things, and peculiarly so in the case of all who confide in theories of scholastic divinity, religious education and religious training, is it not also measurably the case, in some instances, with the children of God? Peter speaks of a neglect, on the part of christians, which will produce blindness, so that they cannot see afar off, causing them to forget they were purged from their old sins .

It is true, God has translated his children from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, and he has informed us that light is sown for the righteous; yet he has also said, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God." We frequently hear the saints complain of what they call darkness, when we are led to conclude that light is what they mean. As when the prophet cried, " Wo is me, for I am undone, " &c., it was the effect of extraordinary light, and not of darkness, for he had beheld a vision of the Lord. And we may rest assured that christians never see and feel and

mourn over the corruptions of their hearts, unless they are in the light . It requires the true light which emanates only from the Sun of Righteousness to convince us of sin, and to cause us to feel the infinity of distance intervening between us and that perfect standard of holiness that we desire, and that we shall be brought ultimately into the full, perfect and eternal enjoyment of when we awake with his likeness .

However distressing it may be to feel and realize the depravity of our natures, it is a certain evidence that we are in the light, and that that light that is in us is not darkness .

But when men, who know not God experimentally, are left to rely upon the light of human reason, of human wisdom, knowledge or science, and from the possession of these, connected with works corresponding with their conceptions of God and of the things of the Spirit of God, however pious they may appear unto men, they are but whited sepulchres, and the light that is in them, being only that of human acquirements, is darkness, and that darkness is great indeed.

Is it not, therefore, of vital importance, that we who hope for heaven and happiness beyond the grave, should examine carefully, prayerfully, and in the fear of the Lord, into the nature of that light on which we rely to make plain the pathway wherein we should walk, and to illuminate us through the dreary chambers of the valley of death ?

At that critical hour when all the glittering lights of human science and intellectual vivacity shall be put out by the cold damps of death and the chill vapors of the grave, then the scholar and the idiot, the monarch and the slave shall be disrobed of every shade of distinction, and lay down their mortal tenements in one common bed, to slumber together until the trump of God shall sound, and the Archangel's voice shall call them forth in the resurrection of the last day.

Elder B . L . Beebe

ADMONITION TO DO GOOD.

NEW VERNON, N. Y., April 16, 1834.

“ But to do good, and to communicate, forget not. ”— Heb. xiii. 16.

Thus wrote the inspired apostle, Paul, from Italy, to the saints at Jerusalem; and as the middle - wall of partition is effectually thrown down, which consisted in meats and drinks, and divers washings, carnal ordinances, and a worldly sanctuary, &c, there is henceforth no distinction to be observed in the church of God; all are made one, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Hence we infer that the above admonition applies to the saints among the Gentiles with the same force as to those among the Jews.

But as in relation to all other scriptures, so will this, it has its appropri-

ate meaning, and may not be wrested from that meaning with impunity.

We have been led to an examination of this text, by the frequent use to which it has been applied by the advocates of the *New Divinity* schemes of the day. In the absence of scriptural authority for the popular faith and practices of the great majority of professors, they have endeavored to cover their motives by a reference to this text; let the object to be effected, or the manner of accomplishing it, be what it may, this text is brought forward as a divine warrant. Thus, for instance: The Roman Catholic would say that saying mass, worshiping the Virgin, and advocating their doctrine, is in the meaning of this text *to do good*; and the paying tithes to the church, and money for the absolution of their sins to the Catholic priesthood, or for the deliverance of the departed spirits of their relatives from purgatory is to communicate, in the sense of this scripture.

Another tells us that it should be understood differently and so we find that men professing to be teachers in Israel do not agree. But, is there no rule given by which we are to know the mind of the Lord, as to what is in his estimation, and what is not, good? Are we indeed left to grope about in the dark, and for the want of a better, to employ human wisdom and providence as our rule, and to conclude that the answering of our own feelings and judgment in our decision will be satisfactory to the sovereign Judge of quick and dead? Let the apostles answer. Peter says, "We have a more

sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to take heed, '(how long)' until the day dawns, and the day-star arises in our hearts."—2 Peter i. 19. And Paul says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. ii. 16 17. Here then we find a rule for our proceeding, as the children of the kingdom, and as the men of God, we are thoroughly furnished to all good works. This rule will answer all necessary purposes unto the men of God; they are amply provided for. And while the nominal professor will attempt to justify his conduct in joining with and contending for the unscriptural institutions of the day, upon the general principle of doing good, without considering that "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is the way of death," the man of God, who feareth the Lord and trembleth at his word, will in all his religious pursuits regard the word of God as his only rule of faith and practice, and disclaim all religious works as evil, however fair they may seem, that are without example or precept in the good book.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

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SONG

SONGS of praise the angels

sang,

Heaven with hallelujahs rang,

When Jehovah's work begun,

When he spake, and it was

done.

**Songs of praise awoke the
morn**

When the Prince of peace was

born;

Songs of praise arose when he

Captive led captivity.

**Saints below, with heart and
voice,**

Still in songs of praise rejoice;

Learning here, by faith and

love,

Songs of praise to sing above.

Borne upon their latest breath,

Songs of praise shall conquer

death;

Then, amidst eternal joy, Songs

of praise their powers employ.

James Montgomery. 1825.

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EDITORIAL

TEMPTATION



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

It has been some time since I read in an old Signs an article by an elder in whom I have much confidence, but found that I was not in complete accord with that particular article. He quoted Matt. 4:1, *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.* Then he attempted to show how Jesus was tempted, but did not sin. Jesus is the holy Son of God and therefore could

not sin. *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 Jn.3:9. Jesus was tempted by men, but the temptations of the devil immediately after he had fasted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness were surely the greatest temptations he had to endure. No other man has ever, nor will ever, suffer such strong temptations. Paul tells us, *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able; but with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* 1 Cor, 10:13. Jesus suffered all the temptations common to man to accomplish the holy purpose of God. In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he must become incarnate. *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood he also likewise took part of the same that through death might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being*

tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Heb. 2: 14-18. A priest must have something to offer for sins, his own and those of the people. The blood of many animals and birds was shed in sacrifice under the old covenant, but in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sin every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. In the 10th. chapter of Hebrews we are told that God had no pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices offered under the first covenant, ***Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he (Christ) saith, Sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.*** This body was the body of Jesus, and he said, ***Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By which will, (God's will), we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.*** The second covenant was made in which the Lord said. ***I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*** What a gracious covenant God has given us through the shed blood of his only begotten Son Jesus! ***He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also give us all things?*** Rom.8:32. Paul said, But my God shall supply all

your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. Phil. 4:19.

The word 'tempt' has two distinct definitions, and both are used in various scriptures. One meaning is, to be enticed or drawn away of our lusts to do that which is sinful or against the law. The other means, to be tried or tested. We should be aware of this lest it should lead us to believe there is contradiction of certain scriptures. James 1 :13, ***Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.*** In Gen. 22:1 we find that God did tempt Abraham to take Isaac upon a mountain and offer him for a burnt offering. If we should say that God enticed Abraham in this we would be in error. God was trying or testing the faith of Abraham; not to find how much faith he had, but to show the strong faith Abraham had; and this was for our learning. In Heb. 11:17, ***By faith Abraham, when he was tried (tempted), offered up Isaac. Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.*** Rom. 4:20-24.

Now we know that God raised up Moses to lead the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt. God went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them by the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. He divided the waters of the Red Sea before

them, and they crossed over dry shod, but the pursuing Egyptians were destroyed when God closed the waters over them. The Israelites witnessed these things, yet they tempted God when they thirsted for water, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not? Ex. 17:7. God gave them manna, angel's food, yet they provoked and tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lusts. Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Ps.78;17-19. God Gave them flesh to eat, yet they were not estranged from their lusts. But while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel. For all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wonderous works. They continuously tempted him and provoked his anger, and only when he slew them did they seek him. They remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steady in his covenant. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not, and turned away his anger, and did not stir up his wrath. Yet they oft provoked him in the wilderness, and grieved him in the desert. Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.

I have paraphrased some of the 78th chapter of Psalm. It may be to your benefit to read the entire chapter. I found it to be very interesting indeed. It teaches us that we should never tempt God in our heart, but believe his holy word and trust in him. If we do not understand a scripture, let us go to God in prayer. *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given unto him. But let him ask in faith, not wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.* James 1:5-6. All men are subjected to temptations, and that daily. I know that I am, and I must admit there are times when I submit to them to my shame. However, we have a high priest to whom we may go and confess our sins. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* 1 Jn. 1:9. And in chapter 2, verses 1 & 2: *My little children, these things write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is our propitiation for our sins.*

Beloved brethren, let us heed this gentle exhortation from the apostle John that we sin not, that all may be well with us. Our God is not mocked, and he knows the thoughts of our hearts from afar. Pray that he might lead us not into temptation, but de-

liver us from evil; and lead us in the path of righteousness for his name's sake, and receive us into his glorious presence when time shall be no more. Praise him forevermore.

May he forgive all errors herein, and bless the truth.

Eld. C C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

TOGETHERNESS

There is a small number of people in this world of forgetfulness, who remember what true togetherness means. They were taught by a Teacher, who, though they forget him now and then, draws them back into a sweet remembrance.

These people sorrow and mourn when selfish, worldly wants and desires tear them apart. The fellowship, faith, hope and love, that drew them together, is a part of their very being. When these marks of God's children are hidden in dissension and strife among themselves, they sorrow and long for the peace they once knew. Trouble and grief are their lot, until the sweet love and charity, which has been hidden for a season, brings them together again.

Ah, sweet mystery of life, to know that he who begins a good work in a vessel of mercy, continues it till all such vessels rightly fitted together form his building, "In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth

into an holy temple in the Lord." The cord that binds them together is Jesus Christ, for in him, and him alone, is the nation whose God is the Lord. Hate, as the world knows hate, is a foreign and strange word to their tongue since the Spirit of love entered their hearts. The only hate within them is that hate they feel for themselves: the old man of sin, that they carry about as a thorn in the flesh, till the day the deliverer comes. It wars with the Spirit or the new man, as long as we tabernacle in the world of sin and sorrow.

We hope to be led to write the feelings in our own heart about a people who are so weak they can do nothing of themselves, to reach the holy temple in the Lord. And yet are built to such specifications, they can do all things, through Christ who strengthens them; how each little piece of lifeless clay, inert and helpless, can be molded into an honorable vessel, so that when it is fitly framed together with like vessels, grows into an holy temple in the Lord.

It is our desire to tell how those little ones, who are scattered all over the world, are drawn together, hewn into a timber, and shaped to fit into its own place. No other spot in the building will be left for this particular vessel of mercy. We are promised that "*I go to prepare a place for you.*" These wayward ones are turned from their selfish desires and lusts. They long to turn their eyes inward and view their own sins, and cry for charity, when they look on a brother's. They cry unto the Lord, "*Draw me, we will run after thee.*" The holy temple is incom-

plete until all the pieces are drawn together, and fitly framed into the building.

They are shaped and made ready for their special place through their trials and tribulations in this world. We are told in the Bible, if we escape these tribulations in the furnace of afflictions, then we are bastards and not sons. Even in our groanings and complaints, a still small voice makes us beg for enough trouble, beg for enough cares and sorrows, to temper us; to make us "wait upon the Lord" and to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Such is the experience of one, who through many doubts and many fears, still has that blessed hope within him.

How we long at times to escape the wasteland, the wilderness, the deserts and the valleys of despair. If we had our desires we would always sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; but without the darkness we could not know light, and without the doubts and fears, we would never know of his sweet mercy and see his sweet smile of deliverance. How wonderful that a God of purpose decreed it so.

"They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble." Is it not wonderul to know of the straight way, the rivers of waters, and how they figure in the shaping of each piece for the building? His

purposes and promises are our guide and shield as he fashions and draws us together in one.

Have you thought about the many strangers drawn together by this invisible force, as they fulfill the blueprint God made for his temple? Even though the world believes these to happen by chance, we know they all fit in the fore-ordained plan of God, for ***"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them; who are the called according to his purpose;"*** Are we not taught in the Scriptures of people, of times, of events and places, that shaped the pieces as the holy temple grew in the Lord? ***"He will say to the North give up; and to the South keep not back: bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth."***

Let us meditate upon the drawing together of some of these children of God; of how he introduced strangers and led them about, as he fitted them in his purposed building. All these travels of the saints before us redound to his glory and praise, and comfort us who follow them, if indeed I can lay claim to such riches. I am so unworthy to even think on such things. They are too high, I cannot attain unto them but must beg that he reach down his mercies to this poor, helpless sinner. Pray for me.

Since Paul was given as a pattern for those who should follow him, let us see how he and a stranger were drawn together, and think on the results. We know how he was stopped on his sinful journey to Damascus,

and how totally depraved he was in all the events that happened there. He was utterly helpless in the matter, but in the mind and purpose of God, Paul's experience of grace and mercy was not complete till he and Ananias, a total stranger, were drawn together in a miraculous way.

Paul was kept blind till their togetherness made him whole. Ananias was as useful in God's purpose, as Paul, in setting before us the inability of man. He was reluctant and afraid of this one who was on the way to destroy him, but went forth in obedience and faith. His meeting Paul set the chain of events, that led Paul to the "*Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold,*" and, many other miracles, as the elect, both Jew and Greek were set apart, as the temple in the Lord grew.

The pitiful means and missions of man are all together vanity, in comparison to the drawing together of these disciples to go forth preaching Christ, the way, the truth and the life.

Consider Phillip and the eunuch, who lived in different countries: Phillip preaching Christ and the eunuch worshipping under the law of Moses. They were drawn together, not by chance, but by an angel of the Lord directing Phillip to the road travelled by the eunuch, who was on the way back to Egypt (meaning darkness or the law). However, Phillip preached unto him Christ, and he believed that Jesus was Christ the Son of God, and was baptized, — forming another timber in the building of God. These were fashioned and made ready at the direction and supervision of the Holy Spirit. The

poet says, "*He moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.*"

The more we study the written word and hope for a revelation of it, the more we agree with the poet. "*How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.*"

When Mary, the mother of Jesus, greeted Elizabeth, the mother of John, we are told in the Bible that John leaped in his mother's womb for joy. Neither of the children were born, but what wonderful blessings and comfort are experienced by the children of God through the ages as a result of their mothers being drawn together. No where is recorded in holy writ, a more beautiful song of praise and adoration of her Lord and Master, than was spoken by Mary, as she carried him in her own virgin body; miracle of miracles.

The little children of God are carried to the heights in John's relationship with their Saviour, as he prepares the way for Him in their own wilderness. They praise God as they are baptized with his Son, and behold the Holy Ghost descending from heaven. Although these are only experiences of grace and prayer now, they are a hope that is an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast.

It makes us long to be given strength to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We pray to be molded, hewn, and shaped to fit in the holy temple, as we read the divine history of John, the messenger of the Lord. We also suffer and doubt with him in prison, when

our Lord hides his face from us in a little wrath. We wonder is he clean gone forever; and cry out with John, "Is this the Christ?"

However, we know, if we have the witness within us, that we must be shown, over and over; that these things must need be, to fulfill the purpose of God in fitly framing his building, that is growing into the temple of the Lord.

How wonderful to meditate upon the fulfillment of prophecy and the purpose and promises of God. We, who are unfit to even dream of such claims, still hope to be numbered with those he loves and calls from afar, as he draws his own to their heavenly home.

We see his purpose to send Joseph into Egypt to save much people alive; and the long, long journey back from the land of darkness. The meeting again, of Joseph and his brethren, who knew him not, was brought about by providential necessity. Yet God's purpose in it still comforts and feeds his sheep today.

His making vessels of mercy out of inert, dead clay, to fit into their own place, included the weak and the poor, as well as the rich and the mighty. The scriptures teach that he has a people in every kindred, nation and tongue under heaven. On that final day his loved ones will be gathered from all walks of life, and from the far reaches of the earth.

Ah! precious ones, can you imagine a place, where you will be together with saints like Paul, Phillip, John, Joseph and those others spoken of in

inspiration? Can you even turn and look into your brother's sweet countenance here with you now, and imagine being permitted to live with him forever in that sweet beyond?

I know that within myself, these things are impossible, but am constrained to believe, that he who bestowed his love upon a poor and undeserving people, could have included me.

Someday, somewhere, when he has finished that holy temple in the Lord, when all the building is fitly framed together, there will be a love and a togetherness, this wicked world never knew or dreamed of, and can never know.

Mrs. Cisco Barren
Spearsville, La.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EDITORIAL

**"OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO HAVE
SUFFERED THESE THINGS?"**

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

How impossible for anyone to really understand and believe what the prophets spoke unless his

understanding is opened, though he may be well acquainted with their words. (see Luke 24:45)

When Jesus said unto the Jews, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me," he was showing them how wrong they were in their understanding of the scriptures; for, instead of their finding in them eternal life by external forms, ceremonies, and works, which they thought was the value of those writings, the prophets were in truth testifying of the coming and the work of Him who was then in their midst, and then speaking unto them. He sharply rebuked them, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

The two brethren, in the connection of our text, were not yet brought to know the purpose and magnitude of the mission of Christ in his coming into the world; and they were greatly saddened that the chief priests and the rulers had delivered him, (whom they thought would be the deliverer of Israel from their Roman bondage,) to be condemned to death, and had crucified him. Their great anticipation was blasted, and it was quite enough to make them of sad countenance as they walked and talked of the things which had just come to pass. Early that morning certain women of their company had gone to the sepulchre and reported that they did not find the

body of Jesus, but saw a vision of angels who said that he is alive. And others had given the same report.

It was because of these things, they told the stranger who had joined them in the way, that they were sad. These two did not recognize the stranger, for "their eyes were holden;" yet their hearts "burned within them" as he talked with them; and as he rebuked them, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." It was a little later that day that their eyes were opened as he blessed and broke bread while they were eating, and they knew who it was that had spoken to them in the way.

"Ought not" indicates an obligation, or the necessity of Christ coming into the world, and suffering, and entering into his glory. "He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Ought not presents the necessity not merely of his fulfilling all the prophesies concerning himself, but more specifically to fulfill his Father's will in preparing a body for his incarnation and sending him into the world, that, after accomplishing the suffering for the redemption of those chosen by the Father (the church), he should enter into the same glory he had with his Father before the world began. (And the amazing part is that he takes all the re-

deemed with him, having fully reconciled them unto his Father.)

“Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.” (John 12:27) As we remember the sinner’s lost condition, and know that he does not deserve even the notice of his offended God, we understand full well that the necessity of his coming “unto this hour,” arose not from any obligation to the sinner, not because of the sinner’s coercion, but rather alone from the love of God so freely shown in his mercy. Truly the subject matter of the whole Bible is the portrayal of what God has done for his chosen people; and is expressed by Jesus, “Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you,” and by John, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

In order for us to understand the “first-cause” of Christ’s coming to suffer, faith makes us look at things before the world began, as related in the word of God. If one is blessed with faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit of which he is born again, he comprehends all the works of God from their decree in eternity to their completion. To him

***“Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks through the clouds of flesh
and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.***

***It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,***

***Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.***

***By faith we know the worlds were
made***

***By God’s almighty hand:
Abra’m, to unknown countries led
By faith obeyed the Lord.***

***He sought a city fair and high,
Built by the eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we
die That heavenly building
stands.”***

—Watts

From the pronouncement of God unto the serpent just after the fall, “***I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,***” to the coming of Christ, his ascension and promise of his second coming, we have a perfect unveiling of all things of which God is pleased to give an account concerning his Son and what he should accomplish in the world—sometimes in types and shadows, and sometimes plainly in him who was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” as he came to “this hour”. These things all manifest the love of God and his mercy and grace from the beginning; and at the same time show that the redemption of God’s people is not of themselves, but is certain because of the atonement made by his Son. The work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

All who concede that the Scriptures are the revealed word of God, but are skeptical of the doctrine, should read His word; for this is where this truth is found. There can be no other interpretation than this when the plainly correlative Scriptures are brought together, presenting a complete narration of Jesus Christ and his work on earth. ***"Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."***

We must look, however, to the things preceding the actual accomplishment of what Christ did, in order to find the reason why he ought to have suffered. the conception of any action is always older than the action itself — there cannot be one without the other. Should we look only at the life and work of Christ after he came into the world, we would overlook so much that is inseparable from all that was necessary in the salvation of the Lord's people: for the coming of Christ for the salvation of his people was not just an after provision to meet unforeseen conditions. His coming was in the decree of God, who had the entire matter incorporated in an eternal purpose.

Prerequisite to the sending of his Son into the world there was, first of all, the ***love of God towards his people***, and the ***choice of them in his Son*** "when as yet there was none of them;" then the ***creation of the world and forming man of the dust of the earth***; then the ***transgression of His command which brought condemnation and death to all men***: thus manifesting the need of ***redemp-***

tion of those previously chosen in his Son; then the giving of the law which made ***sin exceedingly sinful***; then the ***preview of the coming mercy of God*** in the institution of sacrificial worship; and the ***many promises of God*** unto his people made "at sundry times and in divers manners;" then the ***incarnation of his Son*** in a body prepared of the Father ***for the suffering of death***—the only way ***God provided for the redemption*** of his chosen ones.

This is a brief outline of the foundation on which the coming of Christ and his work of redemption rested. It is easy to recognize then the importance of viewing the whole matter from the beginning to the ending, in order to understand why Christ ought to have suffered, and to enter into his glory. These things all evidence the love of God and his mercy and grace from the very beginning, and at the same time show that redemption is not of the people themselves, but is made sure and certain unto the beloved of God by the atonement of Christ; and that the work of God and the work of his Son is in perfect accord in all things.

It is right therefore for us to feel that Christ ought to have suffered and then to have entered into his glory; yet it involves the most solemn thoughts and feelings we may ever have—that God should give his only begotten Son to suffer for such sinners as we are.

The subject involves much more than Christ being just a substitute for sinners in his death; as is so often expressed. A substitute for a guilty person could never clear him of guilt. We

person could never clear him of guilt. We know of no time or circumstance in law in which a substitute could pay the supreme penalty for another; yet is it true that Christ died the just for the unjust: so we must understand the relationship of the Saviour and those he saved.

We are informed in the Scriptures that God's people were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world—they therefore had their spiritual existence in Him then, their life being hid with Christ in God. ***"This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."*** Jesus said, ***"Thine they were and thou gavest them me."*** God's people (the church) being in Christ before the world began, had a close, vital relationship with him and with the Father: so close that God has been their dwelling place in all generations: from everlasting to everlasting; (Psalm 90:1,2) so close that the church had eternal life in Christ before the world was brought into existence. It was this close, vital and *continual* standing of the church in Christ that brought about his subsequent coming into the world for the purpose of redeeming his people who were fallen—it being his sole right to redeem them since they were his own.

This actual existence of the spiritual life of the church in Christ is not to be forgotten, while we are noticing that the earthly nature of the individual members had no existence until they were created in Adam with a natural life which was mortal: that is, subject to sin against God. Sin they

did, and fell under the curse of the law which God gave them. Thus the children of God (chosen before in Christ) are born of the flesh and nature of Adam, and know nothing of their spiritual, eternal life which was hidden with Christ in God, until it is manifested in them when they are called of God, quickened and born of the Spirit: it is then that the whole matter of their choice (election) in Christ, their fall, and their redemption, is so wonderfully made known to them.

When we read, ***"For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression,"*** (I Timothy 2 :13, 14) and, ***"The rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . .,"*** we have presented the oneness of Adam and his wife, Eve; and when we are informed by the Apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians that we, ***"Are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but speak concerning Christ and the church,"*** we have presented the oneness of Christ and his church. It is plainly stated that Adam was not deceived, but the woman was; yet Adam went into the transgression with her; and there was no separation there. Was it not because she was bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh ?

Again, since we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and since our life is hidden with Christ in God, it was for the same reason, in the purpose of God, that Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin, dying the just for the unjust; and so there is no separation there. In Adam the chosen in Christ fell with all others, but the Father sent his Son to partake of their flesh and blood, in order that he should suffer for them in their flesh, bearing their sins in his own body on the Cross. It was this vital oneness, not only in his partaking of their flesh and blood, but in their lives being hidden with Christ in God, that gives answer to his asking "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

All that Christ did when he came into the world was for the benefit of his people: to clearly manifest that there were a people of the genealogy of Adam who were nevertheless beloved of God before the world began—before they had their natural existance—and for whose redemption his Father sent him into the world, (they being alienated from God by reason of their transgressions against Him,) in order that, as a part of the whole continuing will of God, they in their persons should receive the spirit of their adoption as children of God, the hope and assurance of eternal life, being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

The New Testament which Christ gave, which was but dimly seen before his coming to give the perfect light of the doctrine of God our Saviour, manifested that those before

loved of the Father should be adopted from their earthly family, purified and made fit to be the sons of God: their death swallowed up in victory, their bodies redeemed from corruption to bear the image of the heavenly; and when their mortality shall have put on immortality, they shall be in actual possession of the eternal life given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Then will be the fulfillment of the redemption of the purchased possession.

Yes, Christ ought to have suffered and entered into his glory, because He came to do his Father's will.

We have just hinted at some of the wonderful things contained in this subject, but we hope sufficiently to stir up the pure minds of those who read it.

J.D.W

PSALM 100

A Psalm of praise.

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

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

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

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

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

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his (own) image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." - Gen. i. 26, 27.

In what does this image or likeness consist? Scott, in his commentaries, after discussing this question at length, says, "We determine, then, that the image of God in which Adam was created consists in an understanding prepared to imbibe true knowledge, a judgment free from corrupt bias, a will disposed to obedience, and affection regulated according to reason and truth; nor can we conceive that it could consist in anything else." By this last expression, as well as by others, it is evident that this view is adopted, not because of its own intrinsic force, but because there appears to the author no other way in which the subject can be understood. I think there are other interpretations of Scripture which have been accepted for the same reason.

I have never been able to see, the propriety of this view concerning the nature of the likeness to God in which Adam was created, and it is in my mind to express my reason for objecting to it, and also to tell briefly what I think the Scriptures do teach concerning it. Whatever the Scriptures declare we are bound to receive, even though we do not understand it; for we know the words are right, and that the only Interpreter will open our un-

derstanding to know their meaning as soon as we need that knowledge. But we are not thus bound by the form of uninspired words, nor the views of uninspired men. When they are seen and felt to be in accordance with the inspired Scriptures we cannot but receive them; they come to us with the sweet power of light. But it is not right to adopt the views of any one when they are not thus commended to our consciences, though we may regard them as probably true, if we see nothing in the Scriptures contrary to them. When, however, we think we have positive light through the Scriptures upon the subject, we should do wrong to withhold it for fear of the reproachful charge that we think ourselves wiser than others. I have hesitated to express my mind at times for this reason, but I have been condemned for it. We should present our views for the consideration of brethren, not with the thought of exercising dominion over the faith of any, but with the hope that we may "be helpers of their joy." It is pitiful that I should keep back some thought that has brought comfort to my soul because of the fear that some one will say I am bringing in new things. New things! Will not that blessed treasure-house, the Scriptures, present new things to the saints of God until the last of the redeemed has been taken home to glory? "Both new and old." New to every longing, hungry soul whose various wants they satisfy, and to whose various circumstances they apply with all needed help and comfort; old because they are the words and work of Jesus, who

all been fully unfolded yet, nor have all the books that have been written, nor all the sermons that have been preached by the servants of God, supplied all the expressions that will yet be needed to tell of the wonderful things which shall be unfolded to the wondering and admiring view of the saints to the end of the world. The Lord's hungry poor will still be turning from the words of men to the word of God, and what *is* shown to them there in their times of hunger, and weakness, and affliction, will constantly tend to draw them together, and hold them in the bond of union and perfection, as no authority or power of men could do. The opening of the word by the Spirit to suit their needs, the love of Christ felt in the heart, the work of the ministry by his gifts, and the wall of salvation, will effectually bring the children of God into manifest union, and hold them there.

To overcome opposition to our view by anything save scriptural testimony could not be gratifying to an honest, thoughtful mind. If the force of the testimony I present is not apparent to any one I can have no ground of complaint against him on that account. If I am right, the One who made me see the truth upon that point can show it to others. If I am wrong, he who shows me the error does me good. If I have attached myself personally to any theory as its discoverer or special champion, in the sense that I regard any argument against it as a personal attack upon myself, it is likely I will be of no more use upon that subject to the Lord's people. If the Scriptures pre-

sented in opposition to, or in support of, any view do not carry conviction to the mind of my brother, I shall not help my case, nor instruct him in the truth, by speaking harshly to or of him, and calling his view a heresy. The servant of God must remember that he is never to weary in well doing, never to be discouraged by opposition; but in meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves; not instruct by his own authoritative assertions that such and such things are true, but by the proof constantly repeated and presented. He must remember that the positions he defends can only be forced upon the mind by their own intrinsic value. It is a sweet and lovely work, full of precious comfort to the servant, to repeat again and again, and show in every possible way the evident meaning of the Scriptures in which he believes is taught the doctrine he sets forth.

And now I still attend to my subject. An image or likeness of any man, or of anything, is a representative figure of that man or thing. In that respect in which it is an image it is exactly like the original; not *almost*, but *exactly*, like it. An image of a man may be of gold or wood, and of any size; but the form and features must have been exactly imitated so that it cannot be mistaken or it is not an image. Now in what sense can man be said to be like God? Not in his body, all acknowledge, for God is a Spirit. The view that I have quoted from Thomas Scott seems to have been regarded by many as the only other possible understanding; but how can a man's mind be considered as in the likeness of God's mind? The correct

ness of the description of the parts of God's mind, as given by Scott, may well be questioned. God's understanding is not prepared to imbibe knowledge, for he has eternally possessed all knowledge, a thousand years being with him as one day. He has not a will disposed to obedience, for there is nothing for him to obey but the counsel of his own will. In his understanding, his will, his judgment, his affections, and in every attribute, he is altogether unlike man; the nature of these attributes is different. The Bible so presents them. God is infinite in every perfection. His thoughts and ways are not like those of his creature man.—Isaiah lv. 8. The Scriptures do not indicate a likeness to God in this respect, but they do indicate the contrary.

An image of a face or form must be exactly like the face or form, but may be of different size, and must be of different material. But an image or likeness of an invisible thing, as of mental or spiritual capacities, must be simply the same thing. So Christ is said to be "the image of the invisible God;" and again, "the express image of his person."—2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3. This means that he was "equal with God;" "in the form of God" (Phil. ii. 6); one with God. But Adam was not made in the image of God in the same sense in which it is declared that Jesus was the image of God.

Jesus was "made in the likeness of men," in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3.), having all their infirmities and temptations, and bearing the guilt and shame and curse of all their

sins; yet he was unlike them in that "he was holy, harmless, undefiled;" "he did no sin." So far as he was a likeness, the likeness was exact. So, while he was the image of God, and was God, he was distinct from the invisible God of which he was the image, in that he was the Son, the Head of the church, prepared to suffer for his people in their flesh, and to raise them with himself from sin and death to life and glory.

But to my mind the Scriptures do very clearly and distinctly set forth the nature and character of the similitude to God in which man was created. We notice some things which are important in the texts.

First. It is the first time during the record of creation that the Lord speaks in the first person plural: "Let us make man in our image."

Second. Each declaration that the Lord created man in his image and after his likeness, is followed by the expression, "Male and female created he them," as though this explained wherein the image or likeness lies. Gen. i. 27; v. 1, 2.

Third. The name Adam was given to both the male and female, evidently before the woman was made. Also, while the man was yet alone, the command was given to him not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Fourth when the woman was made and brought unto the man he said, "***This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;***" and he said of a man and his wife, "***And they shall be one flesh.***" And Adam called his wife's

name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; but she has been named in Adam with his own name before that separate manifestation.

Now, when the man had transgressed that command, the Lord said, "**Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.**"—Gen. iii. 22. What can this mean but that the image or likeness is now manifested? The image was complete before, but is now made to appear by the act of Adam in taking the fruit at his wife's hands, and following her in the transgression. "**The man is become as (like) one of us.**" Is not that one the Son of God? And is it not clearly shown by the apostle Paul wherein that likeness or image consists? The apostle says that Adam "**is the figure of him that was to come;**" and he says it when referring to Adam's transgression.—Rom. v. 14. It would appear from this, and the declaration in Gen. iii. 22, alone, if nothing more upon the subject were found in the Scriptures, that the likeness in which Adam was created is the likeness of Christ, the Son of God, in his mediatorial relation to the church as her head, and that the similitude (James iii. 9) or image consisted in his being created male and female, and in the one name Adam being given to both while the man was still alone; and that the manner of the transgression manifested this likeness to that One in the Godhead spoken of as "one of us." But the apostle leaves nothing to be inferred or guessed at by us, for he brings the subject clearly to light.

First. He speaks of Christ as the second Adam; showing that the first Adam, as embodying in himself his wife and all his posterity, who are all covered by his name, sets forth, as an image or figure, Christ in his relationship to the church: "**As it is written, The first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit.**" "**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."—1 Cor. xv. 45, 47-49. This shows wherein the likeness of Adam to the Son of God consists, referring exclusively to his relationship to the church, and beautifully setting it forth in this figurative way. Here also we have another illustration of an image, as being an exact likeness, not a partial one; those born of Adam bear his image, and those born of God shall bear the image of Christ, or be like him.

Second. The manner of the transgression was peculiar, and is of most important significance in the figure. "**For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.**"—1 Tim. ii. 13, 14. Here is where the man became "as one of us," one of the Godhead. The image or likeness existed before the transgression, but by this act of transgression, the man following his wife,

the likeness was fully manifested. The image could extend no farther than this; for the first Adam could not restore his wife, nor could he return himself. But here the infinitely superior power and glory and love of the second Adam appears. And how clearly and beautifully the apostle opens up this figure of male and female, husband and wife. ***"Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is Head of the church; and he is the Savior of the body."*** ***"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church."*** ***"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."***—Eph. v. 22-32. Who can fail to see in this most wonderful language the meaning of the image in which the first man, Adam, was created, a figure or image of the second man, who is the Lord from heaven. And how richly the figures of Head and body, and Husband

and wife, are blended, and yet each seen in its own distinctive character; and all setting forth the glorious mystery of the love of Christ to the church.

The man fell by that transgression from his first state in which God created him. He was made good, upright, pure, as a man. He was not a spiritual man, but natural. He was of the earth, earthy, and so all of his posterity are, and would have been even if he had not transgressed. He had not immortality, for we are distinctly told that Christ only has that (1 Tim. vi. 16), and all who possess immortality must have obtained it by a spiritual quickening from Christ, not by a natural creation in Adam. But in no sense have we a right to think or speak of Adam as imperfect, or sinful, or evil, or as lacking in anything as a perfect man when he was created, because the Lord made man good, upright.—Prov. But he sinned. It was not sin in his heart by creation which caused him to do that sinful act, for that act was the first of sin in the world. Sin came into the world then; ***"for sin is the transgression of the law."*** Ever since then sin in the heart has caused every sinful act and word and thought; but that act of Adam caused sin, or rather was itself sin. How do I reason that out? I do not reason it out at all. I just simply take the scriptural record and judgment; and from that I learn that I have no right to go back of that one act of Adam to find the first of sin in the world. It is a mystery, but it is true. ***"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."***—Rom. v. 19. From a state of innocence to a state of sin,

condemnation and death, I think ought properly to be called a fall.

Sin is a most terrible thing, as every convicted sinner knows. No one can know the offense and loathsomeness of sin but those who have been made alive by the power of the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. To such poor sinners the subject that presents to them the love of Christ to the church, and his salvation of sinners, so sweetly and clearly as this does, must be full of holy interest and comfort. As Adam and Eve were one before the transgression, so Christ and his people were one in some wonderful, mystical sense before the world began. As Adam was given the command before Eve was formed, so when Christ came into the world he said, *"Thy law is within my heart."* —Psalm xl. As Adam said of Eve, *"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,"* so of the bride of Christ it is said, *"We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones ;"* and the language of Adam concerning the wife is repeated by the apostle, and concerning it the apostle says, *"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."* Therefore, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, as Eve was of Adam, Christ, the heavenly Husband, followed his bride in the transgression. These members of his body were seen by the eternal God, and written in his book before the world began, *"when as yet there were none of them."* — Psalm cxix. 16. So, as Adam took the forbidden fruit at his wife's hands, because they were

one, and he loved her, and must be with her, likewise Christ came under the law where his bride, the church, was, and stood with her in her sin and defilement, and died for her, and by his death washed her clean from all sin, and made her pure and spotless in the sight of God. *"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, and hath raised us up together."* — Eph. ii. 4-6. This love was an everlasting love. Jer. xxxi. 3.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." This love is illustrated by the love of a mother for her child, by the love of a brother, by a father's love, and by that of earthly friends. But the most wonderful, the sweetest, the most mysterious, and the first love felt and manifested in the world, that of the husband for the wife, was especially designed to set forth in its fullness the love of Jesus for the church, and her love for him, which is caused and called forth by his love for her. And he who had this everlasting love for his bride, the church, was able not only to come under the law that condemned her, and lay down his life for her, but was able to take up that life again, and rise with her forever above the dominion of death, and a present it unto himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

And now while the members of his body are yet in the flesh, and feel the bondage of corruption, they are given faith to see Jesus in this eternal relationship at times, and to behold the manner of his love, and to rest from the burden of depravity and of care in that love. And they are given at times to feel the power and refreshment of his love in their hearts; to realize that Christ dwells in their hearts by faith, and that they being rooted and grounded in love, are able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and that thus they are filled with all the fullness of God.—Eph. iii. 17-19. This love passes the knowledge of the wisest man, but is comprehended in its fullness in the loving, lowly heart of the littlest child of God, when Christ is present with him, dwelling in his heart by faith.

So the first Adam went with his wife into death, because of his love for her, but could not return, and therefore all his family are born in death. But from that great family of men, the Lord has chosen vessels of mercy without number, who are loved of the Father even as he loved his Son; and him he loved before the world began. John xvii. 23, 24. These were given unto Christ, and this figure of the male and female in creation, of the man and his wife, sets forth the mystery of that wonderful love that the Son eternally had for them. And the second Adam came to them because they were his, because they were bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and he had power to redeem


them, and to save them, and to make them feel his love, the sweetest, richest experience which the heart is able to feel; and he will cause them to bear his image, to be like him, and appear with him in glory.

*"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious, human
tongues,
Their Saviour's praises speak."*

Elder Silas H. Durand

MEETINGS

ALTUS LITTLE FLOCK CHURCH

 The Lord willing the Little Flock Church of Altus Oklahoma will have its annual May meeting the third Sunday and Saturday before. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us.

The church is located on 509 West Sutherland.

Elder C.C. Morris, Pastor
C.E. Hatchett, Clerk

GLENWOOD CHURCH

 Glenwood Church, Princeton, WV announces a 5th Sat. meeting, May 29, 1999 starting at 10:00 a.m.

Those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460 West. Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19 North. Then immedi-

ately turn left onto Glenwood Park Road, 1 1/2 miles, to church on left.

Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I-77/460 intersection.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, located in Pittsylvania County, Va. on Mount Cross Road, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in May. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder J.R. Williams, Moderator
Geneva B. Scearce, Clerk

MEETING

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Church on fifth Sunday May 30th. Song service to begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 11:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and any ministers of our faith and order is especially invited.

We also meet at 6:00 p.m. on each second Sunday for a one hour song service.

All are invited.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Bro. Allen Carroll, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1999

Cleo Underwood, VA	\$5.00
Mrs. Grace Locke, KY	5.00
Mrs. Nellie M. Dalton, VA	2.00
E.F. Dyer, VA	2.00
Mrs. Garlon G. Vick, NC	7.00
Eld. Cleo Robertson, NC	2.00
Pete Phillips, VA	2.00
Mrs. Anna M. Savage, KY	5.00
Ms. Brenda Wright, NC	2.00
Guthrie Grogan, KY	2.00
George W. Hyslip, TN	15.00
Larue LeBlanc, LA	2.00
Mrs. Phyllis Snyder, VA	2.00
Mrs. Livie Thompson, VA	2.00
Gayle Phillips, AL	10.00
Lloyd Spikes, OR	7.00
Francis M. Knight, VA	4.00
Mrs. Rebecca S. Smith, FL	2.00
John S. Collie, NC	2.00

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1999

Jim Mosley, WI	10.00
Mrs. Martha Thornton, VA	7.00
Mrs. Frank Sizemore, WV	7.00
Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC	2.00
Mrs. A.U. Hocutt, GA	7.00
Tommy C. Wall, VA	2.00
Homer E. Wade, Va	2.00
Mrs. Udell H. Young, NC	2.00
Ms. Marjorie Cook, TN	2.00
Whitney Mobley, NC	10.00
Eld. Jerry Farmer, KY	2.00
Joseph M. Pegram, NC	2.00
Coley S. Strader, NC	10.00

OBITUARIES

SAMUEL ARNOLD CLARK

It is with A sad heart, that at the request of Old Mt. Church, will try to write in memory of our dear Brother Arnold Clark. Who passed away July 21, 1998 at Danville Regional Medical Center. He had been in declining health for 5 years. Born July 2, 1917 in Letcher county Kentucky. He was the son of Henry Elliott Clark, and Margaret Bowling Clark On Dec. 24, 1937 he was married to Naomi Marin Slaughter Clark. who survives. Bro. Arnold Clark joined Old Mt. Primitive Baptist church Feb. 24, 1951. Was baptised by the late Elder W.R. Dodd, the 4th Sunday in April 1951. Brother Clark was A firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He loved and enjoyed his church. Was always willing to help and suport the church any way he could He attended regularly as long as his health permitted. He served as treasurer and trustee of the church for 30 years. He lived in Pittsylvania county and Danville for over 60 years. And retired in 1973 from the city of Danville Gas department, where he worked as an engineer. After his retirement, he worked for Virginia Solite as fuel secretary until 1981. In addition to his wife of the residence, survivors include two daughters, Janice Clark Shelton of Gretna, and Trudy Clark Thompson of Gafney, S.C.; two sons, Samuel Arnold Clark Jr. of Gadsden, Ala and John Scott Clark of Mebane, N.C. one brother Hadley War-

ren Clark of Wise; one sister, Loretta Clark Moore of Norton. 11 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. He was predeceased by one daughter, Betty Clark Scarce, and one grandson. The funeral was held 4 P.M. Thursday at the Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Home Westover Chapel by Elder C.B.Davis Jr. Burial was in Danville Memorial Gardens.

May God bless his family, comfort and reconcile them, as only He can do. We the church loved him too.

By Sarah Barker,
Elder C.B.Davis Jr. Moderator

SISTER UNA CONNER

We are again made to bow in humble submission to God's will by removing another precious member of Salem Church. Sister Una Sowers Conner was born October 3, 1919 and passed away December 31, 1998. Funeral services were held at Salem Church on January 2, 1999 with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry officiating with interment in the Restvale cemetery.

Sister Una and her husband, Brother Irvin joined the church in April of 1968. They were very faithful to their church, attending services up until their health kept them from coming out. They left the church a very generous gift showing their concern for it's welfare.

Sister Una was preceded in death by her husband. She was survived by

one sister, Minnie Hinkhaus, and several nieces and nephews.

One of Sister Una's favorite songs was "There is a House Not Made With Hands" which was sung during her funeral. We believe she is resting in the paradise of God and will awake in His likeness to be forever satisfied. We will miss her but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Written in love by the request of Salem Church.

Mary Poff

LILLIAN LOVELL NEAL

In memory of Lillian Lovell Neal she was the widow of William Lewis Neal, he departed this life March 8, 1993.

Preceded in death by her parents; J.F. and Lucy Turner Lovell, three brothers and two sisters.

Date of birth December 21, 1895. Sister Lillian Lovell Neal passed away Sunday May 17, 1998 at the age of 102 at the Roanoke Nursing Home.

Surviving are sons and their wives William and Lucy Neal of Roanoke Va., James and Jo Anne Neal of Boston, Mass., six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, several beloved nieces and nephews.

Sister Neal and Brother Neal were received together into the fellowship of Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church in September 1977. She loved her church and was a faithful member. She was baptised by her pastor Elder

Kenneth Key. She loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

Sister Neal and Brother Neal were a devoted couple.

Their home was always open with a warm welcome.

Her funeral was conducted at Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Julian Williams and C.B. Davis, Jr.

She was laid to rest beside her husband Brother William Neal in the church cemetery.

Our loss is her eternal gain.

Sue Blalock, Clerk

SISTER VERNIE E. SHAW

It has become my sad task to write this resolution for my Sister in the Church and Mother-in-law, Sister Vernie E. Shaw. She was born February 28, 1907 in Roanoke, VA, the first child of the late Elder S.J. and Sister Maggie Priddy. She left this life February 8, 1999 at the Maples Nursing Home in Bluefield, WV. Preceding her in death were her husband, John William Shaw and & sister, Nawasa Crotty. Surviving her, a son Lee and wife Sister Marilyn Shaw, two grandsons and four great grandchildren, several nieces and nephews and other relatives.

Sister Vernie had been a member since 1925, first at Bluefield Primitive Baptist Church, then Glenwood Primitive Baptist Church, churches pastored by her father until his death February 9, 1952. During those sev-

enty-four years she saw many happy times along with times of trouble. Her home church remained a haven of comfort to her and she loved to hear the Sovereign Grace of God preached. During the last nine and one half years of her life she wasn't able to be with us many times, but each time we visited her after church she always wanted to know we had a good meeting, who was there, telling us she had followed us through the meeting in her mind. She enjoyed the visits from her pastor and church family. Her faith remained strong to the end. Not many days before her death she told us she was tired and wanted to go home.

Mom had a kindly, humble spirit, always looking to the Lord for daily strength. She was loved by family, friends and those who cared for her at the nursing home, and will be missed dearly by those persons. She had a ready smile and a way of lifting someone's spirits, even when she was quite ill herself. I count it a privilege we were blessed to be with her and help with her care the last two weeks of her life.

Her services were held at Glenwood Primitive Baptist Church February 10, 1999 with Elder Larry Hollandsworth officiating. Burial was in Resthaven Memorial Park, Princeton, WV, beside her husband.

Submitted in love,

Done by order of the church during conference February 21, 1999.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Mod.
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

GEAMES GARNETT THOMPSON

Brother Geames Garnett Thompson was born Sept. 18, 1918 in Pittsylvania County. A son of the late Moses Thompson and Mary Inman Thompson. He was married to sister Myrtle Murphy Thompson, who survives him, on Feb. 11, 1960. Brother Thompson was received by experience on the first Sunday in October 1993, and baptism was performed on the first Sunday in November 1993, into Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church.

Funeral services were conducted at the graveside on Saturday Jan. 23, 1999 at 1 P.M. by Elder Thomas Solomon and the Reverend Daryl Joyce. Burial was in the Danville Memorial Gardens. Those left to mourn Brother Garnett Thompson are his wife sister Myrtle Thompson, and his son Garnett Neal Thompson of Mount Hermon, and his two daughters, Linda T. Reid of Burlington N.C. and Ann T. Knight of Danville VA. Seven sisters; Vergie T. Mize, Geneva T. Fowler, Mary T. Nance, Doris T. Bailey, Sara T. Horsley, Jean T. Cook, and Clara T. Swift all of Danville. Six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Brother Thompson will be sadly missed at Strawberry Church.

May God bless and reconcile each one to their loss.

Written in love and hope,
Elder Thomas Solomon

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

**DARK and thorny is the desert
Through which pilgrims make their
[way
But beyond this vale of sorrows
Lie the fields of endless day;
Fiends, loud howling through the
desert,
Make them tremble as they go:
And the fiery darts of Satan
Often bring their courage low.**

**O young soldiers, are you weary
Of the troubles of the way ?
Does your strength begin to fail
you,**

**And your vigor to decay ?
Jesus, Jesus will go with you;
He will lead you to his throne;
He who dyed his garments for you
And the wine-press trod alone.**

**He whose thunder shakes creation;
He who bids the planets roll;
He who rides upon the tempest,
And whose sceptre sways the
whole;**

**Round him are ten thousand an-
gels,
Ready to obey command; —
They are always hovering round
you,
Till you reach the heavenly land.**

*There, on flowery hills of pleasure,
In the fields of endless rest
Love, and joy, and peace, shall
ever
Reign in triumph in your breast.
Who can paint those scenes of
glory,
Where the ransomed dwell on
high?
Where the golden harps for ever
Sound redemption through the
sky?*

*Millions there of flaming seraphs
Fly across the heavenly plain;
There they sing immortal praises—
Glory, glory is their strain !
But methinks a sweeter concert
Makes the heavenly arches ring;
And a song is heard in Zion,
Which the angels cannot sing.*

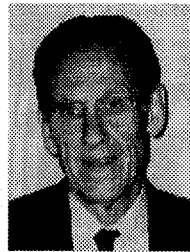
*See the heavenly host in rapture
Gaze upon the shining band;
Wondering at their costly garments
And the laurels in their hand !
There, upon the golden pavement,
See the ransomed march along;
While the splendid courts of glory
Sweetly echo to their song!*

*Oh ! their crowns, how bright they
sparkle,
Such as monarchs never wear;
They are gone to heavenly pastures—
Jesus is their Shepherd there.
Hail, ye happy, happy spirits !
Welcome to the blissful plain !
Glory, honor, and salvation;
Reign, sweet Shepherd, ever reign.*

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EDITORIAL



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

*Therefore said I
unto you, that no
man can come unto
me, except that it
were given unto
him of my Father.
(John Chap 6, vs 65)*

These are the words of Jesus, talking to those who followed him, not because of the power in the miracles that he did, but because they did eat of the loaves with which Jesus fed the five thousand men, plus the women and children. They did not believe in God, and the power that was manifested in the feeding of the multitudes; they were but following him because they desired the things by which they profited by following

him, the eating of the loaves and the fishes. This is true of many today, who in reality follow after the name of the Lord because they benefit naturally in the things that he provides for his followers and all those that are joined with them in a church capacity here in this time world. Jesus is telling them that they cannot come unto him, that is, believe on him in deed and in truth, except that it be given unto them of the Father. Those people to whom Jesus addressed the above words were interested only in the things of this world and the things that pleased them in nature and Jesus is telling them that these are not the things that were important; these were not what his kingdom was all about, his kingdom was not in the things of nature, but was eternal, spiritual and would last when the things of nature were folded up and put away into the annals of the history of this time world. If Jesus's kingdom was of the world and the physical kingdom, he would have spent his time correcting the problems of mankind and his work and word would have been seen and understood by all men. Instead his time was spent revealing the glories of the kingdom of God unto a special people, those who were given him of God, and the whole of scripture is directed to them and to them alone.

The men to whom Jesus was speaking can only see and understand that spiritual food which Jesus gives, his body, and which lasts forever. The natural food sustains your natural life here on earth, but that food which Jesus is speaking of here is that which

sustains the spiritual man, and which endureth unto everlasting life in that world which is to come.

On one occasion when Jesus was brought before Pilate to be examined by him, just prior to his death; Jesus told him, (John Chap 18, vs 36) "*My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom was of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*"

The men to whom Jesus was speaking can only see and understand the things of nature. They will never see or understand the things of the kingdom of God unless he reveals it unto them, in the new birth. They may study the bible, seek and search after the truth with all of the wisdom of man, but they will never receive it, in the flesh, because the truth is spiritually discerned and must be understood by the spiritual mind, and only God's children have the mind of Christ. As Paul wrote to Timothy, in the last days men would be lovers of their own-selves, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth: these that Paul spoke of are in the same position as those to whom Jesus was speaking on this occasion. There has been more money and time spent in this one endeavor, to teach man to know God, than any other project in the history of mankind, and yet they have not taught one person to know him with all of their efforts.

There are many today to whom religion is but the social part of their

lives. They will join one church for a while and then because of some personal reason will leave them and join another church of another faith. They do not think it strange, and that is because the particular doctrine of either church had nothing to do with their joining the church; it could be for business reasons, the social program of the other church, the popularity of the church in the community or for some other reason other than the doctrines, which are based on the things that appeal to the flesh. Some may be members of a certain denomination simply because their forefathers were members and since they have no reason to change they continue with no thought of discerning the doctrines on which the church in question stands. The fact of the matter is that none of them can join the church of Christ; they must be added to it and that must be by God himself; even though they may join a group that calls themselves by that name. Rather, as Paul told Timothy, the days will come when they will no longer endure sound doctrine but their minds are turned unto fables and to teachers with itching ears, and we see this all around the world today. When this is true, one church is just as good as the other since the true church is not in the equation anyway; as Joshua told the children of Israel, if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve. If God is not the rock upon which the church is built and the truth has not revealed the truth to you, it matters not which group you are associated with here on earth;

the truth shall make you free and those to whom it is revealed are free indeed, again regardless of which church you may be affiliated with in this time world. It is not the name of the group that is important, but rather the doctrine of the church that is the all important basis of their authority; Christ's church is made up of believers of the true doctrine of God, who have been saved and called with a holy calling, regardless of the name of the "*denomination*" that they may be meeting with here in this world. The church of Christ is not a recognizable group by the world; they were not in Jesus's time and they are not today. (1 John chap 3, vs 1) "*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*" The church is in the world but is not known by the world. It is an invisible kingdom made up of believers who have been set apart to the glory of God, but the separation is in the heart, and that is not in any way or manner that is discernable by the world around it. The separation, in the heart of the child of God, makes them a new creature in Christ; the ways of the world have lost their lustre in their eyes, the new things of the kingdom of God have taken their place and their desire is to be found walking in these ways all of the rest of their lives to manifest that they are the called out; those who have been separated from the world and all of its frivolous and vain traditions. Their desire is that their heart

has been separated from those things which they have received of their earthly fathers, and that they may now be led by the spirit and therefore not following the lusts of the flesh and the vanity of the natural mind.

Jesus had already told them, on this occasion (John Chap 6, vs 37) ***"All that my Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out,"*** and again in (vs 44), ***"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day"***. These scriptures plainly state that it is not in the man that walketh to direct his steps: they must wait, as the man beside the pool must wait for a quickening of the waters, even so, must the man in nature wait for the quickening by the Spirit before they can be healed, or in this case saved and called with a Holy calling. Even as the man at the pool was healed, those who wait for the call Jesus said, I will raise him up at the last day. The scriptures state that when Jesus made this statement, many of his followers left him and followed him no more; and this is true today: when the truth is preached it separates the wheat from the chaff, the wheat being the Lord's people, because they cannot feed on the doctrines of devils and the children of the devil cannot feed on the manna which comes down from heaven.

These scriptures are not, as a parable, in which there is a mystery which can be debated as to what the Savior was saying, as in the case of the parable of the sower; these scriptures

are plainly spoken in words that cannot be misinterpreted as to their meaning. As the disciples told Jesus on one occasion, ***"Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb,"*** when he was revealing himself to them very candidly just prior to his ascension; on this occasion Jesus was speaking to the people in the same plain language and meant exactly what he said, that is, that it was not in man to approach unto him, but it must be as the results of a drawing unto him of the Father. If this was the way in that day, it is that way today, or please show me where and when, by the scriptures, that the procedure was changed. The technical advancement of knowledge of the world, in the things of nature, does not change the ways of God, he is eternal and changes not, therefore what he said in the days of the apostles applies now. These things were established, in the beginning, and since they were pleasing unto him then, and since he is of one mind and changes not, we must assume that he is of that mind today.

God, was always telling the Jews, by the mouth of the prophets, of the things that he would do in that day, that day, being some future time when there would be changes in the manner of his dealing with his chosen people. Surely, if there was going to be a change in the way that his people would come to know Jesus in the future after these days, he would have left a record of that change and what that new way would be. He has promised that he would never leave them

nor forsake them, and if he was going to change his ways and then left no footsteps by which they would know the way, he would have indeed forsaken them and left them to their own carnal reasoning and theories, for their salvation, but all scriptures deny this possibility, and experience teaches his children today that the way has not been changed, because these truths agree with what their experience has been.

Jesus, told his disciples, on one occasion, (John Chap 15, vs 16) "*Ye have not chosen me but, I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of my Father in my name, he may give it you.*" Each one is chosen to fill their allotted place in the kingdom of God, they are chosen for a specific purpose, which is to bring forth fruit, which is praise and honor unto the Triune God, and that their fruit should not wither and fade, by the passage of time, but would remain. There is not one way of salvation for those in Jesus's day, and another way for others in another later period of time; they are all chosen and called by the grace of God and all that the Father calleth shall come unto Jesus and shall eat of his flesh and drink of his blood: no others will ever be partakers of that solemn and sacred sacrament.

Jesus called whomsoever he would, and there is no instance when he told

one to follow him that they did not, although, in many instances, it required that they must leave their family, their occupation and all their former ways of life and follow him, which they did, many of them even unto death. This is not in the power of the called, but in the power of the calling, which is God; he calls whomsoever he will and they respond because of the power in the calling. Jesus told Paul, he would show him what things he must suffer for His Name's sake and suffer them he did, but he never failed to follow and do those things required of him even unto death; and he never indicated in any of his writings that he would have desired it any other way.

As the apostle Paul said, (Eph Chap 3, vs 7) "*Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.*" and again (Eph Chap 1, vs 19) "*And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.*" This is the only way that one can come unto him, by the effectual calling of God and the revealing of himself unto them. The calling, the election of the heirs of grace and their being set apart unto his glory is always the sovereign work of God in Christ, who came into the world to do his Father's will; and before he died he said that he had finished the work that his Father gave him to do. The work to be done was everything that was needful to accomplish the salvation of all that the Father gave him.

Jude says it, this way, (Jude Chap 1, vs 1) "***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:***" Do you know of anything else that is needful for them? He then said he gave all diligence to write to them of the common salvation, only one salvation, and that is in Christ.

(John Chap 14, vs 6) Jesus said, "***I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.***" This should once and forever silence the claims of the gain-sayers that they can come, or not come according to their own decision, but it does not. They are so absorbed in their own importance and ego that they cannot, and will not, believe anything that does not include themselves, as they are in nature, and to believe that the work was done before they were consulted, or given a chance to receive him, is repulsive unto them. To the world, truth is a relative term, it is not an absolute; they look at the salvation of the children of God as a democratic process, where each one has as much authority as the next and the majority must agree with, and accept a proposition, or to reject it, for it to be the truth. This has never been the truth where things eternal are concerned, men in nature imagine themselves as the source of all power and authority, but the scriptures teach that where the word of the king is there is power and nowhere else: he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. There is no debate, no caucus, no vote; the

end was declared from the beginning and there is no force that can change or alter that which has gone forth out of the mouth of the king.

When one does not realize, and acknowledge their utter depravity in the flesh, they will contend for the right to have a say in the matter, but, when they are made to realize and experience the weakness and depravity of the flesh, they will always, confess that they are unworthy of the least of the mercies of God, and render all praise and glory to the finished work of Jesus. When given evidence that the work, of Jesus on the cross, was for sinners such as they feel themselves to be, they will never question the wisdom of the plan; it is the only plan that will fit their case and grace is the only thing that can justify such as they see themselves to be in the eyes of a righteous, merciful and holy God.

(1 Timothy Chap 1, vs 15-16) "***This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.***" The children of God who have been quickened will always feel themselves to be the chiefest of sinners because the spirit that dwells within judges everything that they do, their deeds, their thoughts, and the motives for their every action, and they are made to stand in awe that such as they see themselves to be could be so

blessed of God. This statement was made by Paul, after his experience on the road to Damascus, and after he was made a minister of righteousness: if he had said, I was the chiefest of sinners, instead of I am the chiefest of sinners, then all would feel that they have not had an experience of grace because this certainly does not agree with their feelings. Paul, then went on to say that his experience was so that Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to all that should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. This causes great rejoicing in the heart of the little children of God because they can understand and fellowship this truth. Each one remembers the way and manner in which they were brought to this knowledge and feel that their path has also been according to the pattern of all who come to Jesus by the drawing power of God's love, grace, mercy and by his gift of faith which is not of their doing.

There was an occasion where one came to the church saying, I didn't want to come, meaning that she had been a long time member of another church and had been satisfied with her belief and could not understand the doctrine of predestination and some other points of doctrines of the church.. She has attended the Primitive Baptist Church for several years with her husband, but, always said that she would not join it, well, so much for the wisdom and the will of man. She had been gradually being changed in the steadfastness of her belief, and being drawn closer to the truth of the scriptures without realiz-

ing it. She still maintained her position, in her conversation, but with less conviction and was being drawn closer to the church and the fellowship of the brethren and felt the love that they had for one another. She was working in the kitchen, during the annual meeting of the Primitive Baptist Church, which she was attending, and was helping prepare lunch as the meeting was drawing to a close. She said she did not know why she left the kitchen and went into the church but decided to go into the sanctuary to hear the preaching for a few minutes. She sat down on a pew in the Amen corner of the church to listen to the closing of the meeting. They had the closing remarks and as they began to sing the closing hymn, with her apron still on, she found herself asking for a home with the church, was received and baptized the following day. She said that she did not know why she came into the sanctuary as she did, but acknowledges that it was not her intent when she came in that day to do what she did: just another evidence that the scripture that, to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven is still the rule.

(John Chap 6,vs 37) *"All that my Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* When the time appointed of the Father comes, there will be a moving of the spirit, and action will be the results, whether in the way and manner that we would expect it, or not. It is the Lord's work and it is beautiful to behold in the sight of those who have been brought


that way themselves. There is nothing more beautiful, in the heart of the children of God, than to see one come forward saying that they felt that they were made to come at that particular time; they heard the voice of the shepherd calling and he leads them forth to follow in the footsteps of the flock. None would have been more doubting of this basic truth than the Apostle Paul: had someone told him when he left Jerusalem, that he would be a preacher of the sovereignty, power and righteousness of Jesus Christ when he arrived in the city of Damascus, yet he was, and continued all the days of his life in response to that calling.

One may have been wanting for this to happen for a long time, wondering and fearing anxiously that it may not be their lot in life; or they may not have been expecting it at all, at that particular time, but it makes no difference in the results. The work is of the Lord and when the time appointed of the Father arrives the manifestation of his purpose will be made known. The world cannot receive this because they have not experienced it, they have never heard that call and that is because that it has not been spoken unto them of the Father. (John Chap 6, vs 63) "*It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.*" We have nothing that we have not received of God, unto whom be all power and glory now, and forever more, Amen.

In Bonds of Love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Williams:

 nclosed is a bank draft for 2 years subscription and the remainder as needed.

The Signs and tapes of sermons, are the only fellowship we have in this spiritual desert.

Thank you and the other Elders for writing your labours of love.

In fellowship of Christian hope,
Donald Ferguson
209-3105 S. Main Street
Pentecton, B.C.
Can. U2A7H1

PSALM 61

*To the chief Musician upon Neginah,
A Psalm of David.*

HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

Forthou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.

Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations. He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.

So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS CLEAN

Psalm xix, 9.

And there is no other principle of action in the world which is absolutely clean. The motives that prevail among natural men are selfish and vain, having the hope of reward and fear of punishment as their principal characteristic. And this is the main principle which prevails in the teachings of worldly religion, as well as in the business of the world. In the doctrine of those whose minds seem most pure and exalted we find heaven presented as a reward for goodness, and the hope of which should be an incentive to good works, and hell as a place of punishment, the fear of which should be used to deter men from wickedness.

Although there is an effort, at times, in the teachings of some, to rise to the height of that true principle which teaches the doing of right for its own sake, and the avoidance of evil merely for its hatefulness, yet the natural mind is not capable of relying upon the efficacy of that principle alone to control and guide men in their conduct, but will constantly fall back upon the hope of reward or fear of punishment, as that which alone can be absolutely relied upon to affect the actions of men for good. And even among those who have evidently been taught of the Spirit, and have been called to the work of the ministry, we sometimes

notice a hesitancy and backwardness in regard to this thing, a kind of question and doubt, injected by the unbelieving carnal mind, as to whether it will do to leave the system of rewards and punishments out of our religious teaching, and depend entirely upon the power of the Spirit of Christ which all his people have. (Rom. viii. 9.) It is the opposition of the fleshly mind that is manifested when any one begins to fear that if we teach the plain revelation of the truth as recorded in the Bible, and as experienced by every child of God, we will thereby encourage the Lord's people to indulge in sin; and that it is necessary to appeal to their selfish desires for rewards and their fears of punishment in order to keep them out of mischief, and hold them within proper bounds.

Whenever such worldly principles are sought to be maintained by those who profess to minister to the Lord's people, some false interpretations of Scripture will surely be the result, some holding back of the sweet fullness of the word of truth, and some consequent lack of true edification and comfort on the part of the spiritual readers or hearers. Whenever a child of God consents for even a little time to the thought that sinful things are to be avoided for fear of the punishment or suffering that will follow, even though he be kept from acting on that principle, he suffers loss. I would not be understood as denying the usefulness of these motives in worldly things. It is good for those concerned in the results when a right act is done or a

wrong deed refrained from, whatever the motive which prompted the right or restrained the evil. But the living soul who is moved in his conduct by the consideration of the results to himself, instead of the character of the thing to be done or avoided, will realize no spiritual commendation and comfort in his conscience as resulting from the correct course he has pursued, but will either be lifted up with pride and vanity in the flesh, or will find himself in a desert place, with terrible leanness in his soul.

The Lord does not work as man works. His ways are as high above ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. Man's wisdom in its highest work on earth is "earthly, sensual, devilish." The Lord's, "wisdom is first, pure." James iii. 17. The beginning of that wisdom of God is the fear of the Lord. (Psalm cxi. 10.) The Lord begins the good work in his people upon the principle of that wisdom which is from above, and upon the same principle he performs it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 8.) And this is the beginning of wisdom's work: **"I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me."** Her. xxxii. 40. Now this fear of the Lord is a pure and holy principle, very different from that slavish fear of punishment which hath torment. This holy principle causes one to hate evil as the Lord hates it, and raises up in the soul a reverential desire to "be holy as God is holy." Thus the very definition of this principle is given to this effect in the word of truth: **"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."**—Prov. viii. 18.

For this reason it is said to be clean: **"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever."**—Psalm xix. 9. There is no other absolutely clean and pure motive in all the world, and therefore no other principle that can lead one in the paths of righteousness. However good the thing done, unless the fear of the Lord prompted it, the motive was not clean, and the act, therefore, was not pure in the Lord's sight. Whatever is not caused by this holy fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, is selfish, unholy, sinful like the nature from which it proceeds.

This fear of the Lord causes those who have it to hunger and thirst after righteousness; it is, therefore, **"a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death."**—Prov. xiv. 28. It never ceases to spring up in the new heart in hungerings and longings after purity and holiness, and in sorrow, grief and self-loathings on account of the depravity felt in our nature, and the sins that appear in our life. It is not our flesh, not our carnal mind or heart, which feels this hatred of sin and desire after righteousness, but the new heart, the divine life, where this fear of the Lord is. This holy principle of pure desire will never entirely cease to exist within the soul where once it has been implanted, nor ever entirely cease to spring up, however much the flesh may gain the ascendancy for a time; nor will it ever be satisfied until this mortal shall have put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

This is the principle which is ever at work more or less vividly in the Lord's

people. Sin, however attractive to the flesh, is hateful to the quickened soul by reason of this fear of the Lord within. Fear of punishment or promise of reward would not avail against the love of sin in the natural man even in a worldly covenant. That was tried in the case of the children of Israel according to the flesh, to show that it would not avail. Neither fear of punishment nor promise of reward kept them from constant transgression, only when the Lord slew them did they seek him. (Psalm *lxxviii. 84.*)

Let it be remembered that fear of punishment or hope of reward never prevents heart sin nor produces true righteousness in the sight of God. Only this fear of the Lord, which is a fountain of life within, can do that.

Those who have been experimentally crucified with Christ, and now live with him, hate sin, and hate the flesh because of sin. Sin is a grief and a dread to them, and their prayer is that of Jabez, "*O that thou wouldst * * * keep me from evil that it may not grieve me.*"— 1 Chron. iv. 10. When a child of God refrains from doing what the flesh desires because of fear of punishment, he is glad to have avoided the evil, but his soul finds no sweet rest before God on account of it, for the secret selfishness of the motive is set in the light of God's countenance. It is the same when he does what he rightly ought to do. How often the poor soul is set to questioning his motives as they appear in the sight of a heart-searching and a rein-trying God. How thankful he is, and how humble and meek,

when he has some precious evidence that faith is in exercise within him, and that the fear of the Lord has moved him. For only by faith can he ever see any righteousness for himself in Jesus Christ, or any deliverance from sin.

How glad one who is thus exercised is to know that all the way he has been led has been appointed of the Lord, and that his sins and infirmities, which cause him such self-abhorrence, are humbling him more and more before a holy God, and showing him the wonderful justice and judgments of the Lord, and are measuring to him his great and amazing mercy and grace. Does this make him love the sins he so hates, or cause him to desire to continue in sin? The question is abhorrent to the quickened soul.

How strange to such a man it sounds to hear one say that the belief in the predestination of God will have a tendency to make a child of God indulge in sin. How strange to hear one say that when Paul says, "*All things work together for good to them that love God*" he did not mean to include evil, sinful, wicked things, but only trials, afflictions, distresses, and the like; thus taking away the real comfort of this precious assurance. And most surprising strange to hear the reason of this conclusion to be that if we believe that the apostle meant to include sin among the all things which work together for good, it would encourage us to sin in order to receive good.

The Lord, by putting his fear in the hearts of his people, has made sin so hateful to them, and so obnoxious,

it becomes like a suffocating atmosphere to them. They can hardly breathe where it is. They are dead to sin, and cannot live any longer therein. To be in it is to be in a kind of death. Yet there is so much of sin in them that they are daily delivered unto death for Jesus's sake. They bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in their mortal body. In their flesh dwells no good thing. *"The body,"* indeed, *"is dead because of sin,"* in the experience of all those in whom is Christ. (Rom. viii. 10.) *"But the Spirit is life because of righteousness."* Here then is the condition of the Lord's people in the world; sinners, yet holy; defiled, yet pure; vile in themselves, but righteous in Christ; being dead, indeed, unto sin with Christ, yet alive with him unto holiness; having in themselves, as it were, two men, one corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and the other *"after God created in righteousness and true holiness"*; two principles, the flesh and the Spirit, contrary the one to the other, so that the child of God can never do the things that he would, and lacks comfort on that account, except as, from time to time, he is shown the good works he longs to do all done by the dear Savior, and he enabled by faith to walk in them, as he was foreordained to do. (Eph. ii. 10.)

Here is the wise and gracious work of God in Christ, whereby his people in this world are separated and taken away from the control of worldly principles, and are led by the Spirit of God. The warfare within keeps sin a hateful

thing to them, and thus by the experience of that continual conflict turns them away from it in longings and cries unto God for deliverance from its baneful power. They need no offer of a reward for doing well, nor any threat of punishment to keep them from sin. The Lord has provided a higher, holier, surer principle of action than that. As it was with the Savior, so it is with his dear children, who have his Spirit; the reward is in, not *for*, keeping the commandments of God, (Psalm xix. 11,) and the pain and grief are in the presence of sin itself, which is hateful to his Spirit, not in the fear of the punishment that may follow.

Let not our brethren fear any more that the plain teachings of the Bible will encourage the Lord's people to sin, as though they were thirsting for sin instead of righteousness. Let us not fear to contend for the truth concerning the absolute sovereignty of God, and to rejoice that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Let no one try to take away one thing from the ALL things which the inspired apostle declares do "work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" for if it could be shown that one thing was intended to be omitted by the apostle because of its wickedness, then that declaration would have no meaning at all to the child of God, who is waiting and longing to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, as the apostle has just described him, and would be without one particle of comfort for him. Let

us not descend in our teachings from the high and holy principles of "the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity," to the low, and selfish, and unsafe principles of worldly wisdom, nor any more distrust the Lord's power to keep his people from departing from him, as he says he will, by putting into their hearts his especial treasure, (Isaiah xxxii. 6,) the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, and which, therefore, is clean, enduring forever.

MARCH 8, 1899.

FRAGMENTS

THE: love of God in the heart is pure and true, and is ever fixed upon that which is pure and true, and never can rejoice in iniquity, "but rejoiceth in the truth." When it has once been drawn out to another in whom it sees the same love-of-God, it can never be withdrawn. We ourselves may be deceived, but that love never is deceived. If the fellowship which we thought we felt toward one has been utterly broken and destroyed, then it was not that fellowship which is founded on the love of God; for that charity is the bond of perfectness, (Col. iii. 14,) and the bond of perfectness cannot be severed. The one whom we love in the truth may have many faults, but that does not destroy our love and fellowship, for they are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In that sense charity covereth the multitude of sins. (1 Peter iv. 8.) But true charity does not excuse or justify sins or faults in one's self or in a brother, nor does it cause us to withhold any needed exhorta-

tion, admonition or reproof, but rather the contrary. The good and comfort of the one we love is our chief desire, for "*love seeketh not her own;*" and we cannot see one we love in a dangerous place without a desire to extend such help as we can. That love also seeks the honor of God's house, and so directs us to that which is according to his commands.

WHO showed to Abel the way of salvation? Who told him what to do to please the Lord, and comforted him when alone and in distress? Does not the same Teacher and Comforter have the charge over his people to-day?

Who gave Noah that faith by which he built the ark, and by which he preached righteousness? There was no man to tell him how to build or how to preach, for he was the only righteous man in that generation. The preacher of the gospel to-day, and the gospel builders, must receive their faith and instruction only from the Teacher of Noah. He will teach them to profit, and lead them surely in the right way, and uphold them by his arm. All men who assume to tell them how and when and where to preach, are vain teachers.

LOVE caused Jesus to say to Peter, "*Get thee behind me, Satan,*" because he savoured not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men. (Matt. xvi. 28.) But it is not our province to call a brother Satan because he speaks erroneously. We ought, however, to sternly recognize in our own words and actions, and in those of another, that which is from the wisdom of the world, which is

earthly, sensual, devilish, and rigidly oppose it. But we need be careful that we oppose it with the spirit of that pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above.

Elder Silas H. Durand
JULY 19, 1899.

(The following is the sermon mentioned above. Thanks to Sister Spikes for sharing it with us and to Sister Reidy Pickral for transcription.)

Sermon preached 1965 in Riffle, Washington by Elder D.V. Spangler.

I feel inclined, the Lord will, to talk to you about a subject that probably was mentioned at Lloyd Spikes' while visiting here and for the last two hours, some way, I have had some thoughts concerning this, and as a foundation for whatever I might speak to you I'd like to read the first verse of the 7th Chapter of the Book of Genesis: *"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."*

I'm sure that Bible readers are familiar with this scripture and I would like to speak briefly, the Lord will, on the subject of the three arks found in the Bible and I know that if I speak about all three that I can't talk long about each one. We know at this time that God had commanded Noah to build an ark and not only did He command him to build an ark, but the same God who commanded him to build an ark gave him faith to believe.

In Hebrew it is said, by faith Noah, warned of God, prepared an ark to the

saving of his house. So we could not leave out that important thing, that whatever there was embraced in the ark, it was the mind of God, and that it was built because God gave Noah to believe He would send a flood upon the earth.

No doubt, while Noah was preparing this ark the people thought he was crazy, preparing an ark! And probably the sun was shining. I understand in the scripture that each of the three arks—there are only three arks found in the Bible were typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. And, as our salvation, these three arks are typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. They bring to our view a perfect salvation because in each of these three arks there was a type of Jesus Christ, the saving of His people in every sense in which they would need salvation. The first ark was to preserve life upon the earth and was to protect Noah and his family from the wrath of God, and if we know anything about salvation we need that protection from God's wrath.

The second ark was the one that Moses was placed in that I mentioned probably while I have been here and was to protect Moses from Pharaoh who was a type of Satan, the power of darkness.

The third ark was where the Ten Commandments was placed when Moses came down from the mount after God had given them to him and it shows that Jesus our Lord is the one who kept the Commandments for us in that ark. And that was called the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God.

When this ark had been completed, God said to Noah, "come." God must have been in the ark, He didn't say, go into the ark, He said, "Come." I like that word "come" in the Bible. It's been used so many times so wonderfully, "come." I am told there will be a time when every subject of God's grace will hear the word, "come." Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Jesus said, Come unto me, etc. The thought is: God was in the ark. And thee only have I seen righteous, though there were eight souls in the ark saved from the waters. God looks directly at Noah. Thee only, He said. And we know about the clean and the unclean beasts.

In the construction of the ark, it had three stories; lower, I believe that's the way it reads, second and upper stories; it didn't say first, second and third — lower, second and upper stories. One thing about the ark, it is a type of Christ, there was only one door, and another thing about the ark, the door was in the side. And as we think of salvation, it was the side of our Lord that was torn, that opened to us salvation and the door of heaven. And the door shall be in the side. I believe our dear brother mentioned it being pitched within and pitched without so that the water is kept out. It had one window, and in a cubic shalt thou finish the window above, and that speaks of the faith of the people of God. God had provided a way to them to see everything, that they always see them as they look up. That window was finished in a cubic above. I am sure that

when the earth had gone down beneath the wrath of God, there was only one way for these people in the ark to look. Up, upward. Then after God had said to Noah and his family, Come thou and thy house into the ark, the Bible says and the Lord shut him in. Why, Noah couldn't even shut the door. After he'd been brought in the ark, the Lord shut him in, you notice how it reads: shut him in. For yet seven days and I will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood upon the earth. I used to wonder why the ark would be sitting seven days and no rain. Seven in the Bible, the number seven, is symbolic of a fullness and a completeness of anything. And the seven days represented that Noah and his family were safe before the flood began. It represented the safety of the people of God before they needed salvation. Seven days and he will open the window of heaven and pour out a flood. Oh, my friends, our soul has often asked, did I have a safety in that ark. The ark of grace, the poet calls it, the ark of grace:

*In the ark the weary dove
Found a welcome resting-place;
Thus my spirit longs to prove
Rest in Christ, the ark of grace.*

and the poet said,

*Tempest-tossed I long have been,
And the flood increases fast; Open,
Lord, and take me in,
Til the storm be overpassed.*

That poet could sing about this ark. And what happened when the win-

dows of heaven opened and the floods came upon the earth. That which caused every hill to disappear raised the ark. Raised the ark! The wrath of God poured out on that ark, the safety of Noah in it is a type of the safety of the people of God. There was a time, my friends, when every hill disappeared and when only that lonely ark floated on the water as a type of Jesus Christ. There was a time when the eyes of God—that all He saw as He looked was the type of His Son. There was a time, my friends, on calvary's hill when the Son of God hanged there for you and I. That God looked at him He sees as the redeemer of His people, as the stroke of justice for us. One said, He looked and, of all, there was none to help and therefore mine own arm brought salvation. And the ark rises above the waters. The reason Noah was safe was because God had prepared him a place. Another thought I want to briefly pass on about the ark. As the waters began to recede after the flood—you know why it was 40 days? I don't know why, but I'll tell you what I think. I have a reason for saying it. Our Lord was tried forty days in the wilderness wasn't He? Why, this journeying of Jesus after He came into the world, He was lead of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and be ahungred, and for satan to try Him. So we all must be tried forty days. So the Israelites must be in the wilderness forty years. All of this is symbolic. The floods fell and finally the waters began to recede. And where did the ark rest?

You know, I read the Bible and you now suddenly I saw something I hadn't seen in all these years. You never reach the time you don't find something new in the Word of God. And as the waters receded the ark was right over Mt. Ararat. It wasn't by chance it was there, on the highest mountain. And I was filled with rejoicing when I saw it said the ark *rested* there. It didn't by chance just be over that mountain. It rested. Our Lord Jesus Christ rested. Yes when the wrath of God had passed, you could rest. It rested on Mt. Ararat and then the raven and the dove were sent out. And it still found life upon the earth, still there was life when the olive leaf was brought in. The raven goes to and fro in the earth, but the dove found no place for the sole of his foot. It couldn't find a resting place and it returned the first time and we are told Noah reached for it and pulled it in. That's appropriate with that hymn isn't it? Ark, the weary dove. A type of God's church found a peaceful resting place.

My beloved hearers, have you found a resting place in Christ? Wonderful rest! Wonderful rest! There's no rest like rest in Christ. Your body may be weary, you may be tired but rest in Christ is different from anything else.

The second ark was when Moses' family had hid him three months. They couldn't hide him any longer. The decree of the King was that every male child of the Hebrews should be cast into the river. But in the face of that Moses' parents, the Bible says by faith they put him in an ark of bullrushes, another ark. An ark right down to the

water where they were supposed to be drowned. In this ark of bull-rushes, I mentioned it before, Pharaoh's daughter came down. And sometimes in my mind I see her as the one who was, in the purpose of God, to come and she looked at the child. He's weeping. She takes it and calls his sister and says, find a home for it and she takes it and Moses was reared in the house of Pharaoh as we might say. Pharaoh is a type of Satan. We only need protection or salvation in three ways. From the wrath of God for sin, from the devil and for someone to honor the Lord God for us. That's the only thing a man needs in salvation. And that was the protection of that and then we come to the ark of the covenant. I want to talk a little while about that.

I love the expression in the Bible: the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God. And Moses was commanded to make this ark. It was a small piece of furniture as we think about it, I couldn't quote the dimensions at the present time but it was to be brought into the tabernacle. When Moses was called upon Mt. Sinai and God gave him the law the first time, Ten Commandments, when he came down he found, as our brother mentioned, the Israelites worshipping a golden calf. They couldn't keep themselves very well could they? Just as soon as Moses leaves them they go into idolatry. And you and I are just as prone today to forget the Lord as the Israelites were, when He leaves us. Moses threw down the tables of stone, to find his people in that condition, and God called him back again. And then

He engraved them in stone and when he returned he put them in this ark. Moses couldn't keep them. The Israelites couldn't keep these Ten Commandments themselves. But there was a safe place for them. In the ark is a type of Jesus Christ. He's the One who has kept the law for us if it's ever been kept. Honored it in his life. And over the ark there was what we call a mercy seat.

You know I used to read that and I thought that's the most beautiful peaceful expression I ever heard. A mercy seat. A mercy seat. You know, God appropriately named many things. He had over this ark a mercy seat. He said to Moses, and there will I meet with thee. God has a meeting place for sinners. But it's above the ark and it's above the mercy seat and there will I commune with thee from above the mercy seat. How thankful we've all been that there is a mercy seat, a place one can sit down in mercy. And over the mercy seat there were two cherubims. The best I can understand, they were like two eagles. One of them is over here and one of them is over there. The scripture says, "The wings of this one touches the wall. The wing of this one touches the wing of that one on that side, and the wing of that one touches the wall on the other side. To me it represents the old and the new testament because each one of these cherubims was facing the mercy seat.

And all the prophecies before the coming of Christ were a promise of His coming. There's no vacant space between the cherubims because the

wing of this one reaches all the way, reaches to this one and so in my judgment the word of God has covered the period of all time that we recognize. And they looked at the mercy seat. The most precious possession the Israelites had was the ark of the covenant.

Somebody asked me a question at Natchez in the night about the ministers. She said I didn't answer directly. Sometimes we answer indirectly—how much honor we should give the minister, etc. And I said, you know, as the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness they carried this ark with them. It was a precious possession. The type of Jesus their Lord. The Ten Commandments were in there. When they had reached Jordan, why, the land they had looked forward to so long to cross over, into the promised land, they carried the ark along. And God gave Joshua instruction as to how they should cross over Jordan, and He said to him, make the Priest take the ark on their shoulders. I believe the minister of the gospel today is bearing the ark in preaching Jesus Christ. He has nothing else to preach. He's satisfied with His name, the name of Christ. He said, when you see the ark removed, borne by the priest, go ye after it. He didn't say, when you see the priest start moving but, watch the ark. Watch the ark! How lovely to hear a minister bring the sweetness of Jesus' name to people. How lovely, as we listen to people exhort the name of Jesus Christ. They desire no glory, no honor in the flesh. And He said, when ye see the ark removed, borne by the

priest, go ye after it. Don't you keep so far behind them and when they were about to cross over Jordan, the priest stood in the midst of it with the ark on his shoulders until all the people passed over. God opened it up like a wall and it stood up like a wall.

Concerning the wandering of the Israelites, the ark moved when they moved. I read on one occasion about the ark being carried into the camp of the Philistines, their enemies, there was a plague there.

They may take His name but only those that have truly needed Him embrace Him indeed. They had the ark and no doubt they felt rejoicing. We have the most precious possession, the ark of the covenant in our camp. And everything began to happen: plagues, and the same ones decided, why thou art a curse in our camp, and we'll see what happens. So they took a milk cow, highly spoken of and they shut up the calf at home, and they put the ark on a cart. They said now if that cow carries that ark to the camp of Israel, we'll know its a plague. And you know, that cow left the calf She went mooing but she had to go. There was no choice. Because the power of God overcomes every obstacle when it's His will for things to move. It sure does, even down to brute animals. We speak of it, we say it couldn't be, but it was! Shut up the calf at home and the cow leaves, goes mooing pulling the cart. Why? Because the power of God arranged it that way. You can never exalt the power of God too much. You can never abase a sinner too much.

No doubt it was a great day when the camp of the Israelites saw the ark coming. Coming! And the hand of man wasn't bringing him back either. Wasn't bringing him back, the hand of God was bringing him back.

And so I want to leave you people thinking of it, with the thoughts I've scatterly presented about the ark. This was a complete salvation that God typified there and the anti-type can never be less than the type. So our hope, our consolation, our joy, everything we have, is because God has ordained it so. Our Saviour said: ***"I thank thee Oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes."*** You know how God's way is in revealing things — to hide things is to leave them unrevealed. That's the only thing necessary for God to hide things, is to leave them unrevealed.

So these three arks were typical of our Saviour. The scripture abounds from the first chapter to the last with Christ. I said last night, if you take Him out of the Bible you'd just have two lids left. That's all you'd have. Jesus Christ, who it is said is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

A few personal remarks I'd like to make now: When I was a boy I was thrown with a people that believed that the work of regeneration was the work of grace and that sinners were passive in regeneration. But they held the doctrine that after regeneration we had the power and the ability to obtain the blessings of God if we'd

obey Him. And you know that looked like a good doctrine to begin with. It looked so good, I said, I'll just obtain the blessings of God and I won't have any chastisement and I was foolish enough to believe that I could live without chastisement. Yet I found in the Bible that He said, ***"If you be without chastisement of whom all are partakers, you are a bastard and not a son."*** But time went on. Suddenly, in May 1919 I was sitting under a minister who was standing in the pulpit preaching and he was preaching from the first chapter of Hebrews, ***"When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,"*** and suddenly my friends, something hit my heart like a dart. That I must speak in His name. I've got to talk about it to His people. I went home that afternoon and put up the horse and walked the pastures, wondering about what I had felt: I said, Lord, take this burden off of me. Time went on and the burden wasn't removed. I wrestled day and night. If I am a minister of the gospel I am not a volunteer. But I love to preach it when God blesses me.

I remember one of our daughters, — expected to lose her on one occasion. And I said this is the wrath of God upon me. The judgments of God because I hadn't spoken. Have you ever felt those things? The judgments of God, and every time things would get worse as the burden became heavy, I'd say: Lord, take it off, I'll speak. And when it eased up I was just as hard again. I'm just as hard-hearted.

Finally, we had a brother-in-law who lived in my home. I loved him very much. I would say he was closer to me than any brother I had, we lived in the same house. He was critically ill. He had said to me many times as a boy, David, I think you are going to have to preach. The brother would say that, though he wasn't a member of the Old School Baptist, he united while he was down sick. I just want to tell you a few things of my life before I leave you, because the most of you I'll never see you again, not here.

A few days before he passed away he called me to the bed, he said: ***"I'm going to die, and I want to hear you talk before I die."*** And I tell you I was trapped. I knew if I refused to try to speak to him I would carry it to my grave. I remember, my friends, going to a barn on our farm and bowing down before the Lord and asking Him, Lord give me strength.

Some of our neighbors gathered at our home at 2:00 or near about that hour and my father opened the service and I tried to speak a few words. I didn't feel I was blessed but when it was through he said, I'm satisfied. Two days later I stood by his bed and heard him say, ***"I see the angels coming for me."***

My friends, they had come for him, I learned obedience, if I know anything about it, through sufferings. I had to have fellowship with my Saviour. I learned that this matter was not optional with men. I learned that if I had a blessing God gave it to me before the world and my Saviour. I learned the doctrine of predestination I'm

preaching, if I know it at all, before God opened my mouth. I tried not to believe it.

I remember one of the first times I ever stood up. I took the text: ***"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. Are ye not much more valued than many sparrows? Yea, even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."*** Why? Because I believe that doctrine. I can't be fed with this doctrine of part works and part grace. Not a poor sinner like I am.

A man was in my congregation and what I said that day appealed to him in such a way that the next week he came to see me. I had small children, I was having a hard time in life, and he said I want you to go to work for me, I believe the doctrine you preached. I worked twelve years with that man from that sermon. Now, to me these are the providences of God. My hearers, God has been good to me. Good to me! Wonderful, so wonderful to me. I can't praise Him enough. I know I'm talking about personal things but I just want to tell you how it came. (A smaller voice on the tape said: "It's wonderful, wonderful, keep on!")

I believe that every minister who exalts the name of God goes into the depths to learn that doctrine. He cannot feed the flock of God until he's been there. And I can tell you the pathway he comes. I can tell you the mountain tops and the valleys. I can tell you of the sunshine and the rain. I can tell you of the winters and the summers. I can tell you of seed time

and havest. I'm talking about everything. And that God has provided in the wonders of His grace and His people are kept before him and He said even a sparrow doesn't fall without me. I use to think He said, "his notice" but He said "without me." I feel like I'm among a people that believe that doctrine.

If I didn't believe it, I wouldn't be here tonight. The sovereignty of God over all worlds, all things, all events, "life, death hell and worlds unknown hang on His firm decree, He sits on no precarious throne, nor borrows leave to be." You love that hymn? Sometimes you can sing it from way down here, yes.

*Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod!
My soul stands trembling while
she sings
The honors of her God.*

*Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives;
Nor dares the favorite angel pry
Beneath the folded leaves.*

But the precious last verse of that hymn is:

*In thy fair book of life and grace,
O, may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!*

God will never give His glory to another. And the glory of His Son shall never be detracted from whatever happens in the world by men, Christ sits

on the throne. And my beloved hearers, He's conscious of your needs. He's a great High Priest who's gone to heaven who can be touched. Touched! Touched with a feeling of our infirmities. I like to think of Steven when he was dying. I like to think Steven saw heaven and he said, I see heaven open and I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And his face was like an angel's. Good way to die wasn't it? Have you ever felt if death comes, all is well? Have you passed that state of fear that you had no more fear? When? When the Lord was there.

Elder D.V. Spangler

"Peace, peace to him that is far off." Isaiah lvii. 19.

Far off! What means that? It means that the soul passing through that experience is separated, in its feelings, and at an infinite distance from God. Now this inward sense of being "far off" is one of the most painful feelings that a quickened soul can experience. The ungodly, who are really afar off, know nothing experimentally of distance from God, for they have never been brought spiritually near. They have felt no "cords of love, no bands of a man" drawing them with sweet attraction to the throne of the most High; they have never signed after the sweet manifestations of God's mercy and love; but they live gladly, and wallow willfully in those things which separate the soul from its Maker. But those who are "afar off" in their feelings, are such as

have seen something of the beauty of the Lord, and felt the evil of sin, who spiritually know Jehovah's purity and the creature's impurity, and have experienced the inward curse, bondage, and condemnation of a holy law. A spiritual discovery of his purity and holiness, making manifest their own vileness, has thrust them down from their self-righteous or presumptuous standing, and made them far off from him; not daring to draw near, nor able to approach; not feeling any spiritual access, but sighing and mourning over their evil hearts in the wilderness, in desolate places; and unable to move a single step forward, because the Lord does not draw them by his smile. A man must know something experimentally of this before he is brought near. How can we know a feeling of nearness if we have not known a feeling of distance? How can we know what it is to be brought "from the end of the earth" (Psalm lxi. 2) by the manifestation of God's mercy and love, unless we have been driven there, in our feelings, by some manifestation of the wrath of God against sin? But to see the blessed Lord, and not be able to draw near to him; to view his atoning blood at an infinite distance from us, his glorious righteousness well-nigh out of sight, and his lovely Person out of the reach of our spiritual view, so as not to enjoy any access to these glorious realities - to know this experimentally and feelingly, is to be "far off" from God. And I believe that God's people know very much of this feeling. There is not much nearness in our day; not much dandling upon the

knees, not much smiling upon the soul, not many love visits, nor love tokens communicated. There is, indeed, a great deal of talking about them; and there are abundance of people who profess to have them; but I fear they are, for the most part, cheats and counterfeits. The real people of God, the true-hearted family are, for the most part, "afar off upon the sea," for it is a dark and cloudy day in which we live.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS 15:5-6.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1999

Mrs. Ruth Wall, TX	\$50.00
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Mrs. Iva Quesenberry, VA	2.00
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Ms. Mary Lou Crissman, NC	2.00
Warren Brown, VA	2.00
Mrs. Cloma McLaughlin, TX	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER VIOLA DIXON CAIRNS

Sister Viola Dixon Cairns, 95, member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, died February 5, 1999. Sister Cairns and her husband, Brother George Cairns, united with the Wilmington Primitive Baptist Church in June 1975. Brother Cairns died in 1980.

Sister Cairns membership was moved to Stump Sound February 28, 1993, when the church in Wilmington was discontinued. She has no surviving close relatives.

Written by request of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church in conference - a copy to be placed in the church record book, and a copy to be submitted to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

SISTER MARTHA EUNICE JUSTICE

Sister Eunice Justice, 95, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, died February 12, 1999. She united with the Raleigh Primitive Baptist Church about 1940. She later lived at Topsail Beach, N.C., and moved her membership to Stump Sound May 26, 1985. She was faithful to attend meetings at her home church and others as long as she was able.

Sister Eunice loved the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone, and the predestination of all things by God. Although she was physically afflicted, she never complained. She manifested a great love for the church—just to know her was to love her. She was always cheerful, radiating love wherever she went. She lived alone and took care of herself until about 2 1/2 years prior to her death, when she went to live with her son Ralph and his wife Rebecca in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Her funeral services were held at Stump Sound Church by her pastor Elder Gene Lupton and Elder J.T. Prescott.

Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beside her late husband Dewey Justice - there to await the resurrection.

Written by request of Stump Sound Church in conference; a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to her family, and a copy be submitted to the "Signs of the Times" for publication.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

PSALM 134.

A Song of degrees.

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Signs of the Times

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SONG

*On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,
And cast a wishful eye,
To Canaan's fair and happy land,
Where my possessions lie,*

*Oh, the transporting, rapturous
scene,
That rises to my sight !
Sweet fields arrayed in living green,
And rivers of delight !*

*All o'er those wide-extended plains
Shines one eternal day;
There God the Sun for ever reigns,
And scatters night away.*

*No chilling winds, or poisonous
breath,
Can reach that healthful shore;
Sickness and sorrows, pain and
death,
Are felt and feared no more.*

*When shall I reach that happy
place,
And be forever blest ?
When shall I see my Father's face
And in his bosom rest ?*

*Filled with delight, my raptured
soul
Can here no longer stay;
Though Jordan's waves around me
roll,
Fearless I'd launch away.*

Stennett.

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EDITORIAL

ST. JOHN 6: 37-39.



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

"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 raise it up again at the last day."



he entire covenant of grace which the three-in-one God of

heaven and earth made before the world was is enclosed in these three verses. If we had no other scriptures, but were blessed to believe these, they are all that we would need. But all of the holy scriptures are profitable unto us while we remain here in the flesh, for we read, ***"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*** Regardless of what the wisdom of man teaches, the holy scriptures are not for the entire world: they are for the man of God. ***"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned."*** Until one has been born again of the Holy Spirit he cannot discern anything that is spiritual. He must be born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In the flesh all men are born dead in trespasses and sin, and we know that anything that is dead can do nothing. Death is the state of being separated from something, and when our fleshly progenitor Adam partook of the forbidden fruit he died: for God had said, ***"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*** God cannot lie, therefore we know that Adam died; not a corporeal death, but he was separated from God. He fell from his upright and sinless state into a state of sin and condemnation, and because all his posterity was in him they also fell. And they

shall remain separated from God until the appointed time of their regeneration or new birth. No man has ever had anything to do with his fleshly birth, neither can he have anything to do concerning his spiritual birth. ***"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."*** Who are those who are born of the Spirit? Are they not the ones chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world? We read Eph. 1: 3-4, ***"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."*** It was according to the good pleasure of God's will that he chose us in Jesus Christ before the world was spoken into existence. The wisdom of the world will deny this, saying, How could God chose us before we existed? But known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world, and he hath said, ***"I am God and I change not."*** We read Psalms 139: 15-16, ***"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, being yet unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when***

as yet there was none of them." Fleshly wisdom cannot truly understand this scripture, but the prophet was given to write this concerning the body of Christ. Paul tells us we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Christ is the head of the church which is his body, and if we be what we hope to be then are we his body, and our names will be found written in the book of life. If our names are not found written there we shall be cast into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

As Jesus declared, he came to do the will of his Father. Can anyone dare say that he failed to do it? Jesus said in his prayer to the Father in the 17th chapter of St. John, ***"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,"*** and as he hung on the cross, ***"It is finished."***

In his Godhead Christ could not die, therefore he must become incarnate; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. ***"Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."*** He did not take on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. And in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

The ultimate purpose of the work which Christ came into this low ground of sin and sorrow was to save his

people from their sins; but there was much more that he did to comfort, heal and teach them. Even as a boy of twelve years he was found of his mother in the temple teaching the doctors, and he said unto her, "***How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?***" What an amazing question this must have been to all who heard it. Jesus went about the land healing the sick, causing the lame to walk, opening the eyes of the blind and preaching the gospel to the poor. And he abundantly shewed his mighty power by raising the dead. The people could find no fault in the miracles that he did, yet they desired to kill him because many of his miracles were done on the Sabbath day: and even moreso when he said, "***My Father worketh hitherto and I work,***" shewing that he was the Son of God and equal with God. Jesus also said, "***For as the Father raiseth up, the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son of man quickeneth whom he will,***" Not only did Jesus raise some who had died a corporeal death, but he also quickens into life his children who are dead in sins, even as many as the Father hath given him. He said, "***Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.***" Many have heard his voice, and there shall be more before his glorious return: not one of his children shall be left behind. Jesus said, "***Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and***

believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." The world knows what it is to pass from life unto death, but none know what it is to pass from death unto life. Neither do they know what it is to truly believe in the just and holy and living God: for if we believe it is given to us from above. "***Unto you it is given in the behalf of Jesus Christ, not only to believe on him, but to also suffer for his sake.***"

The children of God are called sheep, and Jesus said, "***I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, and am known of mine.***" But when he was speaking to unbelievers he told them, "***But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.***" The eternal life that Jesus gives his sheep has ever been theirs. It had no beginning and it shall never end: for that is the meaning of eternal. The life that Jesus gives was in him before the world was, but is now made manifest by the new birth. A birth never gives life, for the life must be present before a birth. Christ is that life. He is the way, the truth, and the life. In him we live and move and have our being. This is a great mystery, "***Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of***

this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory." In his prayer to the Father he prayed for them that shall believe, *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."*

Oh, how sweet and joyous it is when we are given from time to time to feel that we have a blessed hope in Christ, and yet how dark and dreary when he turns away from us for a moment. But he has promised that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and all of his promises are sure. A short time before he was to return to his Father he gave this very precious promise: *"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."* *"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."* What a gracious promise this is! How sweet it is to feel his presence from time to time! Praise his holy name! Without his promises how desolate

and forsaken we would feel to be. But he has left us his peace, peace that the world can know nothing about. *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,"* This is a commandment that we cannot carry out of ourselves, but when he speaks it is with power; it is done. Without him we can do nothing, but through him which strengtheneth us we can do all things.

Jesus stood as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and when our Saviour hung on the tree of the cross he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father and gave up the ghost. Yet at that moment our salvation was not yet complete, for he had not yet risen from the grave. (However it was not possible that he should fail to rise.) Had he not risen we would still be dead in our sins. But Christ was the perfect sacrifice acceptable unto God, and by his sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. When Christ died for his bride she died in him. He did the suffering, bleeding and the dying, (for it was not possible for any to help,) for her sins were charged unto him as her husband and he must pay the debt that God's holy justice demanded. But she was in him when he died, for she was chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that she should be holy and without blame before him in love. The chosen children of God are the bride of Christ, and in him they live, and move, and have their being. We read Isa. 63:9, *"In all their affliction*

he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." When Christ was buried his bride was buried in him, and when he arose she arose in him. *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."*

Brethren, if we have been baptized into the death of Christ, (not the baptism of water which cannot take away sin, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God,) we have been freed from the law of sin and death, for God's holy justice can never demand more than the death of the transgressor. And if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him.

Christ was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. Jesus the good shepherd lay down his life for his sheep, and he said, *"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life,*

that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain; but he himself gave up the ghost when he commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. On the third day he broke the bands of death, for it was not possible that he should be holden of it. This was the first resurrection: blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. Those who have no part in the first resurrection and whose names are not found written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell, which is the second death.

Beloved brethren, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is coming again as he hath promised with his holy angels in a cloud of glory to receive unto himself his redeemed children and present them before his Father holy and blameless. And he is now sitting at the right hand of the Father making intercession for his saints. Praise his holy name that he hath given us a sweet hope that we will be numbered among that blessed people who will hear these blessed words from his lips, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared*

for you from the foundation of the world." Praise God for all of his blessings toward undeserving sinners, especially the gift of his beloved son Jesus Christ.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

FELLOWSHIP IN A SPIRITUAL KINGDOM

When Jesus was arraigned before Pilate he was asked, "*Art thou the King of the Jews?*" He did not deny being a King, yet he was no threat to Pilate or the secular authority. He answered, "*My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, ...but now is my kingdom not from hence.*" John 18:36.

A very strange answer it would seem, both to Pilate and to the disciples of Jesus. The Jews were looking for the coming of the Messiah and the disciples trusted that this was "*...he which should have redeemed Israel.*" Luke 24:21. In fact his disciples would have made him a king had Jesus not withdrawn himself from them. John 6:15. But their expectation was for a temporal king. A king that would throw off the yoke of Rome and establish a temporal government. But this was not to be, for the statement is plain, "*My kingdom is not of this world:*"

And yet we find in Daniel 4:34, that when the understanding of Nebuchad-

nezzar had returned to him that he blessed the most High whose "*...kingdom is from generation to generation.*" So, it is not a contradiction that God has a people from generation to generation, and yet that kingdom, Jesus' kingdom, is not of this world. In every generation God has a people in the world, but they are not of the world. The citizenship of His children is in a spiritual kingdom and that is not of this world.

In contrasting the difference between a heavenly kingdom and that of this world consider Satan, "*...the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not....*" II Cor. 4:4, and also this Satan that is called the "*...prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;*" Eph. 2:2.

This, of course, does not mean that Satan is sovereign here, nor that his actions are outside the power of God. "*There is no power but of God: The powers that be are ordained of God.*" Rom. 13:1. As in the trials of Job, he was put in the hands of Satan, but was restrained from taking his life. He could go no further. Even so, Satan is still called prince of the power of the air or, as we might say prince; of this earthly principality. And he is the god of this world.

What a glorious fact it is then, that Jesus has declared that His kingdom is not of this world.

Jesus is the King of a different kingdom; a spiritual kingdom. Those that are spiritual have a citizenship in a spiritual kingdom that is from genera-

tion to generation. These citizens of the spiritual kingdom are those that are born of the Spirit. They are new creatures, as illustrated in II Cor. 5:17. And, there is a great contrast made between the fleshly man and the new, spiritual man. ***"That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*** John 3:6. But while in this world the spiritual man inhabits an earthen vessel. He inhabits sinful flesh. But the man of the flesh is still in this body too. And, thus the warfare.

This warfare is expressed in another way in Mark 3:27, which is Christ in you. ***"No man can enter a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."*** Those born of the Spirit have had their fleshly house spoiled and made worthless. Yet, it must be confessed that it seems this binding is not complete until this mortal life is finished. Even though His children continue to grow in grace and the knowledge of the Saviour, sin continues to break the "binding" and His children are made to know that their strength is not in themselves, but of Him.

Lest it should be misunderstood, the needs of the flesh must be considered, but not the various lusts thereof. Paul tells Timothy, I Tim. 5:8 ***"...if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."*** And, II Thes. 3:10; ***"...we commanded you, that***

if any would not work, neither should he eat." The point being; that material things with substance are necessary to the flesh and may reflect spiritual love and grace, but they are still only natural things, and at best, are only shadows of the spiritual Kingdom.

In expressing the beauty of the spiritual Kingdom as compared to what is known in the flesh Paul emphasizes that those that are spiritual should not live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. II Cor. 5:15. And from a spiritual standpoint, ***"... henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."***, or no more "after the flesh". The words "after the flesh" are only implied.

Well, of course we know each other in the flesh. But Paul's statement is concerning the spiritual. Knowing each other spiritually is of eternal importance while knowing each other in the flesh is only temporal. The fellowship of those born of the Spirit is truly fellowship with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ. See 1 John 1:3.

And even though the children of God may know of the wonderful truths of the Messiah who came in the flesh and died on the cross, they do not know Him now in the flesh. See II Cor. 5:16. He is now manifest by the Spirit, to those born of an incorruptible seed, ***as a risen Christ, "...who is ever at the right hand of God, who also***

maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8:34.

What a wonderful way to know each other. And, what a wonderful way to know our Lord.

Elder W.G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

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

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

Jesus had just before spoken to his disciples of faith which could work miracles; and faith always does work miracles, in the sense that it always

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

It must not be forgotten that this parable was spoken to eastern people, the whole structure of whose society is different from ours. Their idea was and is that servants are bound to render all demanded service to their masters. In our day and land, where the relations of men to each other are different, any such service rendered from one to another would most frequently be met by the courteous phrase, "I thank you." But such an expression would be entirely foreign

to all the ideas of eastern nations. There, a master would never think of thus acknowledging a service rendered by a servant. The master does not consider himself under any obligations to the servant, but the servant owes all his life and powers to him; and it is of his bounty if the servant receives his daily bread. Now the Savior uses this condition of things as a parable, and by it presents our relation to God. So likewise ye, after that ye have done all that is commanded you, count yourselves unprofitable servants.

1st. We are the creation of God. He has made us, and not we ourselves. He is the only self-existent Being, the only Being of whom eternity can be predicated. We owe our existence to his will. We are, because he is, and because he willed that we should be. Surely the creature must receive all. He can by no means render anything to his Creator. Therefore, when we have done all his will, we have only answered the end for which he created us; we have only rendered back to him that which came out of his own hand. In the Scriptures man is often said to have robbed God, but never to have added anything to him. He said, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fullness thereof." - Psalm 1. 12 See also the connection. As God has made us, we ourselves are his; and as he has created every power within us, and all that we have, these things are also his; and so neither our persons nor our works can profit him anything, or deserve any thanks from him.

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

3rd. Not only has he created us, and daily preserved us in existence, but he gives us all things. Man in his vanity gathers the fruits of his husbandry into his barns; with the profits of his labor he builds houses, and purchases the comforts and luxuries of life. By his learning and wit he gains a great name among men, and he says, "*See what my power hath wrought!*" Vain thought! Who gave him mental and physical power? Who sent down the heat of the sun and the showers of the early and latter rain upon the seed which he has sown? Who gave life to the seed, and prepared the soil in which it grew? Who saved it from mildew and rust and blight? Who gave favoring gales and smooth seas to his ships? Who kept his houses from the storm or fire?

What has he that he has not received?—John iii. 27. Why boasts he as though he had not received it? How little we live in a realizing sense of the constant providence of God! He is the Giver of all. If any streams flow back to him, they are but seeking the place from whence they came out. If every river flows into the ocean, wherein is the ocean profited? Does it thank the rivers? Their cheerful and mighty and beneficent flow can continue no longer than old ocean wills. God in his immensity is the ocean, and all we do and say in his service are but the return of him of what he gives; therefore he owes us nothing. We cannot borrow from him to pay the debt which we already owe him. Therefore, from these three considerations it is manifest that we can yield him nothing. We are unprofitable servants if our whole lives are his.

4th But we have to do with sin and sinners. We have not rendered him his own. We have denied his power and goodness, and set at naught his authority. We are in debt to him. We have failed to obey his commandments. We have fallen from our uprightness, and are enemies to God. As such the Bible speaks of all men. In connection with this also, some reflections grow out of these words of our Savior of which I wish to speak. Could an unfallen man, who should perfectly do God's will, have any merit before God? Could such a man present any holiness to God that would place him under any obligation in return whatever? A man can render service to his fellow-man that can rightly demand

reward, because he meets his fellow-man upon an equal plane; but can he render any such service to God? It is manifest that the first essential quality that must belong to any meritorious work is that it shall be "self-originated;" that is, that it shall be performed entirely out of a man's own self, without being originated from any source outside of himself. If it be originated from any source outside of himself, it is to the praise of that source, and not himself. A man may demand praise or reward from his fellow-man for service rendered, because with regard to him the act was self-originated - it was performed from an equal to an equal; but we are not in any sense equal with God. It has been before proved that we must receive all from the Creator. No good work is from self. All our good works, if we have any, must be from God. We cannot take one thing which God hath wrought in our hearts and make it the ground of a demand for more. If God originates our good works, they cannot constitute any merit in us. If God has originated them, they must be to his praise forever. Can we then originate any good works, such as faith, love, obedience, &c.? In answer, let us first consider that the Scriptures teach that man is wholly unclean, and his heart wholly evil. It must be manifest that evil cannot originate good. Evil only originates evil. To this the Scriptures and reason both agree. Let us look at the testimony of the Scriptures for a little. *"A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."*—Matt.

vii. 18. ***"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."*** - Matt. xii. 34.

That all men by nature are sinful altogether, is declared again and again. See the first three chapters of Romans, in which Paul draws up an indictment against the whole world, and declares that none are exempt from the condemnation there pronounced. Sin and death are the condition and doom of all men. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. God only can work good or originate it in us. If any man does work good works, it is because God has created him to good works, and foreordained that he should walk in them. - Eph. ii. 10. Every good and perfect thing is declared to be the gift of God, and to come down from him. - James i. 17. Repentance is his gift. - Acts v. 31. Faith is his gift. Eph. ii. 8. Love, hope, faith, and all the Christian graces, are declared to be the fruit of the Spirit. - Gal. v. 22, 23. Our good works he is declared to be the author of. - See again Eph. ii. 10; Isa. xxvi. 12. From all these scriptural testimonies we may surely conclude that in point of righteousness we deserve no thanks, and cannot be profitable to God.

5th. From all this is manifest that we cannot make an atonement for our sins. If any price can be rendered to justice, it must be a holy ransom, such as justice can approve. But we have before seen that holiness is not in man except God create it there; and it is manifest that we cannot render to

God his own work as our merit. Because I have one good thing from God I cannot rightly say, ***"Therefore I deserve another."*** Our works, which God has wrought within us, cannot atone for past sins; and all in fallen man is sin, except the works which God works within him. Redemption therefore must be of God; it cannot be of ourselves. Of myself I can neither pay the debts I owe, nor lay up treasures of righteousness after my debts are paid. Human merit is excluded from redemption, both as regards the atonement for sin and the sanctification of the sinner. Salvation must be of divine grace and not of creature works. Even the works wrought within us, of faith, love humility, &c., are not capable of paying the debt which we owe to divine justice, because they are the fruit of the Spirit; and the Spirit is not given until after Jesus has paid all the debt we owe, neither could it be given until after the atonement was made. In salvation, atonement for the sins that are past must precede all else. To this agrees the type. The people could not come near the sanctuary, and no worship could be offered there, until it was sprinkled with the blood of atonement. To this agrees all Christian experience. No man has ever yet felt that he had one spiritual blessing from God, until he has felt himself sheltered by the blood of the atonement. If our works were perfect they could profit God nothing; they could not atone for sin. They must be created in us of God.

6th. But our works, even the best of them, are not perfect. Imperfection is

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

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

If this be true of the Christian, the renewed man, certainly the unregenerate man can do no better. If the best offering of him in whose heart Jesus abides needs the cleansing blood to make it acceptable to God, surely the work of the unrenewed man must be wholly hateful and horrible in the sight of God. If he that does all is unprofitable, where shall he stand who never has known what love to God and obedience to his law mean? Surely from all this the exceeding riches of the

grace and kindness of God take on a new meaning, and must appear immeasurable. If a man is saved, how great is the exhibition of the love of God to him!

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

far sterner rule than he does any one else.

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

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

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

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

F.A. Chick.

(The above was written by

Elder F. A. Chick, Feb. 11, 1885.)

SERMON BY THE LATE
ELDER A. B. AYERS

Pigg River Association 1960

I will read to you the third verse of the fifteenth chapter of Romans: "*For even Christ pleased not himself; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*" The word "me" here implies Christ himself, as we understand. The Psalmist uses almost the same language in the 69th Psalm, 9th verse: "*The zeal of thine house has eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*"

As we understand the word fallen and the word fell, both signify the past tense as to when the "*reproaches fell on me.*" We read also in 1st Timothy where the Apostle said that Adam was not deceived, but Eve being deceived, was in the transgression, but she should be saved in childbearing.

Now the question is, When did the reproaches fall on "*me?*" My mind goes out to believe with all sacredness of heart and soul that in the garden of Eden, when there were but the two, there was the transgression. And in thinking about it, a thought is formed in my mind that there never was but one transgression, and that was in the garden of Eden; and that transgression has been multiplied as the human family has been multiplied. My thought is that in the transgression there was every conceived sin that has ever been practiced by mortal man. The Apostle tells us in the 4th chapter of Ephesians that there is one Lord, one faith, one

baptism. There is one salvation; and that salvation was prepared in the Son of God, upon whom the reproaches fell in the transgression. This woman, was in the transgression, yet she shall be saved in childbearing. Now to me, in the transgression the church was figuratively in Eve; and the seed of the woman concerning whom God spoke to the serpent, was the salvation of his people: **"It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."**

The Apostle Peter tells us that He stood a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world. Christ has been without blemish from the foundation of the world; yet there was the promise that he should bruise the serpent's head; and there was the promise that she shall be saved in childbearing.

Well, what child is under consideration here? It didn't say, In children bearing; but in childbearing. The very child, to me, brethren, the very child, the seed of the woman that was promised there in Genesis, is the very one in which Abraham received the promise that in his seed this child should come forth, **"For in Isaac shalt thy seed be called."** And in Isaac Jesus did come forth, that is, in the genealogy of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesse, David, Solomon, etc.,—the genealogy right on down, did the seed of the woman come forth, on whom the reproaches of the transgression fell. That is, **"All the reproaches have fallen on me."**

Therefore, he stood as a Lamb without blemish and covered every transgression of the household of faith --of the church of the living God. The old

prophet Zachariah tells that, **"In that day"**, (a specific day, which to me is the very day in which the seed of the woman was crucified,) **"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness,"** **"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea."** That was the blood that had the atoning power in the day of the crucifixion of the blessed Lamb of God, upon whom all the reproaches had fallen. He came at the appointed time of the Father, as we are told in Galatians: **"When the fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."**

What a blessed promise, brethren? The promises of God can't fail: never have, and never will. If the promises of God could fail, then none of us would have salvation, nor eternal life. What a blessed promise we have in him, that he should bruise the serpent's head. All the promises were based on him. In Hebrews the Apostle wrote, **"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visiteth him?"** He did visit the Son of Man. The man that is under consideration is figurative of the church; and here we have the Son of Man whom God visited with the wrath that we deserved—that the church deserved in their transgression, because the whole church went down in that transgression and was never able to lift itself up. You can't lift

yourself up by your own boot-straps; you can't lift yourself up with nothing to cling to, but He has the power to lift us up. The Psalmist declares that He brought him up from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed his feet upon a rock.

Brethren, friends, and neighbors, do you have your feet upon a rock this morning? If so, what rock are you standing on? Not the common rocks that I see in the land and soil up here, but the Rock of Eternal Ages. That is the bed-rock. That's God's salvation and eternal truth, who arose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept.

So the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Now can you fathom the greatness of God: his mercy, his love, and his truth and salvation that he has in store for all his people that love him. All of us were in the transgression, yet He chose the church in Christ, for he tells us in 2nd Timothy, ***"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."***

So, brethren it can't fail. There was your promise that all the reproaches of them that reproached thee have fallen on me. Yet he stood in that capacity from the foundation of the world; and before there was a people God made this covenant of redemption with the Son. Can you fathom the greatness of the mercy that God had on you, knowing what would take place? There is not a sin or shortcoming that you have

ever come through in life's journey that was not known to God from all eternity.

He knows how vile and depraved we are today. But the question is, do we believe by faith? The Apostle John tells us, ***"He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."*** Do we believe this morning that God the Father from all eternity did embrace that grace in him, and send him forth at the appointed time? Can you conceive that all the salvation of the whole church of the living God, coming in the very small package, in the oneness of that infant babe that was born in Bethlehem of Judah, and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger. Can you conceive that there was a sufficiency for every child of promise, every heir of promise, every child of grace in every age, from the creation to the final consummation, he standing as a Lamb without blemish from the foundation of the world, and the reproaches of them that reproached us are fallen upon him? Brethren, if you can conceive that, then you have something that is far beyond the capacity of the mind. I have thought about it; and the more I think of it, the more it becomes a sea without bottom, without brim, without shore: The greatness and mercy of God, and what we call eternity; and to live through eternity in the bliss and splendor of the Son of God, clothed with the garments of righteousness that will never fade, never decay.

It is said by a prophet of old, ***"Let the foundation be strongly laid with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the***

expense be given out of the king's house. Oh, brethren, here comes your expense again: that one that the reproaches fell upon. He is the expense of the king's house; and here is the foundation strongly laid: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And there is life in every one of those layers of stone. Let the foundation be strongly laid of three rows of great stones — and they are great stones brethren. It is the very foundation upon which the church of the living God is built. Every house must have a foundation, a good foundation, otherwise the building will soon fall and decay.

But I assure you, brethren, if we have faith to believe that Jesus is the Christ, then we are born of God; and he that is born of God doth not commit sin, because his seed remaineth in him, as the Apostle tells us. Who is it that is born of God? It is not this corrupt man here; it is not this earthly body of ours, but it is the Spirit of God born in you. That is the new birth to me: When he sheds abroad that quickening power that brings us to the knowledge of how vile, how sinful and how lost we are, and how depraved we are; and with that, always gives the knowledge that there is power that is able to save the most vile sinner. If he was willing to reach my case, that was always my thought, for mine is an outstanding case; if he was just willing to reach down that mercy to me. I believe he has brethren, because I have a precious hope that is superior to me to all the hopes of this congregation. I wouldn't give you mine this morning for all of yours, because it

wouldn't do me any good. But this blessed hope is that all the reproaches not only of the whole church of the living God but this poor servant, was embraced in that same promise of covenant grace there, and redeemed by that blood. And I want to give you, in my way of seeing and understanding, the full assurance that none of you will ever enter heaven and immortal glory, only through the merits of that blood that streamed from the side of him that said ***"The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me."*** Just the merits of that blood, and the sacrifice of that body.

When he came into the world, he didn't come as the other high priests did, offering the blood of bulls and goats as sacrifices. He, being the High Priest himself, did not have to offer for sin for himself, if the other priests did: for all the Levitical priesthood had to offer sacrifices for themselves and not for the people only; and that had to be every year. But once in the end of the world, the Apostle tells us, He made one sacrifice: and by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, because the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me, and the zeal of thine house has eaten me up.

Brethren, what a wonderful God this is, that made a promise that can't fail. Abraham his servant received faith to believe that the promise of God could not fail when the Lord said, ***"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest . . . and offer him for a burnt offering."*** He had faith to believe that though I go and slay him,

he is coming back. He testified to that when he said to his servants, ***"Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again unto you."*** He is coming back, though I go and slay him. Brethren, here is your resurrection from the dead. He is coming back with me! That is a glorious thought with me — the resurrection from the dead.

This life here is such a short span, its just a few days. The servant of old said, ***"A few days, and full of trouble."*** If we live to be four score years, we soon pass on just the same. There is no time limit with God, but we must all go the way of the earth. But the blessed thought is that there was a day coming when this one that all the reproaches were laid upon should come forth, for the Lord said,

"Thou shalt bruise his heel, but he shall bruise thy head." That is to me, brethren, when the reproaches, the one sin that has been multiplied that was committed in Eden, like a tree that comes forth from the seed — just one seed brings forth the tree, fell upon him. Here is a figure, that one sin back there has been multiplied, and all of us have been bitten by that same poison, and that same poison will cause all of us to wither. If you chop around a tree and break the sap and bark, you will soon see it wither, and it will soon die. So sin has been multiplied, and caused us to wither in body, to wither in mind and thought, and this old body will go back to the dust. But the thought is now, that He has borne the reproaches — they have fallen on him. He was bruised for our offences, buried for our iniquities, and arose for our justification.

What a blessed thought, that death couldn't hold him! Neither will it hold you. Because just so sure as Jesus came forth from the dead, just so sure there will be a resurrection day. Abraham saw that when he was assured that, I will slay him, but he will come back with me. I have thought of that many times: ***"While we go yonder and worship"***. What was he going to worship? He was going to take the life of his son, but that unfaltering faith and the all abounding love of God was so strong in him that he saw the resurrection there. And when he went to perform the very thing that God commanded him, there God placed a ram — which is a figure of this one that bore the reproaches. There the ram was slain, and Isaac went free. Again here is a pertinent figure of the church: Isaac went free: the lamb was slain.

Here is that blessed Son who knew no sin, who bore the reproaches of sin of all his people, the whole church of the living God. He was bound upon the cross. God delivered him there, and withdrew himself from him, that he might die and pay the ransom price. Your purchase price is the blood of Christ. Your passport, if you enter heaven and immortal glory, has been written in the Lamb's book of life with that blood; because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

"For the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen on me."

(The above is from a recording, and is somewhat condensed for publication Editors.)

Elder A.B. Ayers

"IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?"
JEREMIAH VIII. 22.

From infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord's people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God's people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry, and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, "*For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.*" And then he demands, "*Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?*" Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal prop-


erty for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which human science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for comfort and deliverance from afflictions, and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: "*Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medi-*

cines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, "***Lord, save, or I perish.***" There certainly is no balm short of the Savior's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."
Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ's our Lord."
—ROMANS v. 21.

 HIS is the mercy for mourning saints who are sighing and groaning under a body of sin and death, that God has decreed that grace not only *may* reign, but that it *must* reign. Were it left to us, we could no more rescue ourselves from the dominion of sin than the children of Israel could deliver themselves from the house of Egyptian bondage. But they sighed and groaned by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. He had respect unto his covenant, and looked upon them and delivered them (Exodus ii. 23-25).

So God has determined on behalf of his people that sin shall not be their

eternal ruin; that it shall not plunge them into crime after crime, until it casts them at last into the gulf of endless woe, but that grace "***shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life.***" But it must reign here as well as hereafter, for by its reign here its eternal triumph is secured. It must then subdue our proud hearts, and never cease to sway its peaceful sceptre over them until it has secured in them absolute and unconditional victory. Now this is what every sincere child of God most earnestly longs to feel and realize. He longs to embrace Jesus and be embraced by him in the arms of love and affection. As the hymn says,

"But now subdued by sovereign grace, My spirit longs for thy embrace."

He hates sin, though it daily, hourly, momentarily works in him, and is ever seeking to regain its former mastery; he abhors that cruel tyrant who set him to do his vilest drudgery, deceived and deluded him by a thousand lying promises, dragged him again and again into captivity, and but for sovereign grace would have sealed his eternal destruction. Subdued by the sceptre of mercy, he longs for the dominion of grace over every faculty of his soul and every member of his body. "O," he says, "***let grace reign and rule in my breast; let it not suffer any sin to have dominion over me; let it tame every unruly desire, and bring into captivity every thought to the***

obedience of Christ " Thus, he who truly fears God looks to grace, and to grace only, not merely to save, but to sanctify; not only to pardon sin, but to subdue it; not only to secure him an inheritance among the saints in light, but to make him meet for it.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

1 June 1999

Elder Kenneth Key, Editor
 Signs of the Times
 721 Willard Street
 Greensboro N C 27405

Dear Elder Key,

R equest the following information concerning the next meeting of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association be published in the Signs of the Times.

The Lord willing, the One Hundred Sixty Ninth session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association will be held with North Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Beaufort County, N. C. On October 9-10, 1999. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located off Highway NC99 between Bath and Belhaven, North Carolina.

Elder Key, we look forward to having you with us during the Association.

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH



n annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the 5th of July 1999. The church is located off highway #221, five miles North of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION



he next session of The Pigg River Association will be held with Chestnut Church on the first Sunday in August and Friday & Saturday before.

Those going north on Highway 220 turn onto 724 and follow approximately 5 miles to church. Those going south on 220 turn left on 619 to 724 and go approximately 1 mile to church.

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

Elder Lane Carter, Mod.
 Brother Jamie Cooper, Clerk

PSALM 128:1.

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

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1999 Staunton River Association will convene, the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. The host church is Union Church for this our one hundred & fifty-eighth session. Services will begin at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, July 10th & Sunday, July 11th.

Weatherford Church is located about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 & 763.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Assoc. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1999

James B. Pugh, AL	\$7.00
Ms. Jamie Eanning, AL	2.00
Joe L. Hamrick, Jr., TX	4.00
L.D. Conner, VA	7.00
Silas Payne, VA	2.00
Marian Meeks, NC	2.00
C.L. Fowler, TX	7.00
Mrs. Cliff Weaver, WA	5.00
Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA	7.00
Mrs. Albret Spencer, Va	2.00
Mrs. Mary Adkins, NY	5.00
Mrs. Judy Poindexter, VA	5.00
Mrs. Louise Stanley, NC	2.00
Hoyt M. Sparks, NC	2.00
Miss Reidy Pickral, VA.....	25.00
Donald Ferguson, CAN.....	12.00
Mrs. Dorothy Cassell, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER VERGIE CONNER

It is with sweet sorrow that I write the obituary of my dear aunt and sister in Christ, Vergie Gladys Conner. She was born on June 20, 1912 and passed away March 17, 1999. Services were held on Friday at 2:00 P.M., March 19, 1999 at Salem Church with her pastor, Elder Hale Terry officiating, with interment in the Salem Cemetery.

She was a member of Salem Church for 32 years. She was preceded in death by her husband, John Willard. The Good Lord blessed her with three children, Juanita Pugh, Wesley and Jack Conner. She is also survived by six grandchildren.

Sister Vergie believed and loved the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She was faithful in attending her church and she enjoyed going to church every weekend. She rode to church with Julian and I until she went into the nursing home.

May our blessed Lord be given all the praise, honor, and glory for giving us this dear, precious one. Written at the request of Salem Church.

Eveleen Ruttough

PSALM 141:8.

But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.

MYRTLE THAGARD DANIEL

Myrrtle Thagard Daniel died in her sleep November 21, 1998 in Winter Haven, Florida. She was born in Crenshaw County Alabama September 10, 1908, to the parents of John Frank and Serrilla Thagard. She attended the Primitive Baptist Church as a child and continued to grow strong in her faith and love for the church through all of her 90 years.

At the age of 17, Myrtle married Clifford S. Daniel. They were married for 56 years and together raised five daughters. Two of the daughters preceded her in death.

In 1940 the couple moved from Alabama to Eagle Lake, Florida and later to Winter Haven, Florida where they lived until her husband's death in 1981. Myrtle continued to live there until about three years ago, when she moved to the west coast of Florida to live with a daughter.

For many years she was a member of the Shady Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Winter Haven Florida. Her pastor was Elder J.Y. McCormick who is also her nephew. Since she helped raise him, she always thought of him first as her pastor and then as her son. On the Saturday Myrtle died her daughter had driven her to Winter Haven so she could attend her church Sunday. She lay down for her afternoon nap and did not wake. Her daughter attended church for her the next morning. Myrtle's greatest joy was the fellowship and preaching she experienced at the Primitive Baptist Churches.

MEMORIAL FOR:
BROTHER SILAS M. GAMMON

In February 22, 1999, at the age of 83, our dear brother in Christ, Silas M. Gammon passed away at Brian Nursing Center in Eden, North Carolina. It is with great sadness that I attempt to write this obituary of another one of our Dan River members. In recent months there has been a lot of sickness in our church family, and a number of our dear members and friends have gone to be with their Lord and Saviour.

Brother Gammon was a kind and gentle person and loved his church and church family dearly. He attended church meetings whenever he could. For sometime, due to his physical condition, he had to depend on others for transportation, and for the past several years his brother and sister-in-law, Drewey and Frances Gammon, often transported him to church for the Sunday Services.

Brother Gammon was born on August 31, 1915 in Rockingham County, N. C. He was one of ten children born to John M. Gammon and Dolly Cox Gammon. He was the oldest boy in the family and spent his early life on the family farm in the Happy Home Community. Brother Gammon liked to fish and was one who enjoyed the out-of-doors.

He was married to Hazel Huff Gammon for fifty-two years. She died in 1994. Also, there was a stepson, Teddy Jones who is now deceased.

After Brother Gammon left the farm, he went to work for the Eden Police

Department and retired there after approximately 25 years of service.

Brother Gammon joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, July 31, 1977 and as long as he was physically able attended regularly. He had great compassion and love for his brothers and sisters in Christ, and was a strong believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace.

Funeral services were at Fair Funeral Home Chapel in Eden, N. C. February 24, 1999, by his nephew, Rev. John Warriner. He was laid to rest in the Gammon family cemetery near his childhood home, N. C. Highway 700 in the Happy Home Community to await the second coming of our Lord.

Survivors are his brother and sister-in-law, Drewey and Frances Gammon of Ruffin; sister-in-law, Mae Hugh Gammon also of Ruffin; and several nieces and nephews.

May God bless this bereaved family and comfort and reconcile them as only He can do.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

John Collie
May, 1999

WILLIAM KENNETH SLACK



William Kenneth Slack, 56, of Morehead, KY was born in Charlestons (Kanawha Co.) WV at McMillan Hospital, July, 12, 1942. He departed this life May, 5, 1999, making his stay on earth 56 years, 9 months, 23 days. He was the son of the late

Howard Kenneth Slack and Ruby Evelyn Turley Slack. As a young man he was brought to believe the doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of God and to believe that the promise is sure to all the seed, and to trust in the God who hath declared the end from the beginning, and that worketh all things after the council of His own will. On Easter Sunday, 1962, he was baptised by the hands of Elder Allan C. Smith in the Elk River at Mink Shoals, Kanawha Co., WV, assisted by Elder G.W. Justice. Since 1966 he has been a member of the Little Perry Church of Jesus Christ of Regular Primitive Baptist, Rowan Co., KY. He is survived by one brother Robert Wayne Slack, his wife Molly, and their three sons Robert Wayne Slack II, Christopher Robin Slack and Nathan Howard Slack, all of Charleston, WV. Also surviving are two aunts and one uncle, Elsie Mae Leadman Slack of South Charleston, WV and Doris Jean Slack Farren and James Farren of Bridgewater, VA, and three special friends Wayne Sturgill, Pauline Sturgill and Ralph Sturgill, as well as a host of friends to mourn his passing. The funeral will be conducted May 8, 1999 at the Northcutt and Son Home for Funerals at Morehead, KY by Elder Deward Hall, Elder Arlie Reynolds and Elder Dorris Littleton. Graveside services will be conducted at the Teays Hill Cemetery in St. Albans, WV by Elder Ronald Crouch and Elder Harold Johnson.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

WHEN storm and tempest loudly
howl,
And clouds obscure the sky;
When lightnings flash and thunders roll,
Be not afraid — 'tis I.

If doubts about a future state
Extort the serious cry,
"What shall I do? my sins how
great!"
Be not afraid — 'tis I.

While Satan aims a fiery dart,
Temptations make thee sigh;
Believe in me; I'll keep thy heart;
Be not afraid — 'tis I.

Should health and wealth, and
friends
And death itself draw nigh; [for-
sake,
Tho' heart should break, and
nature shake,
Be not afraid — 'tis I.

'Tis I who lived — 'tis I who died,
That thou might'st reign on high;
Behold my hands, my feet, my
side,
And be convinced 'tis I.

Parkinson's Col.

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EDITORIAL

THE SOUL OF MAN.



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

ing soul. (Gen Chap 2, vs 7)

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a liv-

In response to a request, by a Sister in the faith, to write something on just what constitutes the soul of man. I began to think on the subject and it grew into the following. I pray that what is written is in keeping

with the word of God, any errors are on the part of the writer, and we ask that you just consider the source but deal with them in a kind and brotherly fashion, and pray for me.

There has been much written and many discussions on just what is the soul of the man, which was created in the image of God, and what part does it play in the salvation of man. God is a triune God consisting of the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost and these three are one, according to the scriptures, and man being in his image is also a triune being. The trinity of man is the body, soul and spirit and these three are one being. The body was formed of the dust of the ground, but with no life, and when God breathed into its nostrils the breath of life, it is recorded that man became a living soul. The breath of life gave life to both the soul and the body, and they became a living, breathing human being; as the clay was lifeless, so was the soul before given life. According to the scriptures, the soul is a separate and distinct part of the man; not another term for the spirit, as some believe, and certainly not to be confused with the body in which it dwells. It is that part of man that identifies what he is as an individual human being, not physical or spiritual, but psychologically, emotionally and mentally.

In the natural man, there is his fleshly body, the soul and the natural spirit which all men possess; in the new creature, as he will dwell with God in heaven, there will be the glorified body, the soul and the Holy Spirit; the only

common characteristic of the two beings is the soul. The soul exists in both the natural man and the new creature and experiences the lives of both as the same entity. The soul is that part of the creature that will never cease to exist, either in this world or in the world to come; in this life, as it is born into the world, it dwells in this natural body of flesh under the influence of the natural spirit and knows only the things of nature and the joys and pleasures of this world; it is unaware of the kingdom of God, is at home in this world and unless it is, born again, by its motivating force being changed, it will live and die in that condition, never having known the presence of God nor the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The soul is that part of man which has the tendency, ability, desire and motivation to be a farmer, doctor, lawyer, scientist or any of the other occupations in which man may participate in this life, due to special talents or ambitions that it may have; these facts are not changed or influenced by the body that it occupies or the spirit by which it is influenced, a man does not change his work or hobbies when he is quickened unless those pursuits are dishonest, unethical or immoral. The soul is that which the man is in his innermost self: he may be an extrovert or a shy timid individual, generous or very frugal in his dealings with his fellow man, a republican or a democrat, male or female, and none of these things are determined or motivated by the body or the spirit with which it shares its

being. The characteristics which the soul possesses are the things that makes man what he is, his personal likes and dislikes as an individual, and these things are not changed because of the natural or spiritual condition of the individual before God, either before or after regeneration, with the above exceptions. His values regarding good and evil, integrity and morality are influenced by the spirit motivating him at any given time but his personal chemistry and talents are not affected by either the body or the spirit. In other words the soul of man is his character; that personal charisma that makes him an individual, that part which makes him different as compared to every other man that is on the face of the earth. It is the part of the individual which causes his fellow man to love or to hate him, feel fellowship for him or to be estranged from him.

The apostle Paul writes, (1 Thes Chap 5, vs 23) *"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."* The soul is that part of the man which was animated or activated when God breathed into the body, that he had created, the breath of life. It is separate and distinct from the body, in which it dwells, and from the spirit which activates or animates it. The apostle Paul regarded the soul as a separate and distinct part of man in the above scripture quoted and in, (Heb Chap 4, vs 12) *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and*

sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and the waves and signals which causes the body to function; the wisdom in man that differentiates him from the beasts of the earth, and enables him to execute judgment in living this natural life here on earth, and which enables him to adjust to his environment." It is that part of the man to whom God addressed his statement to go forth and replenish the earth and have dominion over it, because it was that part of man that could fulfil this command, for it includes the intellect. The soul is that unique part of man that makes him an individual, that part which makes him different as compared to every other man that is on the face of the earth. It is the part of the individual which causes his fellow man to love or to hate him, feel fellowship for him or to be estranged from him.

The apostle Paul writes, (1 Thes Chap 5, vs 23) ***"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."*** The soul is that part of the man which was animated or activated when God breathed into the body, that he had created, the breath of life. It is separate and distinct from the body, in which it dwells, and from the spirit which activates or animates it. The apostle Paul regarded the soul as a separate and distinct part of man in the above scripture quoted and in, (Heb Chap 4, vs 12) ***"For the word of***

God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart." If the word of God could divide assunder the soul and the spirit, then they are two separate and distinct characteristics of the man, just as the joint and the marrow are separate and distinct, one from the other.

An example of the position of the soul in relation to the body and spirit, as I understand it, is as the apostle Paul relates in, (1 Cor Chap 13, vs 13) ***"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity."*** I have always been of the opinion that charity was the greatest of these three because it was the common characteristic of both the natural man and the spiritual man, charity, or love, is experienced by man in this life and continues to be experienced, in a far greater measure, in the kingdom of heaven. Faith and hope are characteristics of man in this world that he loses when he dies, because having received the substance of the faith and hope that he has had throughout this life, he has no further need for them, for he has received the reality of them in their fullness. Paul said, ***"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 it."*** It is that which keeps the man pressing on to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and therefore when the

prize is realized, when the race is run, the faith and hope in their accomplishment ceases to exist in the individual.

In like manner, the soul is that part of the man which experiences a natural life here in this time world, and will also enjoy the blessings of the redeemed in that world that is to come. For man's soul to praise God for what he has done for him, he must of necessity, be aware of what that is, and therefore there must be a common characteristic that exists in both the natural man and the spiritual man for this praise and honor to be realized and expressed, in this life and in the life to come, and this common characteristic is that part of man which is called the soul. The soul, dwelling in the natural body, in this life experiences the natural life with all of the sin and lusts of the natural creature; then, in the children of God, it experiences the quickening of the Holy Spirit, which makes it aware of the depravity of man in this fleshly body, and because of this, it worships and praises God for this deliverance. As the one leper (of the ten who were cleansed) returned to Jesus and praised Him for the cleansing from leprosy, because he knew from whence the healing came; the soul of man realizes from whence its deliverance comes and renders praise and honor unto God.

The natural man, in addition to the soul, possesses the natural body which was created by God; a natural spirit which was breathed into him in the garden of Eden and which serves him in this life, but as faith and hope in

the above analogy, the body and the natural spirit serve their purpose here in this time world, but have no part in the spiritual kingdom of God. Unless a change is wrought in the individual, from the state in which they were after the fall, they will live out their life never knowing anything about God and godliness; they will die as they were, creatures of the flesh only, and knowing only the natural kingdom which is their natural domain and having experienced the influence of the natural spirit only. This is where they were sentenced because of partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and they will never be aware of the spiritual world that surrounds them, in this condition.

The soul of man continues as it was; it indeed dies and is buried, but it is that which comes forth from the grave in the resurrection to be reunited with the Holy Spirit (having been separated from it, when it went back to God at the death of the body) and ascends into the realms of glory to ever be with the Father, praising him world without end. This natural body is of the earth, and will return to the earth when the breath of life is withdrawn, it has no part in the kingdom of God, it serves its purpose here in time. Man in nature, will give his all for the perseverance of the body in this life; society will go to any extreme to preserve the body and the breath of life and prevent a man from dying, but when the time appointed of the Father arrives, the race ends and the body and breath of the individual ceases to function as a human being and, man

as he is in nature, including the body and soul, is consigned to the grave. There the soul awaits the second coming of Christ; when it shall come forth in the uncorruptible, glorified, spiritual body, and be caught up together in the clouds to meet those who were alive and remain; and who at the time are changed to the same image, and rise up together to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord. The souls will be the same entity they have ever been, and will ever be, praising God for their deliverance from this low ground of sin and sorrow and into the glorious light and liberty of that new Jerusalem. There they will appear as a bride adorned for her husband and will dwell forever in that place that Jesus said that he would go and prepare for them.

Some believe that the same identical body that lives here in time will inhabit heaven, others believe that there is no resurrection of the body, but, what does the scriptures say? (1 Cor Chap 15,vs 35-36-37) *"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."* Again (1Cor Chap 15,vs 44) *"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."* (1 Cor Chap

15,vs 49) *"As we have born 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."* There is a resurrection of the body of the individual, but it is not the same identical body that dwelled here in this time world.

If this same fleshly body that man inhabits here on earth enters heaven, then what is the meaning of the scripture above that says flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Why is it that that which is dead; which were buried corruptible, must be raised differently (incorruptible) and why must those that are alive and remain, at the time, be changed? Changed from what to what? If they are changed, they are not the same as they were before, and the above scripture, speaking on the subject of the resurrection, says that they shall be changed. They cannot be changed and remain the same. As Paul said of the election, it is by grace, and not by works, or else grace is no more grace; in like manner if its changed, its not the same or else there is no change. The above scripture says that the dead

shall be raised incorruptible (changed) and we that are alive and remain (in the flesh at His second coming) shall be changed. (Phil Chap 3. vs 20-21) ***"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorified body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."*** What and how that change is we know not, but it will be likened unto the glorified image of Jesus, ***"as Jesus prayed to his Father in, (John Chap 17, vs 5)"*** ***"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."***

(1 Cor chap 6, vs 19-20) ***"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."*** These scriptures are used to advance the idea that this natural body is the one that will inhabit heaven and immortal glory, but this is speaking of the body that you have here in this time world and certainly the scriptures support the truth that the Holy Ghost inhabits this body in the new birth, but this does not prove necessarily that this natural body is the one that will dwell in the climes of glory. Scriptures quoted above prove that there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body and surely the natural body is the one we

dwell in here on earth and the spiritual body will be the one we will inhabit in heaven, if we are indeed the children of God. As an individual I have many garments, of which when we refer to them, we say my garments and others refer to them as your garments. We have garments that we wear in the summer and others that we wear in the winter, but we say at any given time, my garment, because they are being worn at the present time, but different garments are worn at different times and seasons of our life. They were made for a different environment, summer, winter etc. but they were created for me; in nature they may not have been originally knowingly tailored for me personally, but in the plan of God, they were made for me and no one else. In like manner God's children have a natural body for living in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and a glorified heavenly body created for them for heavenly dwelling, in the presence of God. They will indeed be our bodies, but not the same physical body in which we dwell here on earth we, if we be his, will be in a different season, or realm, and the style of the day will be likened unto the glorified image of the Savior.

When man in nature is quickened by indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the soul of man experiences the change of being under the influence of both the natural spirit and the Holy Spirit; and this sets up that Dilemma that Jesus said all of his sheep must bear: the cross that they must experience by being his disciple. The soul which had been totally under the law of sin

and death and the influence of the natural spirit, is, with the quickening of the Holy Spirit, made aware of the spiritual realm; it is given a hope that it can, in spite of the depraved condition which it now realizes itself to have been in, under the law, be made righteous by the one and only sacrifice which God prepared for the sins of the flesh and condemning sin in the flesh. The body and soul under the influence of the natural spirit still serves the law of sin and death, but the soul, also being under the influence of the indwelling Spirit of God and with the revelation that it now has of spiritual matters, desires to serve the law of God after the inward man. It was the soul of Paul that was crying out, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*", it recognized the duality of its personality and desired to be free from the conflict that it now has, for the good that it would, it does not: but the evil which it would not, that it does.

Does not this remind you of your experience in this life after the quickening? the new creature delights in the law of God, but how to perform that which is good you find not, because you are also still influenced by the natural spirit with which you must continue to contend. You realize that there is new law in your members and it is warring against the law of sin and death which is also in your members; you desire to do that which is good, but evil is always present with you and you experience the wretchedness that was causing the apostle Paul to mourn

his undone condition. He was, however blessed to conclude his statement regarding his distress in the comfort of the fact that, (Rom Chap 7, vs 25) "*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with my mind I serve the Law of God: but with the flesh the law of sin.*" and also in the scripture that is recorded, (1 John Chap 4,vs 4) "*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*" This is referring to the spirit of the anti-christ which is the spirit of this world, with which Paul was struggling, and his faith was that the inner man, which was spiritual, would certainly overcome the man of flesh, because God was the sustaining force behind it.

(Psa 34,vs22) "*The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.*" The soul of man, being the, the essence of his innermost being, is that which is redeemed from this world of sin and sorrow. The body which was made of the dust of the earth, and which would return unto the ground, at death, is not that which is pleasing unto God; for he cursed the ground for man's sake, because of his partaking of the fruit of the tree of good and evil. God told Adam, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return; this was to the natural man who had sinned and come under condemnation. Cain and Abel represent, as do Jacob and Esau, the elect and the non-elect, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. God did not receive

the offering from Cain because his offering was of the fruit of the ground, which God had cursed. God would not accept an offering from him, because Cain's substance was of the realm of his father the devil and therefore he could only offer that which was an abomination to God; his heritage was desolation, separation from the kingdom of God and his soul will be cast into the lake of fire with the devil and all of his angels. Esau found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears, because before the children were born it was told Rebecca, (the elder shall serve the younger), Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. Abel's offering was of the firstling of his flock and the fat thereof, which was God's creation, and his offering was pleasing unto God and his heritage was in that world that is yet to come, and his soul shall dwell among the redeemed of God throughout the endless ages. The difference between the two manner of people that were separated from Rebecca's and Eves's womb was not based on seniority or superiority of either individual, because the determination was made before they were even born, but rather was because of the election of God. As is recorded in the book of Deuteronomy concerning the children of Israel, (Deut Chap 7, vs 6) "***For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that***

are upon the face of the earth." and Jacob was declared to be the lot of his inheritance.

(Psa 49 vs, 15) "***But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me.***" This Psalmist was writing concerning those who trusted in their wealth to redeem themselves, those who he says like sheep are laid in the grave; and death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. They have their portion in this life, and the writer is declaring that though the grave will have dominion over the souls of all men in death; God will redeem his soul, and the souls of all of the elect from the power of the grave. The souls of all men are retrieved from the power of the grave, some to eternal glory and some to everlasting damnation. (Psa 33, vs 18-19) "***Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive.***" Again the hope of the writer is in, what will be done for his soul, and that is, that it will be delivered from death which, is the power of the grave. (Psa 49 vs 15) "***But God will redeem my soul from the grave: for he will receive me.***"

Is not this the cry of all, Oh! Lord have mercy on my soul, we do not say have mercy on my body, or have mercy on my spirit, but Oh! God have mercy on my soul. This is because that the soul is what is indeed me, and ***psychologically speaking: "the soul***

is what we pray that God will have mercy on and that it will dwell in that city which he hath prepared for them that love him, them that love him in deed and in truth, with all their heart, soul and mind. David's prayer was for the welfare of his soul, (Psa 35, vs 3-4) "***Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.***" also (vs 9) "***And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation.***"

(Matt. Chap 16, vs 26) "***For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?***" These are the words of Jesus: he has just said whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it; then he says that if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul he has truly lost everything that is of any value. The lost soul is that soul which is condemned to the lake of fire and brimstone with the devil and all of his angels in everlasting torment. To the question, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Jesus told the young ruler to sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven: and come, take up the cross and follow me. In this analogy the soul shall lose its life of pleasures and joy in the things of this

world, but save his life or portion in that world to come, and will dwell in the courts of glory with God and all of his holy angels in perfect peace and everlasting joy. This is of more value than all of the earthly treasures that man may possess, as Jesus said, even if you possessed all of the treasures of the whole world. The earthly treasures would be possessed for a few years, at most, but the joys of the heavenly home are eternal.

(Heb Chap 6,vs 19) "***Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an high priest, forever after the order of Melchisedec.***" The apostle Paul is here declaring the immutability of God's counsel in that it is impossible for God to lie and that we might thereby have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us and which is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. The anchor on a ship was a strong chain attached to a large rock or other heavy object which when released into the water would serve to secure the ship that it not go astray. Jesus is the anchor of the soul so that it will never lose its position and go astray after the god's of this world, and be lost eternally, because that indestructible link between it and the portals of glory will never fail. The anchors in nature may fail, but this anchor is as sure and steadfast as God is; the rock is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who declared that he had finished the work

that the Father gave him to do and his work was to be this anchor for the soul and assure its position in the fold.

(Rev Chap 6, vs 9) *"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"* The soul inhabits the earth in this time world, according to the scriptures, and here it is revealed to John that the soul inhabits heaven also. There is never any indication that there is any change in the soul from the natural to the spiritual kingdom; it is quickened under the influence of the Holy Spirit, but it is not changed from one state or condition to another. It may be animated or activated by a different spirit but it is still the same entity, but functioning under control of a different spirit. Whether under the influence of the natural spirit or the Holy Spirit, the soul still exists, in the natural realm and the heavenly kingdom, as the same entity: and ever realizing the glorious wonder and mystery of their deliverance. This realization enables them to sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, those who had experienced the deliverance. Even as Moses and the children of Israel, who could not sing the song of deliverance until they were safely in the

promised land. The souls which were redeemed from the earth, by the precious blood of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ shall sing this song, throughout the endless ages, around the throne of God for this glorious deliverance from this world of sin and sorrow.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

HEBREWS 4:12-16.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRIDE HUMBLED

The following is republished by request and is told, as part of the unwritten or traditional history of Elder John Leland.

During the latter part of his life, Mr. Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours on route. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited, in writing, by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service, both as a place of abode and also a place to hold his meetings. Mr. Leland replied by setting a day that he would preach at her residence, at 10 o'clock am. The lady was a wealthy planter, in Appamattox valley. She regarded herself one of the most pious and exemplary persons to be found anywhere.

She had been raised in the high circles of life, and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was at this time about thirty-five years of age, and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of a widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was, that she might make a display of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her

wealth but her piety as well; so she went to a great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends to attend the meeting; no expense or pains had been spared, not only to have the best and the finest of everything, but to have everything in the best style.

On the evening preceding the meeting several carriages had already arrived, to be in good time and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free perspiration, which ran down his cheeks, making roads in the dust which had settled on his face during his day's walk. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired for the landlady; the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, from which preceded the talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, very richly attired, made her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door, where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once saw in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits of character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone; "Old man what do you want here? I have nothing for beggars."

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unassuming tone, said, "Please excuse me, madam; I do not wish to beg for money, but I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Viewing him hastily from head to foot, she very positively answered: "No! I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I can't take in poor stragglers."

"Well," said Mr. Leland, "I am too much fatigued to travel further tonight, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins?" pointing to a row of negro houses just outside the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes, you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts. He proceeded to the farthest one from the mansion before he found any one to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest but neatest of all the huts, there he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl.

He spoke to her very gently:

"Good evening, aunty."

His greeting was answered with "Good evin, mosta."

"Well, aunty," he said, "I have come to ask a very uncommon favor of you.

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can that be, fo' please God I'se got nuffin to give you?"

"I am very tired from walking all day. I called at the house of your mistress, but she says she has no room for me in the great house. I am too much fatigued to go further, and so have come to see if you can allow me to shelter in your house."

Bless de Lord, mosta, I got no 'commodation for any one; but 'fore a fello' mortal shall stay out doo's, I lets 'em stay in my cabin sho,' ef da can put up wid my plain hut. Uncle Ben be in dreckly, den he can keep you company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as tho you had not a morsal for a long time, and at the same time, pointing to a three legged stool by the door, saying, "Set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so worn out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed. saying, at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble, as I have no money to pay you."

"Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charges any one yit for sich commodations as I could give'em for God knos its poor enuff at best. You say, mosta, you call on missus at de ouse dar, and she can't take you in. Well, you must 'cuse her, for she's looking for a mighty heap o' company tomorrow; dar's a great man to be dar tomorrow, what's gwine to preach in her house, an' a good many folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin', tomorrow, so missus is mighty busy fixin' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben," she continued, as an old grey-headed negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself

about the carelessness of some of the other negroes.

This old couple, Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small, but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by younger and more active slaves. Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarily took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped and gave him a scrutinizing look when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying "Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis old gentleman was out travelin', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus can't let him stay dar, as she's got a heap of company now."

"Well" said Uncle Ben, "We's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in an' give him sech as we have to set before him."

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper, Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from Uncle Ben; he learned, with other things, they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion with but very little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a long day's walk, and would wish to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his

protection through the night; that if it would annoy them, he would retire to some place out of doors.

"Bless God!" said both old folks at the same time, "we allers like prayin' in our house, and nebber goes to bed 'thout one o us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old worn Bible out of his bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading the two old blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bless de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in such an outburst of revential eloquence as was seldom ever equaled, and never surpassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and prayer that they could do nor say any more than to fix their eyes on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than mortal man. He retired to a clean pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep.

When morning came he was up early; Aunt Dilsey soon haf him a good, plain repast, after which he seated himself to read, telling his hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing, he would rest there until afternoon any way; and then, if he felt better, he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said, mosta, stay jest as long as you want to; we be glad to have you stay with us a fortnight, if you can put up with our far."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, with Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in a bustle at the stone mansion; all the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozen, until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing, but to their dismay no preacher made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever seen him but all had heard of him. So every one was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he come he would be drawn by two or four horses, driven by a servant in livery.

Ten o'clock passed, half-past ten, eleven o'clock was announced by the clock on the wall, and no minister.

The company by this time had become restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mistress and said: "Bless de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come here to de door and pray, 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin last night and dis morning, 'a 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's settin, dar now, under de tall pine tree; ain' as de preacher' s not come, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation, when it was agreed to have the straggler, as they called him, to come and pray before the congregation broke up. Aunt Dilsey went where Mr. Leland was sitting and

said, "Mosta, de folks all dispinted bout de preacher coming': he am not cum and da wants you to go down and pray for 'em, 'fore da all breaks up. Mosta, I wants you to pray jis like you did las' night."

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door and, standing on the steps, repeated a hymn from memory, sang, and then he engaged in prayer, and by the time his prayer was ended, all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement. He then remarked that as there seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes; and as a foundation, or starting point he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." When he had spoken for twenty or thirty minutes, the hostess, who had refused him the hospitalities of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and prostrated herself at the feet of Mr. Leland and would, had he allowed her to have done so, have washed his feet with her tears.

It was said that she was so overcome and affected from that time forward, she was a changed woman, so much so that she threw off all her jewelry and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship, where

she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them, in fact it was said that, if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

NO GOOD THING IN THE FLESH

The experience of a child of God is a wonderful mystery. To himself it appears full of contradictions, and therefore the expression of that experience appears as foolishness to the natural mind, and so do the Scriptures which teach that peculiar experience of the Lord's "peculiar people."

The first thing experienced by one who is taught of the Lord is that he is vile, and that he can do nothing good in the sight of God. He will strive and strive again to attain unto some goodness, and may be a long time in learning the truth that he can do no good thing; but the result of all his efforts will be that all his goodness, like the flower of the field, withers away. He may not for a long time know that it is because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon him that the flower of his goodness withers, but it is true. The blowing of this heavenly wind has made him feel the goodness of the flesh withering like the grass, but it also proves him to have been born of the Spirit. (Isa. xl. 6-8; 1 Peter i. 24, 25; John iii. 8.) When the blessed Interpreter comes to this poor soul as he thus draws near to the grave, in his sorrow and desolation, and his life to the destroyers, and shows unto him

his uprightness, shows to him that Jesus is his righteousness and salvation, then he rejoices like a child, in the surprising favor of God, who has found for him a ransom, and has delivered him from going down into the pit. (Job xxxiii. 14-30.) In this joyous season of spiritual childhood there is little or no knowledge of doctrine. He is apt to regard himself as so changed by the wonderful grace that has brought this salvation to him that he is beyond sin and out of the reach of temptation. That was my feeling the day I was baptized, and for some time after. It seemed to me that I should not be troubled by sin any more. But the truth that my flesh was still corrupt came with terrible power. When the Lord's time comes to teach his people knowledge and make them to understand doctrine, he weans them from the milk, and draws them away from the breasts, where they were having the sweet joy and comfort that belongs to the babe (Isa. xxxviii. 9), and takes them into the wilderness, the wilderness of our old nature. There they learn that although this wilderness has "blossomed like the rose," and this desert has rejoiced for them, while the sunlight of God's love and joy filled their hearts, and faith and hope prevailed, yet it is a wilderness and a desert still, "where beasts of midnight howl" when the sun goeth down.

When the apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would,"-

Gal. v. 17, he expresses a truth which is at the foundation of all true knowledge of the way of salvation, and which he carefully dwells upon in various ways in all his epistles. The natural man can easily be satisfied and pleased with what he does, but not so the spiritual man. Even in his works of true obedience he sees enough of self and sin to make him low and humble before God, and to cause him the more to abhor himself. While he is thankful to the Lord for the spirit of obedience, and for the liberty to walk in obedience, yet so far as his own work is concerned he cannot see the goodness and purity of motive which he desires. Indeed, so much of the depravity of his nature appears in all he does that he is often in doubt whether it is true obedience or not. "The sins of one most righteous day would sink us in despair." "The best obedience of my hands dare not appear before thy face." So the apostle says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." And again, "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. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do."—Romans vii. 18, 19. The apostle is not, of course, excusing wrong doing in saying this, nor does he intimate that he is pursuing a wrong course of conduct, as not being able to do right. He does not here contradict that he says elsewhere, "I keep under my body and bring it into sub-

jection;" and again, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." In this and all similar declarations the apostle is giving explanation and instruction concerning the feeling of self-abhorrence and self-distrust which all of the saints have when they are spiritually minded, on account of the felt depravity of their hearts, and the consciousness of sin within them. Speaking of his own experience in this respect he tells that of all his brethren, who, when thus tried in their souls on account of their sinful flesh, cry out with him, "O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he by inspiration speaks the words which tell the only deliverance which can be had, and which does come to every one thus tried: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then the instruction concerning this mystery is given: "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." This mind is the mind or Spirit of Christ, which Paul says we have, and without which no man can be his. (1 Cor. ii. 16; Romans viii. 9.)

In the following connection the apostle explains this more fully, saying, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." This felt deadness of the body, including the natural mind and heart, to all that is spiritual and holy, is the cause of the great afflictions of the saints; of their doubts and questionings concerning their acceptance, and their

deep sorrows and self-reproaches on account of sin, and because they cannot do the things that they would. But it is also the cause of the purest of joys that can be felt in this mortal state, whenever they are made to feel that "the spirit is life because of righteousness." Then they can understand that this affliction because of "the sin that dwelleth in us," is the "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2 Cor. iv.

It is hard to die in this sense, to be constantly reminded by experience that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that therefore of ourselves we can do no good thing, "cannot do things that we would;" yet this is the daily experience of the saints. The more spiritual they are the more of this dying they feel, and the more humble and abased before God, but the more also do they rejoice in spirit because the spirit is life; because Jesus is their life, and is thus pleased to manifest that life in them. Then their trust and confidence are in him, and not in themselves. The saints cannot, except when carnally minded, have gratification and comfort in any work, even a work of obedience, considered as their own world. They are not allowed to find their true comfort in a fleshly boasting; but when they are given faith to see and feel that they have been quickened by the Spirit in doing that work, that it is a work of obedi-

ence and righteousness because the Spirit was their life in doing it, then they are glad with a pure, spiritual gladness, and the flesh is out of sight. Instead of being exalted in their mind because this is a work which they have done, when the Lord gives them his blessed token of acceptance, and shows them that they are "greatly beloved," they will be like Daniel lying with their face in the dust, saying, "When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.?"

There have been times when the words of Paul, "In me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing," have come to me in my extremity as though they were new, with a glad surprise that the inspired apostle had said just what I felt, and on account of which I was tempted to doubt whether I was a child of God.

"I hate vain thoughts," said David. Those thoughts which he hated were in his own mind. What a blessing that we can hate them. The two opposing principles must be in one who hates vain thoughts, the flesh from which the vain thoughts come, and the spirit by which alone we can hate them. "Am I as much to blame for my bad thoughts," asked a dear child of me the other day, "as I am for bad actions? I cannot help the evil thoughts." Such questions often arise in the minds of those who are older, and who have long been in the way. The bad thoughts we truly cannot help, but the Spirit can make us hate them, and can prevent them being acted out.

The blame is the blame that fell on Adam, and on all of his posterity. In the experience of the redemption of our body we shall experience deliverance

from this "bondage of corruption," and then we shall be satisfied. When one is led by the Spirit there will be a struggle within him to silence and put away bad thoughts as well as to avoid evil actions, but enough of sinfulness will still be felt in thought and word and deed to give the most exemplary christian daily errands to the throne of grace.

There is no work that a child of God can do in the sight of men which a hypocrite cannot do as well, so far as the observer can judge. The difference between the true and false work lies in the motive, which men cannot see. It is on this account that true christians are so constantly trying themselves, and watching their own works, and striving to know whether their motives are of the flesh or of the Spirit. They know that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and that no work is accepted of God except it is prompted by his own Spirit. There need be no fear of reiterating too often, or of dwelling too much upon the truth that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that we cannot do the things that we would, for we cannot bring it oftener nor more fully before the children of God than they have it brought to them in their experience; and through the daily experience of this comes the experience of the glorious remedy, which fills the soul with true and unspeakable joy.

It is the saddest of all conditions for a child of God to become convinced that he *can* do the things that he would. So far as he feels this to be true, that far he is from Christ, and from a knowledge of his constant need of him, without whom he can do nothing that is good. It is a serious error in a teacher to teach that any one of the Lord's people *can* do the things that he would. It is also a serious error in any one to decide how often a gospel truth shall be repeated, and when a point of gospel doctrine shall no longer be preached or written about.

The child of God who knows his own inability, and who feels his entire dependence upon the dear Savior, will be enabled to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless, and this gospel walk he will count as an inestimable blessing bestowed upon him, and will give God all the praise for the desire and ability so to walk, and for the peace and comfort that are found in that blessed way.

August 29, 1900.

Silas H. Durand

"What man is he that feareth the Lord "hlm shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." — PSALM XXV. 12.

In all the multiplicity and variety of circumstances that have distressed the children of God, has the Lord ever taken a wrong step? Though he has baffled nature, though he has disconcerted reason, though he has turned our plans upside down, though perhaps he has done the thing

that we most feared, and thwarted every natural purpose and inclination of our heart — can we say that he has erred ? that he has made a mistake ? that he has acted unwisely ? that he has not done that which is for our spiritual good? Murmuring, rebellious, unbelieving heart, hold thy peace ! Shall man, foolish man, a worm of the earth, a creature of a day, lift up his puny voice and say, that God can mistake ? Your path is very dark, very intricate, very perplexed; you cannot see the hand of God in the trial that is now resting upon you; you cannot believe that it will work together for your good. I admit it. I have felt it. I have known it. But the time will come, when this dark path in which you are now walking, shall be seen full of radiancy and light, when you will prove the truth of these words, ***"He brought the blind by a way that they knew not."*** When we know God to be infinitely wise, that he cannot err, that all his dealings must be stamped with his own eternal wisdom, we are silenced, we hold our peace, we have nothing to say, we are where Aaron was. When Nadab and Abihus were smitten by the Lord, Aaron knew that God could not err; he held his peace (Lev. x. 3). This is our right spot. If we know anything of the folly of the creature — if we know anything of the wisdom of God — this is our spot. When our dear Nadabs and Abihus are smitten before our face, our spot is to hold our peace, to put our mouth in the dust; for God is still accomplishing his object, in the face, and in spite of nature, sense, and reason.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION



The Lord willing the 1999 Smith River Association will convene at Paynes Creek Church. Services will be held the first Sunday in September and Friday and Saturday before, dates Sept. 3rd, 4th and 5th.

Paynes Creek Church is located in Floyd County, Va. on the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway between mile post 150 and 151. We invite our correspondents and visitors of our faith and order to attend this meeting with us.

W.G. Parsons
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1999

- Raymond Oxley, WV \$2.00
- Mrs. Vera M. Potter, MS 7.00
- Mrs. Connie Page, NC 2.00
- Mrs. Ernestine Sharp, LA 2.00
- In memory of Mrs. Mytle Daniel
By daughters-Gladys, Evelyn & Jay
FL 50.00
- Ora T. Nichols, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Edd Hodmett, Va 2.00
- R.E. Dale, NC 5.00
- Mrs. Mary Poff, Va 2.00

OBITUARIES

SIS. EUNICE P. GILLEY

With sorrow for our loss but joy for her great gain, we record the death of our sister in Christ, Eunice P. Gilley. Sister Gilley was born in Spray (now Eden), N. C. on March 5, 1918, a daughter of the late Abel D. Purdy and Sister Cora L. Purdy. She was united in marriage, first to John Wesley Mounce, then in September, 1966 to Brother Foster Gilley of Eden, who preceded her in death some years ago. She had no children of her own.

For a number of years she was a member of another order. However, in His own good time and manner, the Lord placed her in the way-like Abraham's servant of old-and led her (we feel) to the house of her Master's brethren. She was received by experience as a member of Liberty Church on June 6, 1976 and was baptized by the late Elder B.N. Clifton. Thereafter she lived among us for some time an humble and peaceful member, devoted to the church and to the service of her pastor.

In her later years of life, following the death of Brother Gilley, Sister Eunice was afflicted with a sad disease of the mind and was confined to a nursing home. She passed away on February 18, 1999, a few days short of her 81st birthday. A graveside service was conducted by her pastor at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Rockingham County, N.C., after which her body was laid to rest beside the sleeping

dust of Brother Gilley, to await the Second Coming of the Lord.

Sister Gilley was survived by one brother, Aubrey Purdy of Eden; his wife, Lois Purdy; two nieces, Mrs. Ann P. Mason and Mrs. Dale P. Fain; two step-sons, Jackie and Jimmy Gilley, and one step-daughter, Mrs. Janice G. VanStein.

The church agreed to prepare three copies of this obituary: one to enroll in the church records, one for her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference the 1st day of May, 1999.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Sis. Iris Puckett, Clerk protem

RUSSELL M. JENNINGS

With sorrow for our loss but joy for her great gain, we record the death of our brother in Christ, Russell M. Jennings of Salisbury, Maryland passed from this life at the age of 83 years. He was born September 22, 1915, in Norwalk, Connecticut to William T. and Florence Barnes Jennings.

Brother Jennings was a quiet man, meek and humble. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." He was baptized into the fellowship of Salisbury Old School Baptist Church on March 19, 1975, and was faithful to attend his church meetings; never missing except for sickness. He had a bad heart for several years prior to his death, even passing out in church on several occasions. One of his favorite

scriptures was Ephesians 2: 8-9, ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*** and was the text used at his funeral. A grave-side service was conducted by his pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson, at Wicomico Memorial Park at 11:00 a.m. on January 25, 1999.

Brother Jennings leaves to mourn his wife, Sister Pauline Jennings, Salisbury, Maryland; two stepsons: Mr. Ronald Holloway, Salisbury, Maryland and Mr. Paul Holloway, Greenwood, South Carolina; two stepdaughters: Mrs. Nancy Robertson of California and Mrs. June Goddard, Denver, Colorado; several step grandchildren and step great grandchildren.

May the Lord comfort those who mourn and bless them to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
Phyllis Farlow, Clerk

DARRELL RHOADES

Darrell Rhoades born April 9, 1926 to Jimmy Rhoades and Myrtle Rhoades in Franklin County in the little community called Good Hope. He was an only child. He formed a union with Julie Evelyn Wall November 5, 1948. This union was indeed until death us do part, spanning 50 years 3 months and 10 days. This union produced three children,

Danny Floyd Rhoades of Greenville, Texas, Susan Elaine Rhoades Anson

of Pittsburg, Texas, and Mark Anthony Rhoades of Waco, Texas.

He has nine grandchildren, six granddaughters and three grandsons.

However, this only scratches the surface of who Darrell Rhoades was.

Darrell Rhoades lived a life of example rather than substance. This is not to say that he did not have his share of material things but rather his wealth was more accurately defined by the way he respected and treated those people he came into contact with during his life. He never looked down on someone because of anything that they had done or bad decisions they may have made. Instead, he would say, "There I would go also without the grace of God to keep me from it". He was never too busy to stop and talk to anyone. This was one of the greatest pleasures he enjoyed, talking with his friends.

He was one of the few blessed people who never met a stranger.

Darrell Rhoades was a God-fearing man and I want to tell you about the God he believed in. Oh, what a God. He was heard to say many times, "There are many little g o d's but there is only one capital G O D." He believed in a God that was all wise, all powerful, all just, and all righteous. He believed in the absolute predestination of all things. He believed in the one and only I AM. He was called to fill the role of deacon to Providence Church. This was a role he never felt worthy to fill; but the love and devotion he displayed for this little congregation was more than proof that he was called of God.

I remember watching his body grow weaker and weaker to the point he required assistance for virtually everything, going from a man who loved to talk to everyone to someone who had very few words to say. One such occasion came as I was leaving his bedroom. I was going to attend the ordination of three brothers at Hopewell to be ordained as deacons. As I was leaving he called me over to his bed and asked me to be sure these brothers were instructed to do the following. To see after the elderly, the widows, and the orphans. To take care of their needs and to do this with discretion.

Although his body had been taken away from him, his thoughts and heart was still that of a deacon.

One of the last nights of dad's life while the family was sitting with dad waiting for the Lord to deliver him home, and while we were saying our good-byes, I told dad that he had given me three sets of shoes that were going to be mighty hard to fill. They were how to be a husband, how to be a father, and how to be a deacon. The first two I told him I felt that with God's help I would do okay. The third, I would attempt to fill with God's help as well. After about five minutes dad spoke to me and said, "Don't worry. I will always be there to help you." I ask the other family members if they had heard what dad said and they said they saw his mouth move but heard nothing. To the very end, the Lord blessed him to discharge his duty as a deacon.

My father taught me many hard lessons while I was growing up, as a child and in my early adulthood. He taught me by example and with his correction. His examples were by how he lived his life. His discipline was that of love, teaching me there were consequences that would follow me for the decisions I made. It was not until I had children of my own that I began to understand the wisdom of these lessons. When it came my time to leave home and start life on my own he gave me very little in material things, but the one thing he did give me was priceless then and is priceless now. He gave me his good name, a name that guaranteed me nothing but gave me the opportunity to do anything. I am proud to be Darrell Rhoades' son.

Submitted in love,
Mark A. Rhoades

NANNIE TURPIN SPANGLER

My Mother, Nannie Turpin Spangler, passed away March 29, 1999, at the age of 98.

The following verses from the Bible seem to describe her better than I can:

*"Who can find a virtuous woman?
For her price is far above rubies."*

*"She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
and in her is the law of kindness."*

*"Her children arise up, and call her blessed;
her husband, also, and he praiseth her."*

She was the beloved wife of the late, Elder David Spangler for 65 years. When I think of Mother I always think of my Father as their lives were almost one.

Life was not always easy. During the Depression, Mother was in a sanitarium with TB. My Father often said he wondered where he would get a dollar to pay the hospital for another day. His burden was so great but by the Grace of God he was provided enough money to survive and my Mother recovered completely. My Mother and Sister Lottie Minter were united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church one night at the hospital while mother was still a patient. Many years later, the daughter of Brother and Sister Gold Minter, Juanita, and I were baptized together at Dan River.

My Mother was a devoted wife, and in my judgement truly a minister's wife and companion. She suffered when Father suffered and rejoiced when he rejoiced. I have heard him say, "Surely she is a gift from the Lord." She was always by his side at Church other than when the time she was ill. Once when she came home from the hospital after an operation, Father was getting ready to go to Church and he wept because she would not be with him. My Sister said, "Mom do you think you could go?" Her reply was, "Yes, but you have to help me get ready." (She always liked to look her best! To me, she was a beautiful woman.) She went with him, and they left rejoicing.

She was a caring, kind, strong Mother, with a keen sense of humor. She loved all of her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren very much. Also, Frances Weatherford was so dear to her as she lived near and was like family — always there to support her.

She was an excellent cook, and loved to cook; to entertain the Brethren and friends from far and near. She loved to travel, to visit all the Churches over the country, even to the Far West and Canada. She loved the mountains and especially Floyd County, Virginia; but above all things she loved the doctrine "Saved by Grace" and the sovereignty of God in all things." We often talked about these things. How I will miss this!

She is survived by children: Elinor Hodnett, Rebecca Smith, Mildred Graham, David Spangler, eight grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by her beloved pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and also, Elder Julian Williams and Elder C. B. Davis, and she was buried there in the cemetery.

My Mother asked me to write her obituary, and I do so with a sad heart; but her family feel so blessed to have had a Mother like her.

Written by request of
Dan River Church
Mildred Graham

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WHAT IS LOVE?

What is love?

No words can define it,

It's something so great

Only God could design it . . .

Wonder of Wonders,

Beyond man's conception,

And only in God

Can love find true perfection,

For love means much more

Than small words can express,

For what man calls love

Is so very much less

Than the beauty and depth

And the true richness of

God's gift to mankind-

His compassionate love . . .

For love has become

A word that's misused,

Perverted, distorted

And often abused,

But love is enduring

And patient and kind,

It judges all things

With the heart not the mind,

And love can transform

The most commonplace

Into beauty and splendor

And sweetness and grace...

For love is unselfish

Giving more than it takes;

And no matter what happens

Love never forsakes,

It's faithful and trusting

And always believing,

Guileless and honest

And never deceiving . . .

Yes, love is beyond

What man can define,

For love is Immortal

And God's Gift is Divine!

Helen Steiner Rice

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EDITORIAL

FAITH



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The subject of Faith in the Scriptures is so vast that volumes could be, and has been, written upon it, yet it has never been completely covered. If God will so bless me to do so, I would like to touch upon a few scriptures concerning it.

Most men have a natural, fleshly faith in the things concerning this world, such as faith in themselves, in their children, in their leaders, etc.,

but the scriptures speak of gospel faith; the faith of God, the faith of Christ, the faith of God's elect. This is a true and living faith and always triumphs. It cannot fail, for it is the gift of God to his elect children. They are saved by this faith. *"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. We will notice that this is not "a" gift, but THE gift of God. Is not this gift the Son of God? *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* Isa. 9:6. Our Lord Jesus Christ is THE gift of God and all of our blessings are in him; we shall not fail to receive one of them. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."* Eph 1:3. *"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."* Jas.1:17. The so-called christian world teaches that this is a created thing and we can have it and use it to obtain the things we desire, even eternal life, but we are expressly told in the holy record that Christ is the author and finisher of it, Heb.12:2. If man could by his own strength produce this faith then he could boast in his own righteousness which would be of works. Where is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? of works?

Nay; but by the law of faith. Rom 3:27. The righteousness of the elect is, ***"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."*** Even the religious world teaches that we must believe to be saved, but how is this belief produced? By works? No. Jesus said, ***"This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."*** Jn 6:29. Paul said, ***"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."*** Phil. 1:29. Paul also said, ***"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the Son of God."*** Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. The living or lively faith which we may have is not a product of the flesh, but the faith of Christ which is in us, the hope of glory. This is a mystery to the world, ***"Even the mystery which hath been hidden from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory."*** Col. 1:26-27. If the Spirit of Christ dwells in us it is he that produces the faith which we have; and the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness temperance: against which there is no law. If these fruits be

in us it is great evidence that we have been born again of the Spirit of God. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit, and the faith of the saints is born of God, ***"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith."*** 1 Jn. 5:4. The apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith, and the Lord said, ***"If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you."*** Jesus also said, ***"Without me ye can do nothing."*** Paul said, ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*** From these two scriptures we must determine that we can do nothing without faith in God. We cannot exercise faith, but faith exercises us. Faith causes us to believe in God, and 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. It is through faith that we believe that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear; for he hath created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created. Heb. 11:4 & Rev. 4:11. Faith is a living principle in those who have been quickened into life, which empowers them to see and realize spiritual things that no human power can discern or comprehend, by which they ***"look not at things which are seen, but at things which are not seen: for the things which are***

seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor.4:18. We see natural things by our natural eyes, but spiritual things by the eye of faith. It is through faith that the Spirit reveals all spiritual things unto the elect; while here we live by faith, walk by faith, and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. The operations of faith in us are confidence in God, reliance on his counsel, wisdom, goodness and grace, perceptions of his power and glory, confident trust in his most glorious promises, the revelation of Christ as our glorious Mediator, giving a clear understanding of his truth and things pertaining to his purpose and grace in our salvation. God given faith in operation also suppresses our fears, triumphs over our doubts and infidelity, strengthens our hope, overcomes our temptations of the flesh and the wiles of Satan, and gives us the strength to run the race which is set before us.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews the writer tells us of a great cloud of witnesses of this God given faith, and all lived before the advent of Christ Jesus in the world. Abel was the first, and he offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. Could Abel have obtained faith and righteousness but by the gifts of God? By faith Enoch was translated and did not see death but was translated because he pleased God; and without faith it is impossible to please God. Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being

fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God. This righteousness shall also be imputed unto us also if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. 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. Rom.4:20-25 & 5:1-2.

Oh, how great this man Abraham was! He was called the Friend of God, and we find in the 17th chapter of Genesis that God appeared unto him when he was ninety years old, and promised him a son, and with him made an everlasting covenant, saying ***"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."*** (Verse 7.) God also promised that he would make him the father of many nations and in him would all the families of the earth be blessed. He indeed became the father of many nations; but Isaac, his son by Sarah, was the only promised son, and God said unto Sarah, ***"-- and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."*** The covenant and promises were unto Abraham and unto his seed. ***"He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to***

thy seed which is Christ." Gal.3:16. If we be of faith, then we are the children of Abraham, and are blessed with him, and are justified through faith as was he, and not by the law. *"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."* *"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith."* *"So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."* They are blessed with him, not in him. They are blessed in Christ who is "the" seed of Abraham. *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;***For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."* *Heb.14 & 16.* It is only through and in him that we receive anything, for it is in him that we live and move and have our being. Paul said, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* Surely we know that Paul speaks for all the saints of God, not just for himself. Until one is born again of the Holy Spirit he has no faith and is under the law, which is our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. *"But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the*

children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." Gal.3:23-26.

We read in Rom.4:13-17, *"For the promise, that he would be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed."* If that scripture ended there, what hope could we have that we should ever be heirs? Thank God it did not end there, but said, *"through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be SURE TO ALL THE SEED; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."* If Abraham is our father through faith, then *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."* *Rom.8:16-17.* O how sweet and glorious it is to us when the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God and joint-heirs with Christ, even though it may be for only a moment. These moments are few and far between with me, yet my hope is strengthened and *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ."* Regardless of how small my hope seems at times I would not trade it for

this world and many more like it, if that was possible. If we have been given faith and hope in Jesus Christ all will be fulfilled when he comes again to receive us unto himself. Then we shall see him as he is, be like unto him and dwell in the glorious presence of God the Father eternally. What a glorious hope this is for poor sinners saved by grace!

Let us bow in prayers of faith before God, and sing his praises forever.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

LETTER TO SISTER WALL

Sister Walls, this is Elder Cabbage. I wanna attempt to put you a note you wanted on tape and then your daughter-in-law can write it off on paper. And in the Bible it speaks of a book of remembrance and I feel that we each have a book of remembrance that we can look back, turn the pages, and look back through time. And especially as we get older. I was 66 the 25th of March, 1997 and sometimes I look back through the books of time and just turn the pages back and and enjoy them again.

Elder Albert Brock came to our association, Pall Valley Association for many many years and he got to tell me, said, now listen, there's a man in Texas I wish you could meet, Elder Loyd Wall. That went on for several years and he had told Elder Wall the

same thing about me that he wished we could meet. And so in 1989 I went to the Hopewell Association in Alabama which was at the Little Hope Church. When I walked up in the yard, standing over there under the tree, was a man I hadn't met before, but someway there was a connection.

You know its amazing how that God's love connects His people together. You can't explain how that works, but when I walked on up to where Elder Wall was standing, he just stood there and looked at me and tears come down his face. And he said, what a mystery, what a mystery. So God had blessed us to meet each other and we enjoyed each other. And that was in October of '89 and I believe the following year in September was when he came to the Pall Valley Association and we all enjoyed him, he and his wife both. Brother and Sister Bradshaw was with them and we think a lot of them too. But we enjoyed having them in our home and Brother Hockston was sick at that time in bed, and they wanted us to have a service. So Elder Wall went with me and he preached that night in the home and took his text from the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy as the eagles stir up her nest and floated over her young, spread abroad her wings and taketh them and bear them up on her wings. And God blessed him with good liberty to comfort and to feed the little lambs of God that was gathered there that night. I guess the next year, I'm not really sure of the date on this, was when we - me and my wife, Rowena, was blessed to go to his association

there at Sulphur Fork Association and I never have forgot that association. That was the only time I was ever there, and I enjoyed it as good as any that I've ever been over the years and I've been trying to preach and go to association. I joined the church in '66 and ordained in '71 and I've traveled quite a bit since '71 and I enjoyed that one. And my wife did too, she enjoyed it a lot.

And I remember the mules he had and the horse, or mare, one there in the pasture and Rowena made pictures. And I believe his preaching at that association tested my wife. Elder Wall told me outside, I believe I saw something today in your wife. He said, you would be glad wouldn't you? And I said, Yes I would. And she's not able to travel with me, but she does go to church here with me at home which I'm thankful for and I thank God that he was blessed to preach to her that day. I believe she was comforted and received something from his preaching. We thought a lot of him and we miss him. We feel that after awhile when the Lord comes after His bride that we'll all meet in that wonderful place that God prepared for those that love Him and there'll be no more separations, no more suffering, no more affliction, but all peace, joy and happiness.

Sometimes we long for that city and by the grace of God we believe we'll meet Elder Wall in a new body, a spiritual body like unto the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And that's about all I can put together at this time and I hope its plain enough to where your daughter-in-

law can type it off to put it in your book. And we love you and we hope to see you, the Lord willing the 5th Sunday in this month. So Good-night.

Elder Cabbage

VOICES OF THE PAST

Hebrews 12: 27, 28, 29.

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

It seems to be very clear according to the scriptures as well as the experiences of the Lord's people, that stability is not to be found on this earth; yet it seems that carnal nature is forever attempting to build upon earth's quicksand as if it were a substantial rock. There is no abiding city here upon earth, and it is all in vain to attempt to build one for the *"world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."* I John 2:17. It seems to be necessary at times for the God of Providence to give the world of His elect a warning shake in order to enforce this important truth upon them.

First, let us look at the Lord's voice in shaking the earth on Mount Sinai.

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

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

to do today? Were not some of us involved in the same thing if we professed to be religious when we were going about, ***"In time past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others."*** (Eph. 2:3.) Were we not building upon a foundation that could be shaken?

Beloved friends, this principal, which is true in a natural realm, is much more true in a spiritual realm. There is a set time in the mind and purpose of God toward his elect people to bring them out of whatever false refuge they may have been involved in. We must be given spiritual life and light in order to feel and see our undone and lost condition. Our sins must appear exceedingly sinful. When Mount Sinai quaked by the power of God, it was typical of the shaking of the hearts and consciences of God's elect people under a fiery law. ***"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."*** (Ezk. 18:4.) And ***"cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."*** (Gal. 3:10.) When the above killing "sentence of death" comes into our hearts and consciences, it slays us as to salvation by the works of the law. See how this shakes to pieces all of man's own righteousness? God's purpose is to remove everything which can be shaken. Take our own self-righteousness, were we not at one time attempting to gain the favor of God by our deeds of righteousness, but was this righteousness shaken to become but as filthy rags? Our crea-

ture wisdom was 'such we thought to gain eternal salvation through our own efforts. We thought we knew much, which was nothing more than boastful ignorance. We found this to be only a fool's dream when we were given by the grace of God to learn the real source of salvation. Our creature strength is demolished when we find by the same grace of God that we are without strength to serve the living God.

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

Why did God shake your heart and conscience with the earthquake of his holy law? To remove the false heaven you had built up for yourself through

your own righteousness, wisdom, strength and good works. He did this by discovering to you the evil of your own deeds and to remove the false heaven which you would have been pleased with until you sank into hell.

The whole of man's miserable abodes must be completely removed, for there can be no union between nature and saving grace. **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."** (1 Cor. 2:14). Salvation must be of grace from first to last. **"And if by grace, then it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."** (Rom. 11:6). **"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."** (Eph 2:8, 9)

What has been the result of all the shaking and removing of things which we have experienced? Surely we have had much removed from us which we highly treasured at one time but which would have led us to fall into the ditch of eternal destruction. Can we now, by the grace of God, say with the Apostle Paul, **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffer the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law,**

but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3:8, 9) We were not all brought along the same way. While in our natural state, some of us were involved in a natural religion, and some of you may not have been, but surely we can all say we were involved in things that we can "count as dung." Blessed are the ones whose God has revealed these things to us. Beloved friends, you have this precious truth that whatever you may encounter along your pathway of life, that all things shall work for your good.

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

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

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

2. His will cannot be moved because ***"all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and we doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him,***

What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35.)

3. The counsel of the Lord shall stand and cannot be removed. ***"My counsel shall stand and I will do all***

my pleasure." (Isa 46:10) ***"The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations."*** (Psalms 33:11)

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

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

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

panied by justification and future glorification. ***"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved."*** This kingdom in the scriptures is called the ***"kingdom of God."***

"The kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21). It is a heavenly kingdom, a kingdom of grace, a kingdom of divine teaching and work of the Holy Spirit within. It is called the ***"kingdom of God"*** to distinguish it from all other dominions and kingdoms of the world. One aspect of this kingdom is the rule of Christ in and over the gospel state of the church which the apostle declares to be more excellent than that of the law. The very nature of this kingdom is indestructible. Man did not set it up nor did God establish it for any temporary purpose. He established it for an eternal purpose, and has guaranteed its perpetual existence by his solemn oath. This kingdom will remain unshaken and secure. Yes, ***"the Lord has sworn and will not repent."***

The kingdom is also a personal matter ***"We receiving a kingdom"*** having been put in possession of it, and what a blessed kingdom it is. What a glorious work it is indeed by the Holy Spirit in establishing the kingdom of grace in a poor unworthy sinner's heart. You may have wondered, as I so often have, (if we be the children of God) why, O, why, did it please God to shake and remove all my false refuges that I was involved in and set up his kingdom of grace in my unworthy heart? ***"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be de-***

stroyed: and it shall not be left to others, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Dan. 2:44)

When the work of grace is set up in the heart of a child of God, it brings about many changes ***"as unknown, and yet well known; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."*** (II Cor. 6:9, 10.) This pathway is unknown to the world, only the chosen of God experience the sorrows and joys of this path. ***"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there; nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there."*** (Isa 35: 8, 9). Those who travel it together know each other, they speak the same language, they have the same Father, the same Christ and the same Spirit. A precious love is made manifest among the sojourners of this narrow pathway, love that binds the people of God together for they are of one family, of the same household of God. ***"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."*** (Eph. 2:19, 20). Is it not

beautiful to see how God calls his chosen to be members of the same household? To sit at the Master's table feasting upon the bread of life; to nourish that inward life, that inward kingdom which God has set up with you. Jesus says, **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever."** (John 6:51.) It is a glorious thing indeed to see members of the household of God sitting in a meeting together feeding upon the words of God through a God called minister preaching **"Jesus Christ and him crucified."**

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

"Hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." It is therefore said to be sure and steadfast. Love must labor against enmity; but love will abound for **"many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."** **"We love him because he first loved us."** True faith, hope, and love cannot be completely removed; if so, a person could

be saved then lost which we know is not true. You may be shaken at times as to your possession of them; yet, these stand not in the power of man, but in the power of God. **"He works and who can hinder."** You may be ready to say, I am often shaken as to the reality of the work of grace in my soul. This may be true, but if the work is real, the shaking which you may feel does not shake the reality of the thing itself **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."** (Phil. 1: 6.)

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

When you are born again into this new state or existence, many wonderful experiences may take place in your heart and conscience. You may have found yourself dropped into a com-

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

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

May God bless you all is my prayer,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

PSALM 145: 8-9.

The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

This is where the Lord's people are when the dear Saviour makes his love known to them. "***O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.***" This also is their safe hiding place while they remain in this mortal state. But how may we know that we are in the clefts of the rock? What kind of an experience is this? If the gracious and loving words of Jesus to his dove are sweet to our souls, then it is sure that we are of those to whom they are spoken; but it may be far from sure to us at the time, because of our feeling of great unworthiness, and because we cannot see that we are in that secret, safe and sacred place, where the dove is said to be. The clefts of the rock, being the sure dwelling place of the dove, the bride of Christ, must be, as we think, a place most sweet and pleasant, free from trouble, and especially free from trouble on account of sin; and when we feel ourselves full of unrest, hedged in, afflicted, cut off from our desires, unable to do what we would, finding evil present with us when we would do good, how can we think that we are in the clefts of the rock, and that the dear Savior can find any sweetness in our complaining, supplicating voice, or see any comeliness in our sorrowful countenance?

I have had some precious comfort in some experiences and thoughts upon

this subject of late, and have for some time felt a strong pressure upon my mind to express, as I may be enabled, some of these things for the comfort of those who have been tried as I have been.

Moses said unto the Lord, *"If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight."* And again, *"I beseech thee, show me thy glory."*—Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18. Such desires to see the Lord's way, and to behold his glory, are not from presumptuous curiosity, as we sometimes fear, but are the solemn actings of faith in the soul, preparing us for such revelations of himself as he designs to favor us with. He will hear all such questions, all such longings and pantings of the poor soul after him, and will answer them, but it will be *"by terrible things in righteousness."*—Psalms lxxv. 5.

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my

face shall not be seen."—Exodus xxxiii. 19-23.

When all this took place (Exodus xxxiv. 1-7), Moses was alone with the Lord in that desolate mountain. *"And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin."* What goodness and blessedness are here in this name, as thus far proclaimed! What a garden of delights, filled with most lovely flowers and richest fruits. What more could be desired by a poor sinner who hates sin, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Well might we say, if permitted to enter into this wonderful name, and enjoy its rich blessings, *"O how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee; which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."*—Psalm xxxi. 19.

But there is another syllable in this mysterious and glorious name, which a sinful man cannot hear and live, unless hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered by the hand of the Lord. *"And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."* This part of the Lord's name is full of terror, and is fraught with death to every guilty soul. It as surely bars

every sinner from the safety and beauty of that holy name, as the flaming sword prevented the return of Adam and Eve to the garden of Eden, and kept from them the way of the tree of life.

Whether Moses was literally put into a cleft of a rock or not, we have in this cleft a figure of the absolute safety that was given to him while the awful name of the Lord was proclaimed. The Lord's hand that covered him while his glory passed by, is not a literal hand, to be discerned by our natural senses, but expresses to us his sure and absolute protection from a danger which is not to the body merely, but to the soul.

As this great experience came upon him, "*Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.*" — *Exodus xxxiv. 8.* In the proclamation of this terrible name Moses' prayer was answered. This name is the revelation of the Lord's way, of his goodness and his glory.

This rock represents Jesus. "*There is a place by me,*" the Lord said, "*and thou shalt stand upon a rock.*" Here is the only foundation upon which a sinful man can stand before the Lord. That sacred Rock was smitten in order that the Lord's chosen people might be safely hidden while his name is proclaimed before them, and while his glory passes by. When Christ was crucified the guilt of his people was atoned for and removed, justice and judgment were executed for them, and the Lord's name was honored and glorified. That part of his name which declares that he will in no wise clear the guilty, still remains, but it does not

exclude his people any longer, for they are free from guilt, being crucified with Christ. and thus hidden in the cleft of the Rock.

When "*the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger*" against sin, and "*his lips are full of indignation*" against the workers of iniquity, "*and his tongue as a devouring fire*" (*Isaiah xxx. 27-30*), none of all the sinful race of man can stand before him. No man can see his face and live. "*Who may abide the day of his coming?*" None but those whom the Lord has put in a cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. These were safe in Jesus while the wrath of that holy and terrible name was visited upon him. He was able to endure the stroke of the sword of justice, to die and rise again, and thus to "*finish transgression, make an end of sin,*" and by satisfying the law to take the sting from death. and destroy that terrible enemy.

And as the Lord's people were saved when the glory of his name was proclaimed in the crucifixion of his dear Son, by being in him in that death in a wonderful and mystical sense, so that they are dead with him to the law and to sin (*Romans vi. 7-11*), so ever after, while in this mortal state, his sufferings and death are their only safe hiding place. In their flesh they cannot stand before the Lord, nor endure the glory of his name, for in their flesh "*there dwells no good thing.*" Those who have been quickened by divine life, realize that they cannot of themselves do one spiritual thing, any more than a dead man can do a natural

thing; as the apostle says, ***"If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."*** — *Romans viii.*

10. And, as he further says, it is only as the body is quickened, or moved, by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, that any man can do anything that is acceptable to God.

The experience of being in a cleft of the Rock must therefore be always crossing to the flesh. It must be an experience full of sore trials and afflictions. We ask the Lord, as Moses did, to show us his way, we beseech him to show us his glory. We want to see and understand more of his goodness. It seems to us that if he should be pleased to grant our desire, we should be at the height of bliss. How little we know of his wonderful ways. He does answer us, but it is ***"in such a way as almost drives us to despair."*** ***"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation."*** We ***"are shut up and cannot come forth."*** We find ourselves more and more unable to do the good that we would, and we are left to doubt at times even whether we have a desire to do good. We are hedged in by our sinfulness and utter weakness, and by the judgments of God which seem to go out against us. We cannot do what we would in providence. Poverty holds us in its dire embrace. We cannot succeed in our work. We hate and dread to be in debt, but debt comes upon us, or danger of starvation for those dependent upon us. Or we do prosper in worldly af-

fairs, and find wealth, but with it there comes leanness into our souls. There is a famine even in the midst of plenty. What we have will not feed our souls. We cannot enjoy the temporal prosperity that comes to us. If we would help others we fear our motives are base and selfish, and that we are only hypocrites. There seems to be a searching power within and about us, and we fear we are found wanting. A tempest is going by, and we tremble; yet cannot see what destruction it is working. We are like those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. They could feel the terrible power of the winds and waves, but could not see what it was. They felt the beatings and tossings and shakings of the ark, and afterward the quiet and peace, but could not know the meaning of it all until the cover was taken off the ark. Then it was all made plain, and the beauty and glory of the rainbow showed to those who had passed through the storm, and who now stood on Ararat, holy ground, a blessed purpose of God in the flood.

In the cleft of the rock, covered and held down by the Lord's hand, how terrible must have been the experience of ***"Moses, the man of God."*** Not another soul in all that desolate mountain. The Lord was there, but not visible to his mortal sight. How long he was in that cleft is not material to know. The power of fear and pain is not measured by time. In a moment the soul maybe overwhelmed with terror. In what way the power of that name came by, we do not know, whether there was a literal quaking of the mountain, with fire and smoke and

thunder, as when the law was given, or whether the awful power of the Lord's name was felt only within his soul, we do not know. What we do know is that a cleft of a rock must be a most uncomfortable place to be in. We also know there must have been a terribly destructive power in the passing of the Lord before Moses, if he must not only be put into that cleft, but must also be covered by the Lord's hand in order to be saved from destruction.

But O, what a blessed time that is when the Lord's hand is taken away, and we are enabled to see his wonderful works which he has done, and to behold the glory of his name which has already been proclaimed. We could not see his way before he had passed by in it. We could not know what he would do before he had done it. We cannot see his face as he comes toward us in his work of salvation. To see him coming in those "*terrible works in righteousness*," by which he saves his people, would kill us with terror. But after he has passed by in the fulfillment of all that terrible work, by which his glorious name is honored, the law magnified, and his people saved, then it is joy unspeakable to see his back parts, to see the glory that follows him. We cannot see him working, but we see the work when it is done. Even then, while in that experience of fear, of inability to see, like those in the ark, what caused the great commotion; in that experience of sinfulness and condemnation, and utter inability to do any good thing, even then the secret of the Lord was with us,

though we did not know it. We were far from the thought that this was God's work in bringing us to himself. We could not then have believed that this affliction, this inability to move in any way of righteousness, was because we were in a cleft of the Rock, because we were being crucified with Christ in our experience. We could not have believed that this tribulation in our souls was because the Lord had put his fear in our hearts, which "*is to hate evil*." But all this fearful exercise in our souls was the secret of the Lord, and when he removed his hand from over us, and showed us his covenant, then we understood that this was his wonderful work of salvation which he had begun in us, working in us "*to will and to do of his good pleasure*." "*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew unto them his covenant.*"— *Psalm xxv. 14.*

Job was in that cleft of the Rock when he said, "*O that I knew where I might find him.*" "*Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right that I cannot see him.*" The psalmist was there when he said, "*I am shut up, and I cannot come forth;*" and Jacob when he said, "*All these things are against me.*" Jeremiah was there when he said, "*He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.*"— *Lam. iii. 7, 8.* And Paul was there when he was blinded by the light from heaven, and

could see no man; and also when, long afterward, he said, "***O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?***"

Those who are in the clefts of a rock all of the time can do no work upon the earth. They cannot run to and fro in the sight of men; they cannot join in work or worship with those who are not with them in the clefts. They are helpless for themselves, and they cannot extend help to any who are abroad upon the earth. They will often feel their confined, shut-in, cramped position so keenly, that it seems to them that they cannot endure it. They want to get out into the midst of the world and do something, do some good to themselves or others, do something to show that they are not altogether nothing. But if they seem to be able to get such desires gratified for a little, they are so utterly ashamed of their works that they want to shrink away out of sight. They find of themselves what the psalmist said of everyman in his best state, they "***are altogether vanity.***" Then, in the Lord's own time, they learn the blessed meaning of this sad experience. They have not really been allowed to go out of that safe dwelling place at all, though they seemed for a time as one in a dream, to be working with the proud and wise of this world. They have been all the time, and yet are, held firmly by the hand of the Lord, notwithstanding all the rebellious lustings of the flesh against the Spirit. Now and then the gracious hand which covers them, and holds them in that narrow, confined place, is taken away for a little

time, and they see the Lord's way, and behold his glory, and gaze with rapture upon the rainbow beauty and brightness of the everlasting covenant. And how they thank the Lord, and praise his glorious name, for his preserving power and mercy. How glad they are that he has overturned their plans, and broken down their strength, and disappointed them in their earthly hopes, and shown them that their works are vain, and that their days are vanity and are as a hands breadth. Now they are rejoiced to see that the works of Jesus are perfect, and that they are all-sufficient, and cover all the ground of their needs for evermore. O, how beautiful and glorious the Lord's works are! How thankful they are for the sure protection they have had in that secret place of the Lord, from the windy storm and tempest which has been abroad in the earth, while they were so eagerly struggling to get away from the controlling and restraining power of God. Now they rejoice in their afflictions, for they see that salvation was in those afflictions. Now they rejoice in the tribulations that made them murmur and complain at the time, for through them they have been brought to "stand before the great white throne," from whence the river of the water of life proceeds, and have entered more and more into the experimental knowledge of the kingdom of God. And now they are called by the sweet voice of Jesus. O, these blessed seasons, when faith prevails, when the hand that held and covered them is removed, and they see the back parts of the Lord, and

realize the blessed effect of his passing by in this terrible works of righteousness, by which he has answered us. ***"The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."***—Isaiah xxxii. 17. And the soothing, comforting, joyful effect of that precious voice of Jesus, not heard by the natural ear, but felt in the heart; how sweet it is: ***"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!"*** His voice speaks not in vain. ***"My sheep hear my voice,"*** he says. When he speaks, then we know that we are his, and that we are dwelling in him, and he in us, and this by no work or wisdom of ours, but by his own power and grace. Those are the times when that voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, is in our souls, that we can say, while our hearts throb and overflow with love. ***"My beloved is mine and I am his."*** The power of that voice removes our fears, and causes us to see that our afflictions have been light, and but for a moment, compared with the ***"far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,"*** which they have worked for us. We see now that these sufferings, which we sometimes felt sure were evidences of the Lord's wrath, were really the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, and that to feel them was to be in the clefts of the Rock.

It has been truly wonderful to me, when I have felt adversities of every kind pressing so heavily upon me, and have been sure that they were evidences that God had turned against me, and that I must certainly lose the

fellowship of the saints, if ever I had really had it, and must be cast out; when I have seen not only spiritual comforts gone, but all worldly prospects failing, and have felt not only physical strength failing, but have feared that the little mental ability I had was going, and that I was of no account, either in the world or in the church; when blankness was upon my life, and darkness was settling heavily down upon my spirit; at such a time how wonderful it has been to find some words of the dear Lord in my soul with power, and light, like the morning rising upon me, and to be shown in a moment that all this was but an experience of being in the clefts of the Rock, and a sure evidence that I was one of the Lord's hidden ones, crucified with Christ; that this was ***"knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made conformable unto his death."***—Phil. iii. 10. To be assured that this is the way the Lord separates his people from the world and self; that this was ***"bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh;"*** dying with him, that I might live with him, even here; suffering with him, that I may reign with him, even while yet in the flesh, through the power of faith.

Then a constraining power is felt, making us turn our faces toward Jesus in love and praise, and causing our voices to ***"break out in unknown strains, and sing surpris-***

ing grace. "It is the voice of the Lord, which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, which divides the flames of fire, which maketh the hinds of calve, and discovereth the forests, and causes every one in his temple to speak of his glory. (Psalm xxix.) It is the voice of Jesus, speaking with the holy, compelling power of his own unspeakable love, which removes the curtains of night, and lets in the morning upon our souls; which turns our thoughts and faces toward him in praise and holy expectancy, and causes us to make melody in our hearts unto him; for he says, "*Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.*"

Elder Silas H. Durand

FRAGMENTS

THE love of God in the heart is pure and true, and is ever fixed upon that which is pure and true, and never can rejoice in iniquity, "*but rejoiceth in the truth.*" When it has once been drawn out to another in whom it sees the same love of God, it can never be withdrawn. We ourselves may be deceived, but that love never is deceived. If the fellowship which we thought we felt toward one has been utterly broken and destroyed, then it was not that fellowship which is founded on the love of God; for that charity is the bond of perfectness, (Col. iii. 14,) and the bond of perfectness cannot be severed. The one whom we love in the truth may have

many faults, but that does not destroy our love and fellowship, for they are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In that sense charity covereth the multitude of sins. (I Peter iv. 8.) But true charity does not excuse or justify sins or faults in one's self or in a brother, nor does it cause us to withhold any needed exhortation, admonition or reproof, but rather the contrary. The good and comfort of the one we love is our chief desire, for "*love seeketh not her own;*" and we cannot see one we love in a dangerous place without a desire to extend such help as we can. That love also seeks the honor of God's house, and so directs us to that which is according to his commands.

Who showed to Abel the way of salvation? Who told him what to do to please the Lord, and comforted him when alone and in distress? Does not the same Teacher and Comforter have the charge over his people today?

Who gave Noah that faith by which he built the ark, and by which he preached righteousness? There was no man to tell him how to build or how to preach, for he was the only righteous man in that generation. The preacher of the gospel today, and the gospel builders, must receive their faith and instruction only from the Teacher of Noah. He will teach them to profit, and lead them surely in the right way, and uphold them by his arm. All men who assume to tell them how and when and where to preach, are vain teachers.

LOVE caused Jesus to say to Peter, "*Get thee behind me, Satan,*" be-

cause he savoured not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men. (Matt. xvi. 23.) But it is not our province to call a brother Satan because he speaks erroneously. We ought, however, to sternly recognize in our own words and actions, and in those of another, that which is from the wisdom of the world, which is earthy, sensual, devilish, and rigidly oppose it. But we need be careful that we oppose it with the spirit of that pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above.

Silas H. Durand
JULY 19, 1899.

HEBREWS II. 15.

We confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, *Romans ix. 7, 8, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."* *"Therefore it is of faith,*

that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations."—*Romans iv. 16, 17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."*

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his "*many sons,*" which he was to bring to glory, and for whom, "*by the grace of God he tasted death."* And they are also in this connection called "*the children,*" and "*his brethren."* These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for every one of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground they receive the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father.

And they are exhorted to **"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage."**—Gal. v. 1. The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.)

"Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."—Isa. iii. 2.

Middletown, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe

HEBREWS 8:10.

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:

"Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours." — ISAIAH liv. II.

BY these "stones," which the Lord has promised to **"lay with fair colours,"** I think we may understand the blessed truths of the gospel which are laid into the soul by the hand of God. The fair colours are deeply ingrained and embedded in the very substance of the stone, not artificially laid on. They are like beautiful marbles, in which every bright hue and vein penetrate into the deepest substance of the material. Such are the truths of God, beautiful throughout, penetrated with grace and glory into their inmost depths. But these colours are hidden from view till brought out and laid into the soul by the hand of God. However fair or beautiful any word of God be in itself, it only experimentally becomes so as inlaid by his own divine hand into the soul. This brings out the fair colours. How often we read the word of God without seeing the least beauty in it! But let the very same portion come home with sweetness and power to the soul, then beauty, inexpressible beauty, is seen in it immediately; it becomes **"a stone of fair colours."** Salvation full and free, the pardoning love of God, the precious blood of the Lamb, justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, **"wine and milk without money and without price,"** superabounding grace, eternal mercy, everlasting life — these are some of the precious stones with fair colours which God the Spirit with his own hand lays into the conscience.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Union Primitive Baptist Church. Located in Pittsylvania County, Va. on Rd. # 605, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August. The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
William Midkiff, Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 25 & 26, 1999.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, 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

**THE SOUTH ARKANSAS
ORIGINAL OLD SCHOOL
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The South Arkansas Original Old School Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Pilgrim Rest Church off Highway 167 north of Fordyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to the Church. Session begins on Saturday before the third Sunday in September (September 18-19, 1999).

We invite all Elders, Brothers and Sisters of same faith and order to come and be with us at this meeting if the Lord's will.

Asso. Clerk, Frances Townley

THE WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at the Dan River Church on Sunday August 29th, with Greensboro Church being the host. Song service to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Dan River Church is located on Hwy. 700 in the Mayfield community between Eden, NC and Danville, Va.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and any ministers of our faith and order are especially invited.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 1999

W. F. Griffith, NC	\$2.00
Grady E. Putman, AR	7.00
Mrs. Novoline S. Stewart, NC	7.00
Andrew C. Agee, VA	2.00
Miles T. Bird, LA	2.00
Willie M. Ratliff, VA	2.00
E. R. Graves, AL	2.00
Mrs. Nellie G. Perry, NC	2.00
Julian Ray (In memory of wife Sister Nellie Ray), NC	200.00
Ms. Anita French, AR	30.00
Victor H. Laws, MD	20.00
Dear Friends, VA	12.00

OBITUARIES

DOROTHY BROOKS

Sister Dorothy Brooks, a member of Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in Person County, North Carolina passed from this life on March 13, 1999 at the age of 90.

She was born in Person County, a daughter of the late Reuben Phillip Brooks and Alma Hall Brooks. She was educated in the schools of Person County and at Women's College in Greensboro, North Carolina. During World War II, she worked with the Treasury Department in Atlanta, Georgia. Later, she returned to Person County where she lived most of her life.

She joined Shiloh Church on June 19, 1960. Elder David Spangler baptized her and her uncle, Brother Huel Hall at the same baptismal service at Dan River Church near Danville, Virginia. She remained a faithful member until her death.

Earlier in her life she had received a Hope in Christ. Through the years we often talked about the Doctrine we love and she told me how the Lord had sustained her through painful personal disappointments and losses. She said she never felt worthy of His love and care, but she could never have lived without it. She loved to visit other Primitive Baptist Churches also and delighted in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace, Election and Predestination to the glory of God's people.

It was amazing to observe her faith as she coped with the problems of sickness and age. She seemed to have little fear of death and looked forward to the time when she would be freed from the bonds of earth and taken Home to the Lord she worshipped.

She devoted many years of her life to taking care of the members of her family as they became sick and disabled, and they returned her love and affection. This was and is an unusual family in their love and respect for each other.

She had the gift of a loving, warm personality and she knew how to reach out to others in friendship always seeking to know the better qualities in those she met.

In the past few years she put much time and effort in the interest of Person County Museum of History to which she and her family made significant contributions of antique furnishings and other gifts.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.B. Davis at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church on March 16, 1999. Her body was interred in the cemetery at Shiloh. She is survived by one sister, Margaret Brooks Reade; three nephews, Ben Reade, Jr., Rex Savery and Malcolm Todd. Dorothy's family and friends feel a deep gratitude to Mrs. Jackie Denny, for her faithful care of Dorothy in her last years.

In loving memory,
Catherine Massey Humbarger

Signs of the Times

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SWEET IS THE MEMORY OF THY GRACE.

*Sweet is the memory of thy grace,
My God, my heavenly King;
Let age to age thy righteousness
In songs of glory sing.*

*God reigns on high, but ne'er con-
fines*

*His goodness to the skies;
Through the whole earth his bounty
shines
And every want supplies.*

*With longing eyes thy creatures wait
On thee for daily food,
Thy liberal hand provides their meat,
And fills their mouths with good.*

*How kind are thy compassions, Lord!
How slow thine anger moves!
But soon he sends his pardoning
word
To cheer the souls he loves.*

*Creatures with all their endless race,
Thy power and praise proclaim;
But saints, that taste thy richer grace,
Delight to bless thy name.*

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

THE GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL



and without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels,

preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

A mystery, is something that is unknown; something that cannot be explained, or understood, with natural reasoning or rationale. It defies all of the laws of nature and the understanding of the natural mind and cannot be

searched out or explained with the wisdom of this world. If it can be understood or detected by the natural intelligence, using the laws of nature or human reasoning, then it may be a puzzle, but not a mystery. Man, in nature can only use natural wisdom and understanding, because that is all of the faculties that he has at his disposal; and since godliness is a mystery, using these parameters, it will never be understood, in reality, by man in nature. The only way that this mystery can be perceived is by the revelation of God, the author of the mystery, for he said that he would not give his glory unto another, and if man could solve the mystery with his wisdom then he could share in the glory of it. The mystery of godliness is something that is beyond the comprehension of the finite mind of man, it cannot be explained to the man in nature because there is no common basis from which you can start to compare the natural with the spiritual. The natural laws do not apply, and that is all that man is familiar with in the natural, physical world in which he dwells. There must, of necessity be a mediator; one which is familiar with both the natural and the spiritual world for any sense of understanding to be communicated between the different realms; and there was only one man, born of a woman that has this ability, and that is Jesus who is thoroughly familiar with both realms and has the power to reveal the secrets of the mystery to those that are born of God.

The apostle Paul said. (Eph. Chap. 3, vs 7-8-9) "*Whereof I*

was made a minister, according to the gift of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles God, unto the household of faith. His commission was received from Christ, when he met him on the road to Damascus, as follows. and there was left no room for doubt as to what that commission was, (Acts Chap. 26, vs 16-17-18) "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 those things in which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." I would say that this was ample authority for the apostle Paul to go forth declaring the gospel and making men see, and understand the fellowship of the mystery of godliness, and to make the saints of God understand what has happened to them in the new birth. The mystery of godliness is not governed by the laws of nature; it defies these laws and the oppositions of science falsely so called, only those who have been born of the Spirit can fellowship this mystery, and that is because they have been raised above

the realms of this world; their feet have been placed upon that rock of ages and the Lord hath put a new song in their heart and established their goings. When this is true, the preaching of the apostle Paul, was a witness to their own experience and they have fellowship in the doctrine. These are those who have been blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand the mystery and they were not born with these attributes from their mother's womb; these are perceived by faith which is the gift of God.

(Isa. Chap 55 ,vs 8-9) God said by the mouth of the prophet, ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your 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."*** so until man can attain unto that high and lofty habitation of God in the new birth, he cannot understand the ways and thoughts of God; for man could never attain to this plateau of their own volition. The natural man can sit down here in his natural realm of understanding, comparing natural things with natural things, debating with equally ignorant and unlearned men as regarding godliness, and declare that he knows and understands the mystery of godliness, but he does not. The apostle Paul declared, (1 Cor Chap. 1 vs 9) ***"But as 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."***

This is referring to the man in nature, with a heart of flesh, he has a vain and conceited imagination of himself and his accomplishments and his comprehension of spiritual matters; believing that he is in control of the world and his own destiny. Believing something doesn't make it so, however, and with all of this pride and loud boasting, he shall never solve the mystery of godliness, now or in the future, with his very limited knowledge of the natural realm and with no knowledge of the spiritual realm. It is, and always will remain, a mystery until revealed to them by the spirit of God, and the apostle Paul went on to say, (vs. 10) but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit.

Man, in nature can speculate, theorize, and wonder, but he cannot know the secret of the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, regardless of the amount of his wisdom and knowledge in earthly matters, (1Cor. Chap 2, vs 14) ***"For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolshness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** Man may obtain a, Doctorate of Divinity Degree, as they like to boast in spiritual matters, from man, but that does not give him any knowledge of godliness. Man can only teach the things of man and not the things of God; as Paul goes on to say in (vs, 10) ***"But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."*** The only school that can confer any degree in spiritual matters is

the school of revelation and that is not available to man upon application. The ones upon whom this knowledge is bestowed, are those that were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to this end; and not because of any earnest searching or study, regardless of how sincere, determined or dedicated that their effort may be, to obtain this knowledge.

Esau, sought repentance with bitter tears but it did not obtain the birthright that he desired; for the lot was already cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof was, and still is, of the Lord. This is true of all men in nature; as Jacob was the lot of the inheritance of the Lord, so Esau is the lot and the inheritance of the devil. (1 Peter Chap 2, vs 7-8) ***"Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."***

These things are decreed by the sovereign and infallible will of God, who does all things well, they are permanent and everlasting: there is no way that man can improve upon or diminish their knowledge of godliness. He may forget or stray from the outward apparent manifestation of this knowledge, but it is there awaiting the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, if indeed they have ever had it, as Elihu said, (Job Chap 32, vs 8) ***"But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty***

giveth them understanding." and this, giving a spiritual understanding, applies to the original and to each subsequent revelation that man receives of the marvelous knowledge of the mysteries of God.

Age cannot attain to it, and youth cannot refuse it, as Jerimiah testifies, (Jer Chap 1 vs 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 out of the womb I sanctified thee and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.***" This degree of understanding of spiritual matters was bestowed, on this occasion, even before the person was born into the realm of nature, and the acceptance of it was not optional. Jeremiah's response to this statement was, "***Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am but a child.***" but the Lord said unto him, "***say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.***" This knowledge is not given to the Lord's people without a purpose, but always for a specific reason and that reason is known only by God. In the case of Jeremiah, the apostle Paul and others it was to preach the gospel, but all of God's children receive this heavenly calling or anointing sovereignly, as did Jeremiah and Paul. and it is not the results of anything that is required of them, to meet the qualifications of the calling, or to understand the mystery. All of the qualifications and understanding of spiritual things are given to them in the calling, from God, and

they are always sufficient for the task that is required.

Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, not to the world as a whole, but to those whom he came to seek and to save. To one he was the man Jesus, and to the elect, he was the Messiah of God. God, by the mouth of the prophets, had declared the coming of the Messiah, since the days of Moses, and the Jews had been looking for him but, even then, they did not believe on him whom God sent unto them. (John 1, vs 11-12-13) "***He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.***" They must be born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus, before they can believe on him whom God hath sent. Although they, the Jews, had the word of prophecy, (Rom Chap 9, vs 5) "***Whose are the fathers and of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen***" they could not believe the actual manifestation of the promise, when it was fulfilled before their eyes. They could not perceive the truth because no man can say, or know, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost and they, as a nation, had not been blessed with this knowledge. Jesus said, while here on earth, (John Chap 7 vs 38-39) "***He that believeth on me, as the scripture 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)". Jesus's coming into the world, being born of a virgin, fulfilling prophecy to a jot and a tittle, dying in the room and stead of the elect and coming forth conqueror over death, hell and the grave are all manifestations of God, in the flesh, as referred to in the above scripture and they are all indeed mysteries when viewed with the natural mind.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was justified in the spirit. Only a perfect sacrifice was acceptable for the sins of the elect, and since man in his fallen state could not fill this requirement, it took the Holy Child Jesus, for whom the Father had prepared a body, without sin, and given the spirit, without measure, to fulfil this demand. Jesus, was verily God, and verily man, and came down to do his Father's will, and the Father's will was that all that he had given unto him in the annals of eternity would be sanctified in him without the loss of one. This required a perfection that man, in nature, does not possess; and it was done in a way that cannot be comprehended by the mind of the natural man and can only be understood when revealed by the spirit of God unto those for whom the sacrifice was made.

Just before Jesus went to the cross, in his prayer unto the Father, he said, (John Chap 17, vs 4-5) "**I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, Oh Father, glorify**

thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Therefore, Jesus, being verily God, and having the testimony that God was well pleased with his work, how is it that anyone can even pose the question as to whether all of the saints of God will be justified before God, in the final day. How can any suggest that the atonement was for all, and yet spend their vast resources of time and money, here in this time world, to insure the fact that the work of the infallible God is successful. Where is their, so called, faith? Surely, they are as the Israelites who reached forth to steady the ark when it was being returned to the nation of Israel, after being in the hands of the Philistines for years, evidently believing that God could not take of the situation at hand. God's consideration of like people in this day is as it was in that day. How can anyone believe there will be a judgement made of those, for whom Christ died, in the final day? Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost and as he stated in the above scripture, and as he said, (John Chap 17, vs 4) "**I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do.**", now did he mean what he said, or not?

(Rev Chap 20, vs 12) "**And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."**

This scripture has been discussed by many, who believe that this is the great white throne judgement of all of the peoples of the earth when the determination of the destiny of all men will be made. As I understand it, there is no judgement, at that time, of the Lord's people because they have been judged righteous before God before time began, and manifestly so in Christ's coming into the world to die in their room and stead; if there is still a judgement to be made of them, then why all of the suffering and sacrifice that Christ did, was it not sufficient for their sins? Were they not already atoned for and sent into the land of forgetfulness, by his death? This scripture says, the dead, shall stand before God and be judged out of the books according to their works; well this does not include God's children because they are not dead, as Jesus told Martha, when she questioned him about the resurrection and the fact that Lazarus would rise in the resurrection, "***I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?***" Therefore the Lord's people are not among the dead that shall stand before God, on this occasion to be judged out of the books, because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ. The books, are the books of the law by which all who are judged are judged per the demands of the law, according to their works, and all shall be found wanting and be cast into the lake of fire. The law maketh

none righteous, but rather is to measure their failure to keep those commandments which were placed upon them.

The book of life, the other book, is the record of all who were chosen, in Christ, before the world began, and judgement has already passed over them as it did the Israelites when the destroyer went through the land of Egypt, in the day of their deliverance. All who did not have the blood of the lamb on the lintel and the door post of their homes, the first born died, but when God saw the blood, the destroyer, or judgement, passed over that house; In like manner, all whose names are written in the book of life do not enter into that day of judgement, it has no power over them because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ, and the righteousness of Christ is their sanctification and their deliverance.

Their justification before God is, and has ever been, as sure as the fact that there will be a heaven for them to inhabit. Heaven is the place that Jesus went to prepare for those whom he loved, those who were given him in that covenant of promise before the foundation of the world, and his promise was that, (John Chap 14, vs 3) "***And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.***". This was a promise that was made unto his apostles and those disciples who were with him just before his crucifixion, and is applicable to all who are faithful

unto the end, but all men do not have faith.

This may not please men in the flesh, but nevertheless, it is the plan of salvation that is set forth in the scriptures, and it is the only one that will forever assure the elect of their inheritance; include them, as they are in nature; and a doctrine that is based on election by a just and holy God, before time began, and is but made manifest in time, independent of their participation in the process, is contrary to their natural reasoning. This has ever been true, in all ages of time, because man feels that he must share in the glory of the salvation of the saints, and this they readily admit; even as, Moses, in his final address to the children of Israel, said just before he died, he made this same distinction between Jacob, representing the Lord's portion, and Jeshurim and his followers who rebelled against God, when he said, (Deut Chap 32 vs 31) "***For their rock is not as our Rock even our enemies themselves being judges.***" Those who have not been given to see the mystery, cannot accept the truth, they hate it because they do not understand it. It is really strange that there should be so much animosity towards the Lord's people, by so many, when there are so few. The Lord's people do not have any feeling of hatred toward the world, because they believe the way that they do, for the Lord's people believe that all are just where they were designed to be in the master plan of God and they have no desire to judge or cast stones. They realize and freely admit,

that there but by the grace of God would they be. Evidently there is something that the man in nature sees and acknowledges instinctively, without realizing it, and does not understand. Man, in nature hates and fears that which he does not understand and over which he has no control, and is lashing out at that which he cannot understand.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was seen of angels, and was ministered to by them on several occasions; they gave witness to his advent into the world when he was born of the virgin Mary, and when he was tempted of the devil; an angel strengthened him after the devil left him. The angels are available to him at all times, for he told the disciples when he was to be delivered to the mob, (Math Chap 26, vs 53-54) "***Thinkest thou that I can not now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be.***" They were ever bearing witness to the fact that this work was truly of God, and are ever watching over the saints of God in their journey here in time. Jesus said, speaking of his sheep as little children, (Math Chap 10 vs 10) "***Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.***" Angels are very much involved in the salvation of the children of God and this is but another mystery which will be known only when time is no more and the saints are all

gathered together in that world toward which they press throughout this life.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was, is, and will ever be, preached unto the Gentiles and believed on in the world, by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Jesus spoke in parables unto the multitudes, that seeing, the world might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand, as he said; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and that he should heal them. The reason that he spoke to them in parables was to make manifest the sheep, who had been given eyes to see and ears to hear, from the goats who were not given the eyes and ears of faith, as he told his disciples, but blessed are your eyes for they see; and your ears for they hear. He was not manifested unto the world at large, but to those who were given him in that covenant arrangement, before the world was formed. When Jesus told them of the Spirit of truth that would come unto them, (John Chap 14, vs 22) "*Judas said unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?*" and this is how it is; his sheep are given eyes to see and ears to hear the comforter which Jesus said that he would send unto them, because he went unto his Father and the others were not. Jesus said, (John Chap 11, vs 27-28-29) "*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*

and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of my Father's hand." To the others he said, "*Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep.*" Paul said, (Heb Chap 4, vs 2) "*For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*" The man in nature will say that they can understand the scriptures as well as anyone else, but they cannot, according to those very same scriptures which they claim to understand, for as Paul said, (1 Cor. Chap. 1 vs. 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.*" One of the gifts of the spirit, to the children of God, is the discerning of the Spirit and without this gift they will never come to know Jesus, or to understand the mystery of godliness, regardless of their sincerity, effort or determination.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, is received up into glory. (John Chap 17, vs 1) "*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is now come; glorify thy Son. that thy Son may also glorify thee:*" The hour had indeed come to which all things were focused, the fulfilling of all prophecy and the consumation of all promises. (Amos Chap 9, vs 13) "*Behold the days come saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes*

him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." Amos is referring to the time when the beginning and the end of all things shall be bought together in just a moment of time, as Jesus prayed, "**the hour is now come.**" He is the salvation of all of the saints of God, and although no one understands fully the mystery surrounding all of these things now, they will when he comes to gather his jewels unto himself and there will be none of those names missing, which were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world. Understanding the mystery is not required, in fact, the most brilliant mind of men could not understand the mysteries of God in their fullness; but the chosen generation receives a little here, and a little there along the journey of life that keeps them following along in the footsteps of the flock.

Jesus's prayer unto his Father, (John Chap 17, vs 5) "**And now, O Father glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.**" The spotless Lamb of God who was with the Father in Zion, the perfection of beauty, before the world was formed, assumed the likeness of sinful flesh; came down into this world of sin and sorrow, took upon himself the sins of the Lord's portion, died the ignominious death on the cross, rose triumphant over death, hell and the grave and ascended back to the glory that he had with the Father before the heavens and earth were formed. The glory which Jesus will share with the Father

then will be even more magnificent than before because it will be complete. On the prior occasion, the suffering lie ahead and the children were lost in sin, now they will be sanctified and glorified and all be together forever, a triumphant Savior, the redeemed of the Lord, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, never to part. No more tears, no more sorrow, all in one eternal land of rest, where praise, love, peace and harmony will reign throughout the endless ages.

The mystery here now is that man was even considered, by God, for these glorious blessings in the first place, as David questioned, (Psa 8, vs 5) "**What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?**" There is no explanation of this marvelous mystery, other than that it was the Father's good pleasure to give unto the heirs of promise, the kingdom that he had prepared for them. The reasons cannot be fathomed by the natural mind; man can only rejoice with joy, beyond any description, when they feel to have been given a portion among those who are blessed with the earnest of the inheritance, here in time, and are made to look forward to receiving the fullness of that inheritance in the world to come. They are blessed to look forward, in hope, to that time when they will be brought, in the unity of faith, and of the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Then the mystery will be ended, they will know as they are known, will see and understand the reasons for their

trial of faith, which they experienced in this life, and praise God for bringing them into that safe haven, where there will be no more grief, no more sorrow and no more doubts and fears. All will be love, joy and peace and they will worship and praise him in a manner that they could never do while clothed with these bodies of flesh, which are their earthly garments. O' glorious, glorious, happy, happy day; This is the day the Lord hath made, for them that love his appearing, let us, if we be so blessed, rejoice and be glad as we live out our earthly days looking forward, in earnest expectation, to the experiencing and the understanding of the fullness of the grand and glorious mystery of godliness.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

THE ORIGIN OF THE HYMN, "AMAZING GRACE"

John Newton, the celebrated English preacher and hymn writer, realized that he was a trophy of divine grace. A while before his death, a brother minister came to have breakfast with him. Family prayers followed the meal. Mr. Newton's sight had almost failed him, and he was unable to read. He sat and listened to his friend as he read the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians. When the tenth verse was read, "By the Grace of God I am what I am,"

Mr. Newton began to speak: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be soon. Soon I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be; I can truly say that I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan, and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, by the grace of God I am what I am."

John Newton could say that with conviction and joy. What had he once been? When he was seven years old, he lost his mother. A little later, he went to sea with his dad and learned all the evils of the seaman's life. Still later, he was forced into the Navy. He deserted, but was caught and stripped and beaten until the blood flowed from his wounds. He had now become a hardened infidel. He fell in with African slave traders. He went from bad to worse until he himself was sold as a slave. It was a Negro woman who bought him, and she gloried in her power over him. She made him depend for his food on the crusts she tossed under the table. He had fallen to the depths of human degradation. And yet the grace of God found him, and saved him, and made him one of the greatest ministers of Christ, and a writer of hymns that have stirred the hearts of men the world over. Truly, he could say, "*I am not what I once was.*" And truly he could say "*By the grace of God I am what I am.*"

Knowing this do you wonder at John Newton's message in the grand old hymn:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound.

*That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found.
Was blind but now I see."*

When we read this account of John Newton's life, we can understand why he wrote the nine verses (along with the regularly sung verses) which are so seldom used today. Read carefully the nine "missing" verses:

" AMAZING GRACE "

*In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear;
Till a new object met my sight
And stopped my wild career.*

*I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood;
Who fixed His languid eyes on me
As near His cross I stood.*

*Sure, never till my latest breath,
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.*

*My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;
I saw my sins His blood had shed,
And helped to nail Him there.*

*Alas, I knew not what I did,
But all my tears were vain;
Where could my trembling soul*

*be hid,
For I the Lord had slain!*

*A second look He gave that said,
I freely all forgive!
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
I died that thou mayest live.*

*The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.*

*Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess within the veil,
A life of joy and peace.*

*The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine,
But God who called me here below
Shall be forever mine.*

(Selected from the "Baptist Examiner," June 29, 1974, page 5.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"And floods upon the dry ground." - Isaiah xlv. 3.

How often does the soul, born and taught of God, feel that it is this "dry ground!" It would fain be fruitful in every good word and work; it would be adorned with every grace of the Spirit within, and with every good and godly fruit without. Let no

one think that the child of God is careless or indifferent either as to inward or outward fruit. There is nothing too holy, too heavenly, too spiritual, or too gracious which the child of grace would not desire inwardly to experience and outwardly produce. But he feels that he cannot by any exertion of his own produce this fruitfulness after which he sighs. As well might a barren field convert itself into a fruitful garden without being tilled by human hand or without rain from the sky, as a soul that feels and knows its own barrenness produce by its own exertions a crop of the fruits of righteousness. But the Lord that knows the desire of the heart, and its inward mourning over its own barrenness, has given in the text a sweet and gracious promise, "*I will pour floods upon the dry ground.*" A partial shower would not be enough. The dry ground would soon absorb a few drops of summer rain. Floods must come, either from the skies or from the streams of that river which makes glad the city of God, to produce this mighty change. These "*floods*" are the promises poured into the soul, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, the manifestations of Christ and of his atoning blood, the inflowings of grace as superabounding over all the abounding of sin, and the flowing of peace as a river into the contrite spirit.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 9:1-2.

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvelous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing and praise to thy name, O thou most High.

JONATHAN AND DAVID



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

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

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

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

the Philistines forty days in succession, and each day had challenged Israel to choose a man to fight him. Upon his appearance all Israel were dismayed at the sight of him, and fled from him. Nevertheless Israel each morning, seeming to forget their fear of the previous day, went forth to the fight again, in the same armor, and again shouted for the battle, as though confident of the victory. But again they were afraid at the sight of Goliath, and fled from him.

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

It was on the fortieth day of the champion's appearance that David appeared and accepted the challenge. So on the fortieth day Jesus overcame the evil in the wilderness. David could not go to fight Goliath without the authority of Saul, so Jesus must be recognized by the law as having the right to go into the conflict with death. He was authorized by the law, and put forward by the legal authori-

ties as the one man who **"ought to die for the people, that the whole nation perish not,"** though the high priest who uttered that prophecy by the Spirit did not himself know the power of the words he uttered. (John xi. 50-52.)

Saul armed David with his own armor, but David put it off. The law armed Jesus with the flesh. By being made flesh he came under the law. He could not meet and overcome death until he had taken upon himself and put off again that flesh in which sin had been committed, and thus had condemned sin in the flesh. It was only by first being overcome himself that he could overcome the great enemy. He must first die in order to abolish death. The law must first be satisfied by his death, which makes an end of sin, and then death has lost its power. **"He that is dead is freed from sin."** Then the Son of God, who took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, in order to die the death due for the transgressions of his people, can no longer be holden of death, but comes forth victorious over him. **"Death hath no more dominion over him."**

All this must be shown in a figure by the action of David, while David must remain alive. So having put off Saul's armor, he chose five smooth stones from the valley. These stones represent an accursed death inflicted upon an Israelite. When a man became accursed he must be stoned to death. David threw one of these stones and brought down the giant. Jesus by his own death under the curse of the law,

represented in this figure by the smooth (perfect) stones with which David armed himself, brought death down at his feet, and "destroyed him that had the power of death." He must first die, and then meet death with his own death, and thus overcome him so thoroughly that he can never make any one, for whom Jesus died his captive any more. Jesus fought the battle so effectually in the valley of Elah, the bitter valley of death, that when he came forth out of that valley he even **"carried captivity captive."**

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

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

them." His intercession is felt to be effectual, for with the sword of justice justly taken from his conquered enemy he has destroyed him forever.

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

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

What can this act of Jonathan signify unless it be the fact that all of the Lord's people in all dispensations do

ever ascribe their robe of righteousness, and all their garments of salvation, and all their weapons of war and their strength, to Jesus? They recognize and testify that all they have belongs to him, and is his gift to them. This is as clearly declared by the holy men in the legal dispensation as by those now in the gospel day.

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

For Jonathan, David had some words of love and tenderness which he had not for Saul. *"I am distressed*

for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." The love of the Lord's people to Jesus is wonderfully described in those few words. In all ages, in all dispensations, in all lands and among all people, it is the same. It is indeed wonderful, a *"love that passeth knowledge."*

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

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

This promise was not literally fulfilled to Jonathan, for he died with

Saul in battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Nor were the promises which were given to the prophets to declare among the people literally fulfilled to them. They, with all the Lord's spiritual Israel under the old dispensation, *"having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."*—Heb. xi.39, 40. The *"everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure,"* which was made with them, and which was all their salvation and all their desire, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) was not made to grow or be fulfilled in their flesh, nor in the sight of men. Its fulfillment was experienced then in the manifestation of Christ to them through the Spirit, who has now appeared in the flesh, and has openly fulfilled all that they spoke of him, revealing himself to his people among all nations by faith, and showing unto us that his people both under the old and the new dispensations are made perfect only in him.

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

PLEASANT WORDS

"Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24)

None but those who have experienced bitterness of soul can fully appreciate the sweetness of the doctrines of the Gospel. All of you who have been made to know your own weaknesses can truly rely upon the strength of God's love and power. If you have been sick unto death because of your many sins; then, words of grace and mercy are the only tonics to bring good health. If God has worked mightily in your soul in giving you eternal Life your taste has been so changed that words of worldly wisdom have lost their sweetness to you. Words gleaned from the Holy Scriptures which proclaim God's sovereignty, love, unchangeableness, promises, mercy, and grace; all have a peculiar sweetness which the unregenerated cannot taste. If you be so richly blessed that you possess a soul sweetened by the spirit of God's love; then, only pleasant words will flow from your mouth. Let us read the 23rd verse of the same chapter of Proverbs: ***"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips."***

According to Proverbs 16:21—***"The wise in heart shall be called prudent; and the SWEETNESS OF THE LIPS increaseth learning."*** Both bitter and sweet does not flow from the same fountain. If the heart has been sweetened, sweet words will flow

through the lips. If a sinner has been shown the greatness of his sins, and has tasted the sweetness of God's grace; he will speak words of mercy to other sinners instead of words of condemnation. Whatever is in the heart usually comes forth from the mouth. If the heart be bitter, the words flowing from the mouth will also be bitter. Jesus said, ***"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."*** (Matt. 12 :34-35.) Words are like arrows from a bow, they never return. Jesus said ***"That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."*** If you have this wisdom in your hearts, you will be very careful and cautious in speaking that you do not offend anyone. If you be angry, sin not. It is better to refrain from speaking when angry than to speak grievous words which will stir up anger. It is better to be silent when you cannot think of pleasant words to say. Bad words have wrought more evil than plagues, pestilences, battles, and diseases all put together. You may mend any possessions you keep near you; you may heal outer wounds of the body: you may change your apparel; but, you cannot take away the sting that has disheartened some poor soul caused by a few careless words spoken by you.

There are words spoken which have done more separating than the wielding of swords. We ought to be very

careful in our speaking, writing, and conversing.

When Christ sent forth the seventy into every city and place where He would come, He instructed them specifically and exactly the first words to be said upon entering a house: ***"PEACE be to this house."*** Even though these words might not be received by the occupants; yet, they were to be said by His ministers. You cannot think of a more pleasant blessing to be invoked than PEACE. No other word is more satisfying and pleasant than the word, PEACE. His ministers were not to wait until they obtained evidence that everything was in order and that they would be wholly received before they said anything. They were instructed to say upon entering the house, ***"Peace be unto this house."*** Pleasant words were to be said which would be received into the souls of those who really desired peace. Yet there are those who do not seek after peace because they are satisfied with their own righteousness and their soul is full. This agrees with Proverbs 27:7, ***"The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."***

Pleasant words are as an HONEY-COMB. As my mind is dwelling upon the labors of a gospel minister in his constant search for the sweet nuggets of precious truth so that he may be able to fitly speak words in season to the weary; my prayer now is — , **Make me as one of Thy honeybees. As the bee goes from flower to flower in gathering honey; may I be enabled to gather sweet gospel truths from the**

sacred Scriptures. As the bee deposits this honey into the honeycomb set in the hive. may I be able to feed wisdom, words of knowledge and understanding into the empty souls which hunger for the truth in the church. As the bee is especially gifted in gathering, processing and depositing honey; may I be endowed with special gifts to gather, properly speak, and store in the church special honey-drippings of God's spiritual sanctuary, the Word of Truth. The honey-drippings of the honeycomb is sweet to the taste of a natural man; so is the gospel truth sweet to the spiritual taste of believers. The sweetness of the gospel to the believer is the only thing we can think of that is said in the Scriptures to be sweeter than Honey. See Psalms 19:10. The tongue of the bee is peculiarly fitted to lap the nectar of the flowers, and the bee is considered to be the wisest of insects. The tongue of ministers is just as peculiarly gifted to speak the choicest of Scriptures and to lap from them fitting phrases to suit the need of hungry hearts in most-wisely dividing the word of truth. As bees abound in almost all parts of the natural world; even so ministering servants are found in almost all parts of God's spiritual kingdom. As bees cling to the queen-bee and make her dwelling place to be theirs; the fruitful children of God cling to the church, Christ's bride, and bring their treasures, spiritual gifts, into the church. When I speak of God's ministers I am including even those of least esteem of all laboring children of God.

God has ordained the growth and spread of the churches as He ordained the multiplication of the bees, and their habit of some leaving the home hive and establishing other dwelling places. Churches have flourished from a very small beginning and have so multiplied that new churches are continuing to be established. Some from one colony will leave their home place and establish a new colony. When members are constantly added to the church and new local churches are being constituted it shows a healthy state.

It is true of churches as is also true among bees. Sometimes poison is brought into the hive by bees, which will result in the death of that colony. Sometimes unscriptural doctrine and practice is initiated into a local church which will result in that local church dying. Sometimes ants or other insects will invade a colony of bees and kill them to such extent that they no longer exist. Sometimes enemies of the truth find their way into a local church and destroy it until it can no longer function. May God cause us to take inventory of our condition. God's work prospers. His Church grows. The Lord adds to His Church. Either the church of your membership is growing or becoming blighted or poisoned. Interest is either on the increase or decreasing. Faith of God's children is as a mustard seed. How is it like a mustard seed?? It grows !!! Movement is the sign of life. Good works are the evidence of faith. Is the honeycomb dry? Is there no honey or sweetness when you come together? Sweet

doctrines and practices, as well as sweet experiences are brought to the center, which is the church, where all feast together. Sweetness in fellowship, communion, and worship enriches God's storehouse where the saints gather. Is this true where you attend? I had rather be with a few where there is growth than to be with thousands where there is a decline. I prefer leaving a full house and begin in a new place where there is room for honey to be stored. When a family has been completed and children have become grown; one by one they leave their former places of dwelling and take on the responsibility of beginning new homes. There is progress in every realm of God's work. The same law of growth and multiplication works both in the natural and spiritual realm. When the Lord raises up leaders in His churches; when they become of age, they go out into new places to assume their ordained place and position to plant other churches. If it be of the Lord these new churches will prosper and grow. God's supply of Honey will never be exhausted. Hungry and thirsty souls shall ever increase so that there will always be room for it to be deposited. As long as we go forth in the right way the work of the Lord's chosen ones whom He hath ordained to glorify Him shall prosper.

His gospel shall be preached. There will ever be ears blessed to hear and hearts to understand. The sweetness of God rich providence and amazing grace shall be measured and dropped into hearts that have been prepared to receive it.

I suppose that there is no other natural sweetness besides honey that comes to man already refined. Other sweets have to be condensed to make it sweeter and richer. The doctrines of the Scriptures are like honey. The Holy Sacred Scriptures are already condensed and refined. Try condensing honey further by burning and you get an unpleasant odor. Try condensing the Scriptures of Truth by leaving some out and overemphasizing others and it becomes unpleasant even to a soul desiring truth in its purity. God does not use ministers to lessen the importance of any scriptural teachings, but rather to rightly divide the word of truth. None is left out if the whole is rightly divided. There is a curse pronounced upon those who attempt to take away. Some might want to weaken the true teaching of the scriptures by adding the puny work of sinful man to make it coincide with opinions naturally believed. When this is attempted it is not pure doctrine. The doctrine relative to the sovereignty of God is sweet when positively affirmed and proved by the Scriptures, that God works all things after the counsel of His own will; yet, when the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments is made less obligatory in stressing the point, it is over emphasized, thus losing its sweetness and purity. On the other hand—: preaching the duty of man to fear God and keep His commandments cannot be over emphasized unless God's sovereignty is limited to stress the point. It is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one undertakes to proclaim that man

is in no way accountable, responsible, or obligated to keep God's law, in order to prove that God is sovereign. On the other hand — : it is not rightly dividing the word of truth when one proclaims that God does not work all things after the counsel of His own will, in order to emphasize the duty, obligation, and responsibility of man. May God's ministers continue to preach both: the sovereignty of God and the duty of man. I know full well that without HIM we can do NOTHING; yet, I know that we CAN DO all things through Him Who strengtheneth us. It is sweet to know that the prayers of His saints are not in vain. It is sweet to feel that He hears and answers prayers. It is sweet to believe not only that HE IS; but, He also is a REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.

Pleasant words are as an honeycomb; sweet to the soul, and HEALTH TO THE BONES. The wholesome words of our Lord are not only sweet to the soul in making it happy, but also heal the sick mind and bind up the broken heart; as well as, healing broken bones. These pleasant words give courage sufficient to go from faith to faith, and from strength to strength. They cause the inward man to be strengthened as honey causes the outward man to be built up. Written articles of faith and church covenants are made healthy by members who adhere to them and abide by them. The structure of church organization could not be healthy unless godly zealous gracious followers of Christ were the constituents. The structure

may be well-founded but it will become unhealthy without the Spirit.

As God pours words of eternal life into our hearts and minds and makes us know the sweetness of His mercy and love, we should, also, pour words of comfort and encouragement into the ears of poor struggling sinners, making manifest mercy and grace to them. Jesus Christ died for sinners because He loved them; yet, He hated their sins. If we be Christ-like — and we are if He be born in us — we will even love those who persecute us; yet, hate their sins. If one goes into error we are to help save the erring brother; yet, help kill the error. We are to call no man unclean; yet, we are not to partake of his unclean deeds. We are commanded to speak softly, not angrily; pleasantly, not harshly; reasonably, not contentiously; and, we are commanded to love one another but not to hate.

If I had to choose one word in defining God and could use no other, I would choose the word LOVE. John said God is love. If I had to choose three words in summing up God's commandments, I would c h o o s e THOU SHALT LOVE. Jesus quoted two commandments upon which all the law and prophets hang. The second was like unto the first in that they both began with: Thou shalt love. Love is a pleasant word. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is ease of conscience. Where there is ease of conscience there is

happiness. Where there is pure happiness there is Heaven. Where there is Heaven there God is. We taste it now and then. We experience such sweetness in these foretastes of Heaven that our desires are greatly encouraged with the hope that some sweet day after awhile, we shall be wafted into our eternal home above where we can feast forever upon those sweets which are SWEETER THAN HONEY. May God add His blessings.

AMEN.

Elder E. J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1999

Mrs. A.V. Krewatch, MD	\$14.00
In memory Bro. & Sister Somers, NC	22.00
Mrs. Ruby Wall, TX	5.00
Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA	2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	7.00
Mr. & Mrs. John Swilley, Jr, AR..	7.00
Robert E. Moore, AL	2.00
Banks H. Conner, VA	2.00
K.G. Thompson, VA	2.00
H.C. Brown, VA	2.00
Mrs. Vivian Underwood, VA	2.00
Ted A. McDaniel, VA	12.00

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

OBITUARIES

**THE OBITUARY OF
SISTER BERTHA SHORT**

It is with sweet memories that I attempt to write of Sister Bertha Shelton Short. She was born January 21, 1911, a daughter of Charlie Shelton and Sallie Plymale Shelton. The Lord called her home April 27, 1999. She was married to C.H. "Hub" Short, who predeceased her.

Sister Short was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and Baptism August 9, 1943. Sister Short was a faithful member and attended church as long as her health permitted. I remember her as always having such a sweet and peaceful smile.

Sister Short's survivors include one son, Wayne Short of Hurt, VA., two daughters Peggy Preston of Hurt and Audrey McDowell of Burlington, N.C., one brother James Shelton Sr., three sisters Laura Parker, Lucille Goad and Hilda Hines all of Gretna, VA. – seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Sister Short's funeral was held April 29, 1999 at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, by her Pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park.

We will all miss Sister Short and may each one be reconciled to God's will.

Written in love and hope
Carol R. Pickral

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

SISTER LESSIE WRAY TILLEY

Sister Tilley was born August 2, 1901 in Patrick County, Virginia to Fannie and Jim Wray. She departed this life to be with her Lord on November 13, 1998 at the age of 97. She was married to the late Brother Warford N. Tilley for 57 years. Surviving her are two daughters, Elaine Walters of Riverside, California, Nadine Atkinson of Eden, North Carolina, one son, Lee Maynard Tilley of Newport News, Virginia, eight grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

When her youngest child was just a little girl, Sister Tilley was baptized by Elder Jacob F. Spangler into the membership of the church which he served in Spray, N.C. In later years when this church was being served by someone else, it was not in order. Because of this, Brother and Sister Tilley left that church and came to Dan River Church. Sister Tilley was received into the fellowship of Dan River upon a confession of faith November 26, 1944. Brother Tilley was made a deacon, as he had been a deacon in the Spray church.

They were a lovely couple and theirs was truly a marriage made in heaven. I have precious memories of their coming to my grandparents' home with the Spanglers and having lunch after church and memories of visiting in their home. He and Sister Tilley entertained in their home and went far and wide to be with the Lord's people.

Sister Mildred Graham shared some of her special memories of Sister Tilley. She told of how she used to drive Sister Tilley and her mom, Sister Spangler, around at the lake and how they had to stop at every antique shop. She remarked that Sister Tilley had wonderful taste and how very much like her mom Sister Tilley was - so much so that they seemed almost like sisters in nature. There was a special chemistry between them. She also shared that one time they asked her to stop and ask a lady if they could buy apples off a tree. The lady said okay if they would pick the apples, so Sister Mildred said to them, "Okay girls, get out of that car" and they enjoyed those apples that day.

Sister Tilley is best described in Sister Mildred's words: "She was a gracious and lovely lady and a wonderful deacon's wife if ever there was one." The scriptures tell us that a deacon's wife is to be "*faithful in all things*" (1 Timothy 3:11). She was truly a dear mother in Israel, firm in her faith, and devoted to her church. When I think of her, I think of the scriptures in Proverbs chapter 31, verses 10, 25-27, and 30: "*Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.*" "*Strength and honour are*

her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." "*Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.*" To know Sister Tilley was to love her. I'm so grateful for how she and Brother Tilley touched my life.

May the gentle Shepherd fill the aching void in the hearts of all of us who mourn her passing - both her spiritual and her natural families. And, may he reconcile us to know that our loss is her eternal gain.

Humbly Submitted,
Mary Hawkins

PROVERBS 15:1-6.

A SOFT answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

Signs of the Times

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Tribute to Elder W. K. Smith

*His old chair is vacant beside the
fireplace*

*No smile greets us when we come in
Our hearts almost burst at the very
thought*

*We have lost our most precious
friend*

*His daily counsel kept our erring
feet*

*From striking many a rough snag
The word of his God was his drink
and his meat*

*He counted his righteousness as
rags*

*Such a beautiful gift as ever was
placed*

*On a poor mortal here below
Twas given to him by sovereign
grace*

*Twas a blessing from heaven we
know*

*At home and abroad, at church or
with friends*

*He was blessed with wonderful
power*

*To remove anger and restore sweet
peace*

He was a father to us at all hours

(continued)

*He served several churches: one for forty years
When duty called, he obeyed
Tho' said he was snatched from blasphemy and shame
When the burden upon his was laid*

*He was given zeal and love for the cause
By his maker who ignited above
He was called to the labor of "carrying the word"
And his was a labor of love*

*This world held no beauties apart from his God
For he saw him in each event of time
In the beautiful flowers, the songs of the birds
Some trace of his God he would find*

*In his late years of life as his body declined
He had little desire here to roam
And often when retiring at night to his bed
He would say, "One day nearer home"*

*He is gone and alas, his absence we mourn
For his presence and comfort we sigh
Yet we know our loss is his eternal gain
He has gone to his Savior on high*

*Instead of murmuring at the will of our God
We must be reconciled that it be so
And thank the giver of all good gifts
That he was spared so long here below*

May God thus use us to the praise of his name

*Make us obedient as we journey along
And pray when our purpose in the world is served
We shall meet him in that long sought home*

(Written by Sister Delma Smith, Spearsville, La. widow of the late Elder John Lee Smith, the son of Elder W. K. Smith)

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Sis. Nellie Johnson Ray

MATTHEW 5: 9-10.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

EDITORIAL

THE CARNAL NATURE OF MAN

"For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. Chap. 8, vs 6-7-8)



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

This carnality of man is that characteristic which God hates, it is the characteristic which separates man from God and which he received for his partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the beginning when God saw everything that he had made he pronounced it very good, but when man partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he was marred from his original state of creation, in like manner as the vessel which was marred in the hands of the potter when he wrought a work on the wheel. When God beheld man in this condition, he said, the thoughts of the imaginations of his heart is only evil continually and that he would not always strive with man because he is also flesh. Carnality is the fleshly characteristic of man with all of the vanity, pride and fleshly lusts for the things of nature; all of the things that are an abomination in the sight of God. In this condition he is no longer in the

image of God or in communion with God. This is the state of death that God pronounced upon man for partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he is separated from the life that he had experienced when he walked and talked with God. When evil entered into the man, he was no longer pleasing unto God or able to walk and talk with God as in the beginning, in the garden of Eden. God is totally good and the evil that is man in his carnal nature, is that which alienates him from God and which is directly and totally foreign to this goodness; and is an abomination in his eyes.

The above scripture states that to be carnally minded is death; and all men are in this state of death, as they are born into the world, regardless of what they may claim to be, as the "so called" state of innocence until 12 years of age, etc. The things of the spiritual realm are unknown to them and they can never, in nature, bridge that great gulf that will forever separate them from the spiritual realm, unless a change is wrought in them to reverse this state of sin and death. This can only be done by the omnipotence of God, with whom all things are possible. They are dead to spiritual things and are not even aware of the existence of the spiritual kingdom of God which is all around them. They are in the same position as the servant of the prophet Elisha, when a king sent an army to take the prophet and surrounded the city in which the prophet and his servant were. When they awoke the next morning the ser-

vant went out and saw the enemy around the city and cried aloud to his master and said, what shall we do, for his hope of deliverance was impossible, from where he stood, and what he saw. The prophet prayed that God would open the eyes of the servant that he might see the host of God, which was their defense. When God opened the eyes of the servant, he saw that the mountains were filled with the horses and the chariots of fire around Elijah. This lesson is taught over and over again in the scriptures, as when Jesus opened the eyes of the man that was blind from his mother's womb, the disciples asked Jesus, who did sin this man or his parents that he was born blind and Jesus answered that he was born blind that the power of God might be made manifest in him. These wonders were there before the servant of Elijah was enabled to see them, just as the kingdom of God is all around all men in nature before they are aware of them but they just cannot see them unless God opens their eyes and enables them to see. The things of the kingdom of God are never known or realized by the natural man; they are only seen by the eye of faith, and this is God's special gift to the elect only. It is as a man is in a totally dark room, void of any light; there may be all manner of good or evil around them, but until the light is turned on they cannot see them and are never aware of their existence, but when their eyes are opened, they see what was there all along. The quickened sinner sees and realizes the utter hopelessness of his wicked and

undone condition if the outcome depended on his own arm, and realizes his need for a daysman to stand for him, one that can do what he never could.

(Math Chap 7, vs 16-20) "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth 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." The carnality of man is manifest by his works which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, hatred, witchcraft, emulations, wrath, strife seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like. These are things which manifest the desires of the heart of the natural man, and as Jesus said, the desires and sinful pursuit for these things come forth from the heart: and they are they which defile the man. The carnal mind is enmity against God and godliness, and as long as man is in the flesh he cannot please God; he would never seek after God because he is perfectly satisfied and is at home in this world and knows nothing but the things of nature. The carnal desire of man is for all of those things which he has enjoyed and has lusted for since the fall, and his being driven out of the Garden of Eden into this world of sin and sorrow.

The condemnation of the carnal man is because he loves darkness better than light, because his deeds are evil. Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd, but, he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. The thoughts of the heart of the carnal man are ever after the sensual pleasures of this world, gratifying the lusts of the flesh, the pride of the natural eyes, and the vain conceited imagination of his own importance in the scheme of things. Every imagination of his heart is enmity toward God and all things godly, even as was Saul of Tarsus's when he left Jerusalem: it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, because it is of the flesh. This state of man is called death, because he is separated from God, from all that is good, all that is holy and all that is well pleasing unto God, because it is indeed void of any knowledge of the spiritual realm and the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The apostle Paul, when he left Jerusalem thought he was serving God but he was actually fighting against the truth. He, however was a chosen vessel and was converted to make manifest the power of God, as he said, as a pattern to them that should thereafter believe on Jesus to life everlasting.

This valley of death in which the natural man dwells is void of any spiritual light, that light which Jesus brought into the world, that light by which the kingdom of heaven is made

visible to the children of God; that light that John came bearing witness of; that light which shined around the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus. When Paul was blessed to see Jesus, he said that as he journeyed and came near to Damascus: suddenly there shone around about him a light from heaven, and in one recounting of this experience, he said a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun. The sun in the heavens illuminates the world of nature but it takes this light, brighter than the noonday sun, to reveal the things of the spiritual kingdom, and man cannot turn this light on or off. Jesus said, ***"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*** It was even as Moses' face that shone from being in the presence of this light, when he came down from the mountain with the tables of the law, so that the people could not look upon his face; even so this light that Jesus brought into the world, is not seen by the natural man.

This light is not as the lights that were created to rule the day and the night, in the days of creation, those were the lights by which all men see the things of nature around them. This light that Jesus brought into the world is to illuminate and reveal the things of the kingdom of God to his elect; the kingdom of which Jesus was speaking when he told Herod, ***"My kingdom is not of this world."*** This is the answer the question posed by Judas (not Iscariot) when he asked Jesus, ***(John Chap 14, vs 22) "Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world."***

He will reveal these things unto his elect only, and those sitting right next to them will never even be aware of them; it is a man seated next to one with a headset on listening to the radio, one can hear the music, but the other cannot, because they are not tuned in to the station from which the transmission is being sent, even so is the communication between God and his children. The message is only available to those who have the connection, which is the Holy Spirit, and you cannot receive this of yourself; they are freely given to the heirs of promise by the grace of God.

(John Chap 13, vs 35-36) 'Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.' All men live in this world in total darkness, as regarding spiritual matters, until Jesus turns the light on in their lives. Jesus told his disciples, *(John Chap 9, vs 4-5) 'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.'* Jesus was the only one that could work the works of the Father, and ultimately that work is to save the household of faith from their sins. The works that Jesus performed while here on earth was to make manifest that God was ever living and fulfilling the promises that he had made to Abraham and all of the heirs of promise, by the mouth of the prophets who came under the law. This he did,

testifying that *"I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do"* and this should forever still the cries of the gainsayers who are still trying to assist God in this noble task, but not being able to discern these truths, they continue to follow after the law for righteousness to which they can never attain.

The Cherubs, and the flaming sword which were placed at the east of the Garden of Eden, are figurative of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and they were placed there to keep the way of the Tree of Life; that the promise that God had made unto Adam when he commanded that man should go forth and replenish the earth might stand. Although separated from God and an alien to the life into which he was created, the promise of God that man should go forth and replenish the earth still stood firm and the promised seed still must come forth, per that promise. *(Rom Chap 3, vs 3) 'For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of none effect; God Forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar:'* Even so the grace of God is not thwarted by the devices of men, or devils; what he has ordained shall come to pass, in the way and in the manner that he determined. This is the foundation on which the salvation of the saints of God is based, it does not stand in the ways of man or his devices, but in the determinate counsel and foreordination of the almighty God of heaven and earth. The unbelief, or the sins of man do not make the faith of God of none effect, or the promise null and

void, God forbid, rather as it is written the wicked are the sword of the lord, and are included for the purpose for which they were intended. His determinate counsel and perfect foreknowledge considered all events, in working out his plan of salvation; there is nothing that shall surprise God or cause him to alter his course in the salvation of every heir of grace. Thanks be unto God, man cannot hinder or help in the plan of their salvation, and aren't you glad that it is so.

This is the only hope that man has of salvation and it is sure and steadfast because it is anchored on that solid rock, that rock which God placed beneath the feet of David when he lifted him up out of the miry clay, and established his goings. As Moses said, (Deut. Chap 32, vs 4) **"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."** When the Most High divided unto the nations their inheritance, he separated the sons of Adam, and set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, which is his portion. All men are carnal, in the flesh, but carnality does not separate them from the purposes of God, Jacob is the lot of God's inheritance and in him all nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Jesus came to seek and to save them that were lost. Only God's people are lost in this state of carnality, the others are at home there and will forever dwell there, but the lost sheep shall be redeemed from the filthy garments of carnality and will be given,

the best robe, the robe of righteousness which was wrought for them by their Lord and Savior in his death, burial and resurrection on their behalf.

Although the children of God live out their lives here in this time world in the state of carnality, seeing themselves as lost and undone sinners, they have been given a hope of a life beyond that river of death, a life that is above this world and they have been made to believe that this hope is the earnest of an inheritance in that city which all of the saints look forward to, that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, David said, (*Psa 37 vs 13*) **"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."** If the children of God did not have evidences of this hope, here in time, they would certainly be in a state of hopelessness and despair, but God does not let them dwell there too long. He gives them faith to carry them over the rough spots. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen, and this is God's sustaining gift to those who have been quickened, those who have been born again, not of the corruptible seed of the serpent, but of the incorruptible seed of the woman (Eve) who represents the whole household of faith, in the person of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who overcame death, hell and the grave for them.

Although the state of carnality is very distressing to the sheep, it is one of the greatest blessings also, for by it, they are made aware, constantly,

that they are not their own keeper and to realize their utter dependence on God to sustain them in life and to deliver them from this body of death, when he comes to take his jewels home. (*Rom. Chap. 8 vs. 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."*** Yes, even the carnality of man works for good to them who love the Lord; it condemns the lost but it also humbles the righteous and makes them realize that they can never claim any good, in and of themselves. They are made to know, from experience, that but by the grace of the Almighty God, they would be even as those who have no hope.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sister Smith;

I received your letter of July 10, 1999 and enjoyed hearing from you very much. I appreciated your comments regarding my writings in, "The Signs of the Times," and I always hope that they will be of comfort to someone. I especially enjoyed your poem written in memory of, Elder W. K. Smith. It was a tribute to one that has gone on before, and who had a very special influence on our life. I have read it several times and seemed to get something new out of it each

time. Those who have had an influence on our lives are very special to us. I have known several that I especially love and cherish in my memories, but have not been enabled to put it down on paper.

This is a poem that would be enjoyed by all who have had those, "special brethren" in the past who have been such a wonderful influence on their lives, especially in the earlier days of our experience, when our faith was so near and dear to our hearts. I would like to see it published, if you permit, but I would not submit it without your express permission. I feel that it would be enjoyed by many who have had such a person in their life. We have all had brethren, in our younger years in the church, who have meant so much to us, and this poem brings to our own minds those precious memories, and we re-live those precious times again.

Yes, I knew your husband and remember the many times that I have spent in your home, in the earlier years of my going among the Baptists. You both will always have a very special place in my heart. I remember the several times that you both visited in the Memphis Church, and even some of the texts that, Elder John Lee Smith preached from. He, like his father, was a very special gift to the household of faith, and will always be remembered by those who were blessed to hear him, as long as they live.

I know that these memories are precious to you and trust that you will continue to be blessed with the knowledge of the affection and respect that

the churches have for you and for his memory. Time goes on, but these things will always remain in the hearts of those who have been blessed with Elder Smith's Gift in the stand and your special gift as an help meet to him. I will always remember you, as a devoted member of the church, and whose whole life was devoted to supporting your husband in his efforts, and in your own desire to be a servant to the church as his wife.

May God, in the riches of his grace, bless you the remaining days of your life, and enable you to attend your home church and churches in your area and enjoy the preaching and fellowship of the household of faith. This is something that we cannot do, of ourselves, but may God keep you and uphold you in your faith as long as you dwell among the Saints of God.

We look forward to seeing you at, The South Ouchita Association, this fall.

In Christian Love;
Richard H. Campbell

Dear Elder Key;

Please find enclosed an article for the Signs, if you think it worthy of space, also a letter to Sister Delma Smith, the widow of the late Elder John Lee Smith of Spearsville, Louisiana. She had sent me a poem that she had written in memory of Elder W. K. Smith, her father-in-law, and as you can see in the letter I requested permission to send it to the Signs of the Times for publications, which I subsequently received from her.

I enjoyed the poem because it reminded me of those in my memory who have meant so much to me in my younger days. I believe that it will be of interest to the brethren because it will remind them of such people in their earlier life in the church who were such an inspiration to them as they began to go among the brethren.

We had a good annual meeting this year, in Memphis, wish you could have been with us. I wish that you would try to put us on your schedule for another year, the Lord willing. We would love to have you and anyone else that you can bring with you. Elder Blumfield was at the Little Vine Ole Association this year and promised Elder Chapell that he would attempt to come and be with us if at all possible.

I trust that you are doing well, health wise and having good meetings in your area. I had hoped to come up this year but it just did not work out that way. Maybe next year, I have always enjoyed my visits very much and love the brethren in that area.

I have not heard from Bro. Strader for a while, I understand that he is in a nursing home. Could you send me the name of the home, and if possible, the telephone number. Someone said he has a personal phone in the home. When you see, or talk to him, please give him my best regards and tell him that I think of him often, and tried to call him once but, not knowing the name of the home, could not get him.

Dear Elder Key, may God, in the riches of his grace, enable you to continue to be a blessing to the churches in your area. I know that you may

not feel to be so, but you are. I hear from the brethren and all speak highly of you and appreciate you as their minister and also as the editor of the Signs; may you continue for many years in both callings.

Please come to see us, if you can, we would love to have you in the Memphis Church at any time.

In Christian Fellowship;
Richard H. Campbell

Memphis, Tennessee
September 23, 1999

Dear Brother Strader;

I called your son last week, to get your telephone number, and was advised that you were in the nursing center and might not be able to get to the telephone, so I got your address so that I could write you. I have thought of you many times, and started to call you but could not get your number. I hope that you are doing well, and are able to get around alright.

I am sure that you are keeping in touch with the brethren up there, by way of telephone and visits. If you can talk to them and have them visit with you, you are blessed. I just wish that I was where I could visit you and talk to you about the things that are so dear to our hearts and that bound us in the bonds of christian love for so many years, that love of which the world knows nothing. You have been well blessed to live in an area where there

are many churches and brethren of like precious faith, and to be so much loved and respected by them has been of great comfort to you over the years. May God, in the riches of his grace, bless you to continue in this love and fellowship with them all of your days.

We are going to the South Ouchita Association this weekend the Lord willing. It is a very precious place to visit, there is such love and fellowship, peace and harmony reigns as they come together to worship God. Surely, these are the heavenly places, in Christ, that the apostle Paul speaks of in the scriptures. I hope that I will be blessed to continue to meet with the Lord's people as long as I live, because that is the most important part of my life.

I had hoped to get to North Carolina this year but did not make it. I am still trying to make it and hope to see you, this year or next year, the Lord willing. Tell everyone that I know up there, "Hello" for me and that I think of them often and hope to visit among them again some time in the future.

May God keep you and richly bless you with that love that you have known for so much of you life. Remember, he promised that he would never leave nor forsake you, and God does not lie.

In bonds of love,

Richard H. Campbell
2171 Allen Court Drive
Germantown, Tennessee 38139

ARTICLES

THE BIG PICTURE

by G.B. Bird

Nov. 5, 1954

Before I attempt to even hint at this enormous picture, I would like to say that the picture to which I refer is so vast and we mortals are so small and weak that at best we could only hope to get a slight glimpse of the great picture, And the portion we do see with our human eyes, is only the shadow of REAL, The Apostle Paul speaks of, "While we look on things that are not seen, for the things that are seen are temporal."

So it forever remains an unchallenged fact, that what we do see of this great picture, that is with our natural eyes, is only the shadow of the *real*, and due to our pitiful limitations of vision, we can only see a very small part or portion of the shadow, our mortal or natural eyes can only see even dimly a very few miles, even on a clear day; then the earth offers so much interference in the way of clouds, smoke, dust and fog, that our view of nature and the things of nature, is very small compared to the greatness of even the natural picture, And were we to climb to the tallest mountain on a clear day, our eyes betrays our great limitations, as we begin to look off in the distance, we can see very well for a few hundred yards, but beyond this things become less clear and every-

thing seems to blend into a hazy mass, and even then, we may see the outline of the hills in the distance and even may wonder what is over these hills, but until we move positions we will never know. Were a young man in his month to start out to see all things on earth, how far would he get in his lifetime, were he to live to 90, and how little of the 'all things' would he see, or understand, he could see but little and remember far less, were he to spend his entire lifetime in these United States, he would see even then a very small portion of the things of the earth, and by the time he minutely covered, even one state, and started to return over his journey he would find so many and varied changes, that he could not remember what was, Yet our God sees the entire picture all the time and all at once, because with God *It is eternal now*, hence he sees no change in the finished picture, for there is no change to Him. And there is no conditional element, or the element of chance, in the great picture, No room for any such foreign matter, *in* the unbounded fullness of God's sovereignty.

And we must remember that with all the great painters of the earth, even though they may rightly be reckoned as famous painters, these earthy painters must have the picture first stamped in their mind, before they could possibly put it on canvas, and the picture that existed in the painter's mind was just as real as it ever will be when put on the canvass, and I doubt if any man has ever been able at anytime, to put on canvas all that existed in his mind,

with his many brushes and the varied colors at his command, no, the great artists see enough and know enough, that they know it is physically impossible to fully express all the hidden beauties of God's nature.

If it be a beautiful landscape that is being painted on the canvas, all the painter can hope to do is to merely touch the highlights, of the beautiful scenic view that lies before his eyes, the myriads of insects that lie hidden in that forest, the delicate perfume of the beautiful flowers, the intrinsic aroma of the grape bloom, the odor of the wanton earth, the song of the bird whose nest is hidden beneath the foilage out of sight of the prowler who might seek to destroy the eggs in that nest, beneath the warm body of the old Mother bird, which with her constant turning of these fertile eggs is a very definite part in the natural process of incubation, yet the artist cannot put these things on his canvas.

If the painting be that of a Mother, holding her own precious baby to her loving breast, that look, that feeling both with the Mother and her baby of love and contentment of well being, No artist can paint these living emotions on canvas.

The same is true of another kind of artist, the man that would paint a word picture, of some of the great beauties of God (I am now aware of my weakness in this present undertaking) If his word picture consists of a description of some temporal thing, he is so very limited that he can only touch the highlights of any subject, no subject on earth has ever been completely

and fully covered to the point of exhaustion, until nothing more could be said upon it, that is, no man has ever told it all about anything, no chemist has ever reached the top in Chemistry, No man has ever, nor can he ever reach perfection in any field of endeavor. The author, though he may spend tireless hours, days or even years in research and study on any given subject, he not only cannot learn all there is on any topic, but he cannot put on paper every thought that may be conceived in his own mind. Even our language is so limited that there are no words to adequately express certain emotions that mortals sometime feel with surprise and wonder, The feelings of a youth entering into womanhood or manhood, the frustration, the mystery, the uncertainty, the awakening of feelings that scare him, who could ever even vaguely put on paper in print, these feelings and emotions. All we can ever hope to do is to merely hint at these things, And that hint - no matter how ably expressed - carries no weight of meaning to anyone, save only those who have experienced for themselves these emotions.

The poet Watts says:

Thy ways Oh Lord with wise design,
are Framed upon thy throne above,
And every dark and bending line,
Meets in the center of thy Love.

With feeble light and much obscure
Poor mortals thy arraignments view,
Not knowing that the least are Sure,
And the mysterious just and true.

There is no wavering, no variable-ness, no moving at random, of the great brush that is in the hand of the only Master Painter. It is because of Him that all other painters exist. And because He is the Author and Finisher of our faith, And because of him all other authors exist; every dark and bending line, every particle of LIGHT and shadow, that go into the Picture are wrought with such accurate precision, and eternal fixedness and unchangeable certainty that there are just enough of the light, and no more than enough, and the shadow is just enough and no more than enough and is just as necessary as the light to complete the finished picture, each is essentially good in its place. and of, what men call good and evil there are in this God Painted Picture, just enough of each, and not too much or either not too little of the good and bad, of joy and sorrow of crying and laughter, of sighing and singing, of hoping and despairing of groanings that can not be uttered or songs of praise, All, all are there painted by the Master Painter, and all the hues of coloring are eternally indelible and cannot be dimmed by age, or erased by men or devils, twas from His own storehouse His own unbounded fullness, that all these colors came.

Nothing man can do, can detract a single lota from this finished picture nor can he add thereto. this picture is Eternal, has no beginning nor no ending, it existed in the eternal mind of the Only Wise God, ere it ever had shape or form on earth or in heaven, and because of that unbounded fullness

of the mind of God, All creation had its form, its time and its place. Love is the wonderful BRUSH that has spread the varying hues, and the same blessed HAND that wielded the brush to spread the light color, also spread the dark and the dismal, no other power, being or thing, had any thing to do with the spreading of either the light or the dark.

The dye is set, the unfading dye of God's eternal will and purpose in all things, The Picture is finished, in God's timeless NOW. Nothing can be added to it nor nothing taken away, It is perfect, No wonder we hear Jesus, our Blessed Saviour, saying "It is Finished" Amen and Amen, praise his blessed name forever more.

Fear not trembling saints, it is all forever settled in heaven, no harm can possibly come to you, even though your pathway be thorny and rough and your feet be bleeding with cuts and bruises, it was all by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, nothing else can ever take place, or come to pass, outside his will and outside his love. Even though your name be cast out as evil, by those you once trusted and who posed as your friends, and who have now become your enemies because you have told them the truth, men in whom you once trusted, and with whom you have taken sweet counsel together, with whom you once walked into the courts of heaven, to worship God in peace and love.

This too is a part of the picture, and it could never have been otherwise.

In this wonderful picture, we behold in the Spirit's power, The marvelous portraying of God's eternal love, for poor sinners, in the person of His only begotten Son, full of grace and truth, in this picture we behold in glowing colors, His lowly birth, Then His life of sorrow, a sin bearing victim under the heavy burden of a broken law, who himself knew no sin, being perfect man and perfect God, hence a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, yet in all his suffering, we see the wonders of love shining forth in its crowning glory, love for His Bride, poor sinners, like you and I, How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out, Job was inspired to say: *"By His spirit He hath garnished the heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked Serpent."* Job 26, 13.

Job also says Chapter 12, 16. *"With Him is strength and wisdom: The deceived and the deceiver are His."*

He is the first and only cause of all causes, we see him portrayed in all nature, even the firmaments declare His glory, Every movement of every star is declaring his eternal fixedness of all things, This is so very clearly depicted in the wonderous Picture.

While I cannot explain this great picture to another, nor can I show it to any save only those to whom it is revealed, and who are thus blessed to glimpse (as through a glass darkly) a little portion of its unbounded beauties, Yet I think I am thankful to my God, for the hope that He has revealed to me the awareness that this Picture

does exist, perfected in the TIMELESS NOW of God, IT IS FINISHED.

Sometimes I feel that it is enough, that mine eyes have been blessed to behold the eternal fullness of my God, and though in my effort to tell the good news to my brethren, it has resulted in my being cast out from their midst, and hated by those I love, Yet I seem to know, that this all is a part of the picture, yet in my human weakness I would pray, Lord let this cup pass if it be possible, Yet not my will, but Thy will be done.

Sovereign Ruler of the Skies
Ever Gracious ever wise,
All my times are in thy Hand,
All events at thy command.

Plagues and death around me fly,
Till He bids I cannot die:
Not a single Shaft shall hit,
Till the God of Love sees fit.

Today in my musings, I am brought back to the old home in Putnam County W.Va. where I spent my boyhood days, but Oh the heartaches, sorrows and suffering since those early days, while surrounded by parental care, how these precious memories stir my very soul, in remembering my father and mother and there large family of 14 children, of which I was the 7th in order of birth, And today I am the oldest living member of that family There are but 6 of us left, I am now nearing my 73rd birthday Feb. 7, 1955 many has been the unsolved myster-

ies of my life all down through the years of my pilgrimage, but the greatest of these, yea, the mysteries of all mysteries, the great wonder of all wonders, is, how could such an unclean mortal as I ever fit into that Perfect Picture, God only knows. Perhaps this may be my last article, very soon there must be, 'a last article' and my pen shall be lain aside, the struggle shall be over, But what will the end be?; Of my brethren every where, I ask your forbearance and tolerance, If you cannot believe with me, I hope there is no harm done to you who might oppose my views, I am imperfect, for which I ask your forgiveness, and tender my apologies to all, but I have no desire to make any apologies for my God, for BEING SOVEREIGN.

Yours in a good hope,
G.B. Bird

Sent to The "Signs" by
Mr. Buford R. Thornton
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PSALM 29: 3-4.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.

The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"WRATH"

Whe word wrath denotes several emotions including anger, grief, bitterness, indignation and fury. When used of God, wrath refers to His absolute opposition to sin. In no way is the anger of man compared with God's anger. Man's anger is destruction and cursed. *Gen. 49:7 "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel."* Man has no mercy of himself and his wrath is cruel. Let us not fall into the hand of man. Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord: for His mercies are great. God is a merciful God and His anger is a constant aspect of His Holy Righteousness, and man's wrath is an unholy emotion to which we should not give vent. *Luke 4:28 "and all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,"* and rose up, and thrust him out of the city.

"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Vipers, beasts, serpents, dragon. *"The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan."* John the Baptist referred to the Pharisees and Sadducees as vipers. Christ said to the scribes and Pharisees, *John 8:44 "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh*

a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it. John asked the question to a generation of vipers of which there was no answer from. Their own cursed anger which was them to flee from their own destruction to come. Men are warned today and they seek to flee the wrath of man to come. Think and think again of the nuclear power build-up today; man's wrath to come. Cursed be their anger for it was fierce and their wrath, for it was cruel.

God being a merciful God and His anger a constant aspect of His Holy Righteousness, God's wrath warns not His people to flee from God, but by His tender love and mercy compels them to Him.

Hebrews 12:5 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 12:7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not 12:8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

To those, whom John the Baptist was addressing when he said, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," were just and devout people waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Ghost was upon them. It had already been revealed unto some by the Holy Ghost that they should not

see death before they had seen the Lord's Christ. (Luke 2:25-32 Jesus presented in the Temple.) To those who were waiting by faith for the consolation of Israel and looking for redemption in Jerusalem heard the voice of one crying in the wilderness.

Words which they had long waited to hear. ***"Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*** Rom. 11:5 ***"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."*** To the remnant, the elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ that was enough to say. When John saw the generation of vipers come about him, he found it necessary to say much for they gloried in it that they were the seed of Abraham; but John knew they were of their father the devil. John was not bashful nor did he fear the face of men for he was full of the Holy Ghost and of power. The Pharisees and Sadducees were a viperous gang, they were all alike, though enemies to one another. A wicked generation is a generation of vipers and they ought to be told so. Note; many come to ordinances, who come not under the power of them.

Now to the word of exhortation and direction. ***Matthew 3:8 "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."***; we profess repentance and rely upon the doctrine and baptism of repentance. Repentance is sealed in the heart and it is there as a root, but in vain do we pretend to have it there, if there be no fruits of it. If repentance

is sealed in the heart as a root, it is there by the baptism of Christ who has baptized us with the Holy Ghost and with fire, and the fruits are sure. *John 15:5* "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bring forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. The fruit of the Spirit are what the branches are to bring forth." *Eph. 5:9* "For the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." *If we are of His kingdom, we will continue to pray to God to keep us faithful.*

Luke 16:10 "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

Col. 2:6 "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Is this not our desire to walk in the same faith and or the order of the Orthodox churches, and to continue in the faith of the Apostles? Some will answer this question, "Yes, it is my desire." This Dear Brother in Christ will be praying to God to lead him and direct his path in the strait and narrow way and he will press forward holding fast to the faith with those comfortable words of Christ; "Lo, I am with you always even until the end of the world." Christ did not say, He would be with us in all our ways. He said, *St. John 12:26* "If any man serve me let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my father honor."

God of Heaven and of earth gave the oracles of faith to the elect according

to the foreknowledge of God preserved in Christ. The first and primary ordinance of the Church is the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire, by our Lord and Saviour; Jesus Christ. *Matthew 3:11* "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

The baptism He performs with the Holy Ghost and with fire is in union with Him sharing in His death, burial and resurrection. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, in no way, can be separated from the born again child. The new birth and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire are united in one in Christ.

The baptism of water unto repentance is a symbol of Christ's baptism into the militant church here on earth and is the first ordinance of the militant church along with the Lord's Supper. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, leaving us an example. *1 Peter 2:21* "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps." an example pertaining to His kingdom in His words, things which shall be, things which must be and things which should be. Christ bore the sins of all His people expiated them by His death upon the cross and no man can depend safely upon Christ as having his sins and expiated his guilt, till he dies unto sin and lives unto righteousness. *1 Peter 2:25* "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls." Not only is He supreme in examples, but supreme in all Holi-

ness and righteousness, having taught His disciples the eight characters of blessed people and plainly in His own words set forth the fact concerning adultery. Matthew 5:32 and 19:8-9 There would be great comfort to the militant churches and members to read these scriptures along with the third chapter of First Timothy and repent. The letter to the angel of the church in Thyatira said, *Rev. 2:18 "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication."* There are those whom do say, I have read these scriptures many times, but my conscience will not permit me to comply with them. Brethren, please, I beg you; the conscience is not the final appeal. The final appeal is God and not man's conscience. Due to the persistence of sin, a man's conscience can become seared or hardened; for this reason the conscience can not be our guide. By the Grace of God, we are given blessings which are rich and divine, inspired scriptures which are true. To hold fast to the scriptures is not an injustice to any person but love and kindness to the members. It is a divine biblical right, given by the Grace of God, to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. To do so, is not taking anything away from any person or depriving them of spiritual blessings. When we, church members, including deacons or ministers, step outside the inspired scriptures to our conscience, we can and must feel assured that five of the letters in Revelations chapters two and three are applied to us. Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardus and the Loodiceans.

He who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ said, *Rev. 3:19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent. 3:20 "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."* Note: just to hear the voice is not good enough, but the door must also be opened. The five foolish virgins heard the voice but the door was not opened. All ten virgins had everything in common, including the grace, love or charity, of God, except oil, which represents faith.

There is a great difference between Heavenly spiritual blessings and blessings from Heaven. The children of Israel received blessings from Heaven while in the wilderness. The blessings they received were to sustain the natural body and to provide them with strength to continue on to the promise land which flows with milk and honey. Bread, milk, butter, honey and wine are the nourishments to the hungry soul, spiritual food from Heaven and Heavenly food to the eight characters of blessed people. The natural food we receive each day is no doubt food from Heaven and for this food and all other natural and spiritual blessings, we are to offer thanks and pray to God to give us hearts to be thankful unto Him. If we receive the Heavenly blessings, we must follow Him, not enticing words of man's wisdom or man's conscience with cruel wrath. *Matthew 8:12-13 "There are many come and sit down with*

Abram, Issac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven and the children of the Kingdom are cast out into outer darkness; there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.” The kingdom of Heaven, (the church), is first above all things on earth and we must seek first the kingdom. To those who seek first the kingdom in faith, will of no doubt be scourged, not only by some outside the church, but even of some false professors in the church, who will seek after their own conscience and believe. The church is first above our everyday work, friends, our children our husband or wife. Christ plainly set this forth in *Luke 12:53* ***“The Father shall be divided against the Son and the Son against the Father, and the Mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; the Mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”*** Seek ye first the kingdom, and when people say, regardless of who they are, or how close they may be to you, “He loves the church of Christ, Primitive faith and order more than he loves me,” that’s a blessing to you.

To the true professor in faith, those who by the Grace of God, through faith, possess the eight characters of blessed people, are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Heavenly places and will not fall down to worship any other. A steadfast faith in Christ will produce a steadfast faithfulness to Christ. Our own close kin will tell us we must give in a little here and there when even kings must own that when

their commands are contrary to the commands of Christ, that it is Christ to be obeyed and not them. Daniel chapter 3, Matthew chapters 4 and 27, and Acts chapter 25.

We, the Church of Christ, Primitive faith and order, would not deny any person, any organization or group of people the right to worship as his or her conscience may dictate to them, nor would we deny them to worship any gods they may choose, nor would we deny them the right not to worship, or even to say, there is no God. It is a constitutional right of this United States of America. Let us pray, hope and try that this right will remain for it is the only way this nation can stand as a nation. However, there is a great difference between a constitutional right and a divine biblical right. The divine right and the right to worship as the conscience might dictate was made manifest in Cain and Abel. By the Grace of God, Abel was given the divine Grace of faith to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. By the power of God, the right of the conscience was given to both Cain and Abel. So by faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. At the season and time to the purpose of God according to the election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, began the most brutal war that has ever been or will be upon the earth, when Cain slew his brother Abel. Cain, who was of that wicked one, slew his brother because his own works were evil and Abel’s Righteous. ***1 John 3:12 “Cain who was of that wicked one and slew his brother.***

And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous. "Cursed be his anger for it was fierce, his wrath for it was cruel. For now the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. The voice, the blood and the cry was made manifest to man, of the first sons of Adam. The voice, the blood and the cry was in Egypt, in the wilderness and on the cross. Christ Himself, the only offering acceptable unto God for the sins of His people whom were chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon the flesh and the flesh withereth, but the word of our God shall stand forever. So above all, take the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the darts of the wicked. ***Hebrews 11:4 "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts and by it, he being dead yet speaketh."*** At the time Abel made the offering, we have no record of the word faith. Genesis 4:2 plainly sets forth the fact that by the Grace of God, Abel was given faith before the offering. ***"Abel was a keeper of Sheep."*** God gave Abel repentance and faith in the promised seed and instructed him in the mystery of sacrificing. Faith was made manifest in Abel, a saint, along with the first example of religion. By the Grace of God, through the sanctification of the Spirit, Abel was made acceptable unto God first and then by faith, the offering was more

excellent unto God. Abel lived by faith and died for it. This is one of the first instances, that is upon record, of fallen man going in to worship God. God is a merciful God and communication between man and God was not void due to the fall of man. The strait gate and narrow way was opened to God's elect, according to the election of Grace, when Christ stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ***Matthew 7:14 "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."*** Thanks be to God, by the Grace of God, there are a few who do. The Grace of faith here mentioned is vastly different from the false and feigned faith of the hypocrite of fruitless faith of the false professor. It is the faith of God's elect, wrought by the spirit of God in effectual calling. Faith is a precious grace and not only, as it is very uncommon, very scarce. Even in the visible church a very small number of true believers, among a great multitude of visible professors, have the true grace of faith. To those who do, it is most precious. The just live by faith, a truly divine spiritual life. Faith procures all the necessary supports and comforts of this excellent life. ***Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*** Here we are given a definition or description of the grace of faith in two parts. Faith and hope go together, and the same things that are the object of our hope are the objects of our faith. (1) It is firm that God will perform all that He has promised to us in Christ to the

elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit. The divine promise is firmly embedded in the soul and the things which are included in the promise are fruits of the spirit which produce the substance of things hoped for, by the first fruits and the foretastes of them. The true believers in the exercise of faith are filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Christ dwells in the soul by grace through faith. (2) The evidence of things not seen. Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things that cannot be discerned by the eye of the body. Faith is the firm assent of the soul to the divine revelation and every part of it and set to its seal that God is true. It is an approbation of all that God has revealed as holy, just and good. It keeps the soul suitable for affection and endeavors and serves the true believer instead of sight and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body. Faith reflects honor upon all those who have lived by it.

Faith is not a new invention. The Grace of faith, by the Grace of God, has been planted in the soul of God's elect since the covenant of grace. The first best men that ever were in the world were believers in the true living God. They were an honour to the faith and the faith an honour to them. It put them upon doing the things that were of good report and God has taken care that a record shall be kept and report made of the great things they did in the strength of His grace.

Faith goes to Christ and buys the wine and milk, which are the proper

nourishment of the new inward man. *Isa. 55:1 "Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters and he that hath no money, and without price."* Faith buys and brings home the tried gold, the heavenly treasure that enriches, faith takes and puts on the white raiment, the royal robe that clothe and adorn. *Rev. 3:18 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see."* Faith unites the weak believer to Christ as readily as it does the strong one and purifies the heart of one as truly as another. And every sincere believer is by faith justified in the sight of God. The righteousness and obedience of Christ gives faith all its values and preciousness and the righteousness of such a person cannot but be of infinite value to those who by faith receive faith. (Faith for faith) Jesus Christ is God, yea our God. He is truly God an infinite being, who has wrought out this righteousness and therefore it must be of infinite value.

Rev. 1:11 "What thou seest, write in a book and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia." Let us hold in view that the letters were to the visible churches made up of visible people and set up by the apostles shortly after the day of pentecost. There were two of these Churches that Christ did not say He found fault or He had something against. These two churches are Smyrna and

Phelodelphia. Christ said to the Smyrnachurch *"Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."* Christ said unto the Church of Phelodelphia, *"Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."*

I will therefore that men pray everywhere lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Abstain from all appearance of evil. Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it."

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Elder Benard Moon

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1999

Gray & Clovis Hall, AL	\$7.00
Mrs. Lina Willis, Sr., NC	2.00
W.H. Norman, NC	7.00
James L. Shelor, VA	5.00
Loy P. Rodgers, AR	7.00
Mrs. Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
William Vick, TN	10.00
Richard Lawless, WV	2.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA	2.00
A Friend	75.00
Wallace Harvey, WV	10.00

PSALM 100.

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

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

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

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

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

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF SIS. OCIE SPENCER BOOTHE



With a mixture of sadness and fondness we recently bid our earthly farewell to our dear sister and, we feel, a precious saint of God, Ocie Spencer Boothe.

Sis. Boothe was born in rural Patrick County, Virginia on Dec. 2, 1896. She was a daughter of the late James Peter Spencer and his wife, Sis. Sarah Ann "Fanny" Adams Spencer, and was also the granddaughter of a prominent

Patrick County minister, Elder Joshua Adams.

On Sep. 1, 1912 she was united in marriage to Thomas Green Boothe, who preceded her in death on July 13, 1970. To their union of nearly 58 years were born five children: two sons, Edgar and Thomas Boothe; and three daughters, whose married names are, Mrs. Gordon (Nora) Walker, Mrs. Frank (Ethel) Nolen and Mrs. Frank (Mary) Massey. It was Sis. Boothe's lot in life to suffer the loss of her husband, all of her brothers and sisters, both of her sons and her eldest daughter, while she lived.

Like her mother before her, Sis. Ocie spent the greater portion of her life going among and loving the Old Primitive Baptists. She united with Goblintown Church by the relation of her experience during the 3rd weekend in April, 1953 and was baptized the following 3rd Sunday. For the balance of her long earthly life she dwelled among us as a loyal, faithful and devoted member of the church she loved so well.

Since she was unable to drive, she always had to rely on others for conveyance. Following the death of Mr. Boothe, she was frequently unable to attend the meetings for this reason. In her last years it was the joy and pleasure of my wife and me to meet her at the Nursing Home at Stuart and take her to church at various times.

The ravages of time and advancing age took their toll on this dear sister's earthly house. Following a serious decline extending over several months, she died on June 1, 1999 at the age of

102. At her request, her funeral service was conducted at the Moody Funeral Home Chapel in Stuart by her last pastor, Elder John Wingfield after which her mortal body was laid to rest in the Boothe Family Cemetery, close by her long-time home place. In addition to her two remaining daughters, she was survived by 12 grand-children and 29 great-grandchildren.

We believe Sis. Boothe died the death of the righteous and sleeps the peaceful sleep of the redeemed, and her body lies waiting for the second coming of the Lord from Heaven. The church agreed to prepare three copies of this memorial record: one for inclusion in the church records, one to be given to her family and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Goblintown Church in conference, the 19th day of June, 1999.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Sis. Judy Pendleton, Clerk pro tem

SISTER JOSIE SIMPKINS HOLLANDSWORTH

In memory of our dear sister who passed away on April 28, 1999. She was born March 30, 1915, making her stay on earth 84 years and one month.

Survivors are: husband, Martin Hollandsworth

Daughters and sons-in-law: Bonnie and Raymond Howell

Lucille and Tait McCarey

Judy Hylton
 Sons and Daughters-in law:
 Kenneth and Neligene Hollands-
 worth

Jerry and Romana Hollandsworth
 26 Grandchildren
 24 Great grandchildren

She has been a member of Old Union Primitive Baptist Church for 44 years. She loved her church and had the brethren visit in her home as long as she was able. We will miss her but have been reconciled to God's will.

Services were held at Mayberry's Chapel at 2:00 Sat. May 1st. by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. Interment at Captain George Quesenberry Cemetery.

Written by request at our last business meeting by the church.

Elder Terry Moderator
 Dorcie Semones—Clerk

SISTER NELLIE JOHNSON RAY

It is with much sorrow and sadness that I write this obituary of our dear sister in Christ, Nellie Johnson Ray, 1400 Fairview Street, Greensboro, North Carolina. She passed away on May 28, 1999 at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, North Carolina at the age of 87.

Sister Nell was born on February 16, 1912 in Guilford County, North Carolina. She was one of five children born to Rodrick and Nora Johnson and was the last surviving member of her family.

She was married to Julian L. Ray on February 8, 1930 and they had a long life together totaling 69 years and 4 months. They didn't have any children of their own but Brother Ray told me that his brother's wife died and left three children. He and sister Nell took his brother's little girl, Janet Ray, into their home when she was 6 1/2 years old and raised her until she was 18 years old. Although she was their niece, they loved her as if she was their own.

Sister Nell joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on December 10, 1972. She loved her church and her church family and was a strong believer of Salvation by Grace. She was a kind and caring person and attended her church meetings regularly.

A graveside funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery on May 31, 1999 by her pastor Elder Kenneth R. Key. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

She is survived by her husband Brother Julian L. Ray and her niece Janet Ray Rumley. May God bless and reconcile both of them to their loss.

Written by request of Dan River Church.

Connie M. Page
 September 1999

MATTHEW 5: 7-8.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

*How pleasant, how divinely fair,
O Lord of Hosts, thy dwellings are!
With long desire my spirit faints
To meet th' assemblies of thy saints.*

*My flesh would rest in thine abode,
My panting heart cries out for God;
My God! my King! why should I be
So far from all my joys and thee!*

*The sparrow chooses where to rest,
And for her young provides her nest;
But will my God to sparrows grant
That pleasure which his children
want?*

*Blest are the souls that find a place
Within the temple of thy grace;
There they behold thy gentler rays,
And seek thy face, and learn thy
praise.*

*Cheerful they walk with growing
strength,
Till all shall meet in heaven at
length;
Till all before thy face appear,
And join in nobler worship there.*

Watts.

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EDITORIAL

THE GREAT
MYSTERY OF GODLINESS



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

the gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

A mystery, is something that is unknown; something that cannot be explained, or understood, with natural reasoning or rationale. It defies

all of the laws of nature and the understanding of the natural mind and cannot be searched out or explained with the wisdom of this world. If it can be understood or detected by the natural intelligence, using the laws of nature or human reasoning, then it may be a puzzle, but not a mystery. Man, in nature can only use natural wisdom and understanding, because that is all of the faculties that he has at his disposal; and since godliness is a mystery, using these parameters, it will never be understood, in reality, by man in nature. The only way that this mystery can be perceived is by the revelation of God, the author of the mystery, for he said that he would not give his glory unto another, and if man could solve the mystery with his wisdom then he could share in the glory of it. The mystery of godliness is something beyond the comprehension of the finite mind of man, it cannot be explained to the man in nature because there is no common basis from which you can start to compare the natural with the spiritual. The natural laws do not apply, and that is all that man is familiar with in the natural, physical world in which he dwells. There must, of necessity be a mediator; one which is familiar with both the natural and the spiritual world for any sense of understanding to be communicated between the different realms; and there was only one man, born of a woman that has this ability, and that is Jesus who is thoroughly familiar with both realms and has the power to reveal the secrets of the mystery to those that are born of God.

The apostle Paul said. (Eph Chap 3, vs 7-8-9) ***"Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ: And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:"*** The apostle Paul's commission was to go forth, from the day that Jesus appeared unto him, declaring the wisdom of God which was a mystery to the natural mind, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world was formed. He was to go forth preaching Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God, unto the household of faith. His commission was received from Christ, when he met him on the road to Damascus, as follows. and there was left no room for doubt as to what that commission was, (Acts Chap 26, vs 16-17-18) ***"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 those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, an inheritance***

among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." I would say that this was ample authority for the apostle Paul to go forth declaring the gospel and making men see, and understand the fellowship of the mystery of godliness, and to make the saints of God understand what has happened to them in the new birth. The mystery of godliness is not governed by the laws of nature; it defies these laws and the oppositions of science falsely so called, only those who have been born of the Spirit can fellowship this mystery, and that is because they have been raised above the realms of this world; their feet have been placed upon that rock of ages and the Lord hath put a new song in their heart and established their goings. When this is true, the preaching of the apostle Paul, was a witness to their own experience and they have fellowship in the doctrine. These are those who have been blessed with eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand the mystery and they were not born with these attributes from their mother's womb; these are perceived by faith which is the gift of God.

(Isa. Chap 55, vs 8-9) God said by the mouth of the prophet, ***"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your 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."*** so until man can attain unto that high and lofty habitation of God in the new birth, he cannot understand the ways and thoughts of God; for man could never attain to this plateau of their own

volition. The natural man can sit down here in his natural realm of understanding, comparing natural things with natural things, debating with equally ignorant and unlearned men as regarding godliness, and declare that he knows and understands the mystery of godliness, but he does not. The apostle Paul declared, *(1 Cor Chap 1 vs 9) "But as 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."* This is referring to the man in nature, with a heart of flesh, he has a vain and conceited imagination of himself and his accomplishments and his comprehension of spiritual matters; believing that he is in control of the world and his own destiny. Believing something doesn't make it so, however, and with all of this pride and loud boasting, he shall never solve the mystery of godliness, now or in the future, with his very limited knowledge of the natural realm and with no knowledge of the spiritual realm. It is, and always will remain a mystery until revealed to them by the spirit of God, and the apostle Paul went on to say, *(vs 10) but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit.*

Man, in nature can speculate, theorize, and wonder, but he cannot know the secret of the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, regardless of the amount of his wisdom and knowledge in earthly matters, *(1 Cor Chap 2, vs 14) "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they*

are spiritually discerned." Man may obtain a Doctorate of Divinity Degree, as they like to boast in spiritual matters, from man, but that does not give him any knowledge of godliness. Man can only teach the things of man and not the things of God; as Paul goes on to say in *(vs, 10) "But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."* The only school that can confer any degree in spiritual matters is the school of revelation and that is not available to man upon application. The ones upon whom this knowledge is bestowed, are those that were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to this end; and not because of any earnest searching or study, regardless of how sincere, determined or dedicated that their effort may be, to obtain this knowledge.

Esau, sought repentance with bitter tears but it did not obtain the birthright that he desired; for the lot was already cast into the lap and the whole disposing thereof was, and still is, of the Lord. This is true of all men in nature; as Jacob was the lot of the inheritance of the Lord, so Esau is the lot and the inheritance of the devil. *(1 Peter Chap 2, vs 7-8) "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: where-unto also they were appointed."* These things are decreed

by the sovereign and infallible will of God, who does all things well, they are permanent and everlasting: there is no way that man can improve upon or diminish their knowledge of godliness. He may forget or stray from the outward apparent manifestation of this knowledge, but it is there awaiting the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, if indeed they have ever had it, as Elihu said, (*Job Chap 32, vs 8*) "***But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.***" and this, giving a spiritual understanding, applies to the original and to each subsequent revelation that man receives of the marvelous knowledge of the mysteries of God.

Age cannot attain to it, and youth cannot refuse it, as Jeremiah testifies, (*Jer Chap 1 vs 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 out of the womb I sanctified thee and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.***" This degree of understanding of spiritual matters was bestowed, on this occasion, even before the person was born into the realm of nature, and the acceptance of it was not optional. Jeremiah's response to this statement was, "***Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am but a child.***" but the Lord said unto him, "***say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.***" This knowledge is not given to the Lord's people without a purpose, but always for a specific reason and that reason is known only

by God. In the case of Jeremiah, the apostle Paul and others it was to preach the gospel, but all of God's children receive this heavenly calling or anointing sovereignly, as did Jeremiah and Paul. and it is not the results of anything that is required of them, to meet the qualifications of the calling, or to understand the mystery. All of the qualifications and understanding of spiritual things are given to them in the calling, from God, and they are always sufficient for the task that is required.

Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, not to the world as a whole, but to those whom he came to seek and to save. To one he was the man Jesus, and to the elect, he was the Messiah of God. God, by the mouth of the prophets, had declared the coming of the Messiah, since the days of Moses, and the Jews had been looking for him but, even then, they did not believe on him whom God sent unto them. (*John 1, vs 11-12-13*) "***He came to his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.***" They must be born again, as Jesus told Nicodemus, before they can believe on him whom God hath sent. Although they, the Jews, had the word of prophecy, (*Rom. Chap 9, vs 5*) "***Whose are the fathers and of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen***" they could not believe the ac-

tual manifestation of the promise, when it was fulfilled before their eyes. They could not perceive the truth because no man can say, or know, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost and they, as a nation, had not been blessed with this knowledge. Jesus said, while here on earth, (*John Chap 7 vs 38-39*) "**He that believeth on me, as the scripture 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)**". Jesus's coming into the world, being born of a virgin, fulfilling prophecy to a jot and a tittle, dying in the room and stead of the elect and coming forth conqueror over death, hell and the grave are all manifestations of God, in the flesh, as referred to in the above scripture and they are all indeed mysteries when viewed with the natural mind.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was justified in the spirit. Only a perfect sacrifice was acceptable for the sins of the of the elect, and since man in his fallen state could not fill this requirement, it took the Holy Child Jesus, for whom the Father had prepared a body, without sin, and given the spirit, without measure, to fulfil this demand. Jesus, was verily God, and verily man, and came down to do his Father's will, and the Father's will was that all that he had given unto him in the annals of eternity would be sanctified in him without the loss of one. This required a perfection that man, in nature, does not possess; and it was

done in a way that cannot be comprehended by the mind of the natural man and can only be understood when revealed by the spirit of God unto those for whom the sacrifice was made.

Just before Jesus went to the cross, in his prayer unto the Father, he said, (*John Chap 17, vs 4-5*) "**I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, Oh Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.**" Therefore, Jesus, being verily God, and having the testimony that God was well pleased with his work, how is it that anyone can even pose the question as to whether all of the saints of God will be justified before God, in the final day. How can any suggest that the atonement was for all, and yet spend their vast resources of time and money, here in this time world, to insure the fact that the work of the infallible God is successful. Where is their, so called, faith? surely, they are as the Israelites who reached forth to steady the ark when it was being returned to the nation of Israel, after being in the hands of the Philistines for years, evidently believing that God could not take of the situation at hand. God's consideration of like people in this day is as it was in that day. How can anyone believe there will be a judgement made of those, for whom Christ died, in the final day? Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost and as he stated in the above scripture, and as he said, (*John Chap 17, vs 4*) "**I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work**

that thou gavest me to do.", now did he mean what he said, or not?

(Rev Chap 20, vs 12) "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." This scripture has been discussed by many, who believe that this is the great white throne judgement of all of the peoples of the earth when the determination of the destiny of all men will be made. As I understand it, there is no judgement, at that time, of the Lord's people because they have been judged righteous before God before time began, and manifestly so in Christ's coming into the world to die in their room and stead; if there is still a judgement to be made of them, then why all of the suffering and sacrifice that Christ did, was it not sufficient for their sins? Were they not already atoned for and sent into the land of forgetfulness, by his death? This scripture says, the dead, shall stand before God and be judged out of the books according to their works; well this does not include God's children because they are not dead, as Jesus told Martha, when she questioned him about the resurrection and the fact that Lazarus would rise in the resurrection, *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?"* Therefore the Lord's people are not

among the dead that shall stand before God, on this occasion to be judged out of the books, because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ. The books, are the books of the law by which all who are judged are judged per the demands of the law, according to their works, and all shall be found wanting and be cast into the lake of fire. The law maketh none righteous, but rather is to measure their failure to keep those commandments which were placed upon them.

The book of life, the other book, is the record of all who were chosen, in Christ, before the world began, and judgement has already passed over them as it did the Israelites when the destroyer went through the land of Egypt, in the day of their deliverance. All who did not have the blood of the lamb on the lintel and the door post of their homes, the first born died, but when God saw the blood, the destroyer, or judgement, passed over that house; In like manner, all whose names are written in the book of life do not enter into that day of judgement, it has no power over them because they are not dead, they are alive in Christ, and the righteousness of Christ is their sanctification and their deliverance.

Their justification before God is, and has ever been as sure as the fact that there will be a heaven for them to inhabit. Heaven is the place that Jesus went to prepare for those whom he loved, those who were given him in that covenant of promise before the foundation of the world, and his promise was that, *(John Chap 14, vs 3) "And if I go and prepare a place for*

you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This was a promise that was made unto his apostles and those disciples who were with him just before his crucifixion, and is applicable to all who are faithful unto the end, but all men do not have faith.

This may not please men in the flesh, but nevertheless, it is the plan of salvation that is set forth in the scriptures, and it is the only one that will forever assure the elect of their inheritance; those who were sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. They are called from following the ways of the world and made to seek that strait and narrow way that leads to life everlasting, that way described in, ***(Job Chap 28, vs 7) "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen."*** They have been given to know that this is the only way, a way that is not visible to the natural man; as Jesus said, ***"I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*** There was an occasion, when Jesus was preaching to the multitudes and said, ***(John Chap 6 vs 65) "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."*** and from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him, then Jesus asked the twelve, ***"will ye also go away"*** and the apostles answered unto whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Those who went back were those who

could not accept the truth, because to acknowledge the truth, would manifest that they were not of the flock that Jesus came to call unto himself. They were not following him because they believed the power of the miracles, but, because they did eat of the loaves and were filled, they were looking for what they benefited from the miracles, and not the mystery of the miracles.

This truth finds the same reception in the hearts and minds of the natural men today, they just cannot accept a doctrine that does not include them, as they are in nature; and a doctrine that is based on election by a just and holy God, before time began, and is but made manifest in time, independent of their participation in the process, is contrary to their natural reasoning. This has ever been true, in all ages of time, because man feels that he must share in the glory of the salvation of the saints, and this they readily admit; even as, Moses, in his final address to the children of Israel, said just before he died, he made this same distinction between Jacob, representing the Lord's portion, and Jeshurim and his followers who rebelled against God, when he said, ***(Deut Chap 32 vs 31) "For their rock is not as our Rock even our enemies themselves being judges."*** Those who have not been given to see the mystery, cannot accept the truth, they hate it because they do not understand it. It is really strange that there should be so much animosity towards the Lord's people, by so many, when there are so few. The Lord's people do not have any feeling of hatred toward the world, because they believe the

way that they do, for the Lord's people believe that all are just where they were designed to be in the master plan of God and they have no desire to judge or cast stones. They realize and freely admit, that there but by the grace of God would they be. Evidently there is something that the man in nature sees and acknowledges instinctively, without realizing it, and does not understand. Man, in nature hates and fears that which he does not understand and over which he has no control, and is lashing out at that which he cannot understand.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was seen of angels, and was ministered to by them on several occasions; they gave witness to his advent into the world when he was born of the virgin Mary, and when he was tempted of the devil; an angel strengthened him after the devil left him. The angels are available to him at all times, for he told the disciples when he was to be delivered to the mob, (*Math Chap 26, vs 53-54*) "*Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be.*" They were ever bearing witness to the fact that this work was truly of God, and are ever watching over the saints of God in their journey here in time. Jesus said, speaking of his sheep as little children, (*Math Chap 10 vs 10*) "*Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in*

heaven." Angels are very much involved in the salvation of the children of God and this is but another mystery which will be known only when time is no more and the saints are all gathered together in that world toward which they press throughout this life.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, was, is, and will ever be, preached unto the Gentiles and believed on in the world, by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Jesus spoke in parables unto the multitudes, that seeing, the world might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand, as he said; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and that he should heal them. The reason that he spoke to them in parables was to make manifest the sheep, who had been given eyes to see and ears to hear, from the goats who were not given the eyes and ears of faith, as he told his disciples, but blessed are your eyes for they see; and your ears for they hear. He was not manifested unto the world at large, but to those who were given him in that covenant arrangement, before the world was formed. When Jesus told them of the Spirit of truth that would come unto them, (*John Chap 14, vs 22*) "*Judas said unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?*" and this is how it is; his sheep are given eyes to see and ears to hear the comforter which Jesus said that he would send unto them, because he went unto his Father

and the others were not. Jesus said, *(John Chap 11, vs 27-28-29)* "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of my Father's hand." To the others he said, "Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep." Paul said, *(Heb Chap 4, vs 2)* "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." The man in nature will say that they can understand the scriptures as well as anyone else, but they cannot, according to those very same scriptures which they claim to understand, for as Paul said, *(1 Cor Chap 1, vs 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." One of the gifts of the spirit, to the children of God, is the discerning of the Spirit and without this gift they will never come to know Jesus, or to understand the mystery of godliness, regardless of their sincerity, effort or determination.

Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, is received up into glory. *(John Chap 17, vs 1)* "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is now come; glorify thy Son. that thy Son may also glorify thee:" The hour had indeed come to which all things were focused, the fulfilling of all prophecy and the consumation of all promises.

(Amos Chap 9, vs 13) "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt." Amos is referring to the time when the beginning and the end of all things shall be bought together in just a moment of time, as Jesus prayed, "the hour is now come." He is the salvation of all of the saints of God, and although no one understands fully the mystery surrounding all of these things now, they will when he comes to gather his jewels unto himself and there will be none of those names missing, which were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. Understanding the mystery is not required, in fact, the most brilliant mind of men could not understand the mysteries of God in their fullness; but the chosen generation receives a little here, and a little there along the journey of life that keeps them following along in the footsteps of the flock.

Jesus's prayer unto his Father, *(John Chap 17, vs 5)* "And now, O Father glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." The spotless Lamb of God who was with the Father in Zion, the perfection of beauty, before the world was formed, assumed the likeness of sinful flesh; came down into this world of sin and sorrow, took upon himself the sins of the Lord's portion, died the ignominious death on the cross, rose triumphant over death, hell and the

grave and ascended back to the glory that he had with the Father before the heavens and earth were formed. The glory which Jesus will share with the Father then will be even more magnificent than before because it will be complete. On the prior occasion, the suffering lie ahead and the children were lost in sin, now they will be sanctified and glorified and all be together forever, a triumphant Savior, the redeemed of the Lord, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, never to part. No more tears, no more sorrow, all one eternal land of rest, where praise, love, peace and harmony will reign throughout the endless ages.

The mystery here now is that man was even considered, by God, for these glorious blessings in the first place, as David questioned, (*Psa 8, vs 5*) *"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"* There is no explanation of this marvelous mystery, other than that it was the Father's good pleasure to give unto the heirs of promise, the kingdom that he had prepared for them. The reasons cannot be fathomed by the natural mind; man can only rejoice with joy, beyond any description, when they feel to have been given a portion among those who are blessed with the earnest of the inheritance, here in time, and are made to look forward to receiving the fullness of that inheritance in the world to come. They are blessed to look forward, in hope, to that time when they will be brought, in the unity of faith, and of the perfect knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Then the mystery will be ended, they will know as they are known, will see and understand the reasons for their trial of faith, which they experienced in this life, and praise God for bringing them into that safe haven, where there will be no more grief, no more sorrow and no more doubts and fears. All will be love, joy and peace and they will worship and praise him in a manner that they could never do while clothed with these bodies of flesh, which are their earthly garments. O' glorious, glorious, happy, happy day; This is the day the Lord hath made, for them that love his appearing, let us, if we be so blessed, rejoice and be glad as we live out our earthly days looking forward, in earnest expectation, to the experiencing and the understanding of the fullness of the grand and glorious mystery of godliness.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10: 27, 28.

Sheep are peculiar creatures, being very dependent and unable to provide for themselves.

Except for the shepherd's care the sheep would soon perish. Is this not our case? Our spiritual needs are nu-

merous and pressing, yet we cannot supply any of them. We are traveling through a wilderness that yields us neither spiritual food nor water. Unless our spiritual bread drops down from heaven and our water flows out of the rock, we would soon be consumed. If Christ were not our Shepherd, we would fall prey to Satan. We are sinful creatures and if we are his sheep, we shall feel it to be a great display of Christ's love and mercy toward us in coming down to this sin cursed world to bleed, suffer, and die for poor unworthy sinners.

"My sheep," says Christ. How come the sheep to be Christ's? They are his because the Father chose them in Christ out of the rest of mankind before the world was. They were given to Christ Jesus as his bride. He, according to the council of His own free will, and according to His own good pleasure, made choice individually of certain persons. For to Him belonged the sovereign prerogative that he might have mercy on whom he would have mercy. "My sheep." Their names were written in his book of life, so they became his portion and heritage. Christ often speaks of them in this way: "As many as thou hast given me" "Thou hast given them me." As a gift, the Father committed them into Christ's hands. Thus they became a token of the Father's love to his only begotten Son, separating them from among all mankind as a love gift to his Son.

"My sheep," says Christ. They are his for in addition to the gift, he has bought them with a price. They had sold themselves for nought; but he has

redeemed them, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with his precious blood. There is not one sheep of all his flocks but what he can see the mark of his blood on him. In the face of every saint the Saviour sees, as in a glass, the memorial of his bloody sweat in Gethsemane, and his agonies on the cross. So you see, "You are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." Will Christ suffer those whom he has shed his precious blood for, to perish? If Christ has suffered for us, bought us with his blood, will he suffer our souls to be cast into the pit? If so, where has justice gone that the substitute should bear our guilt, and we should bear it too? And where is mercy that God should execute twice the punishment for one offense? No, my dear beloved ones, He will not suffer any, no not one to perish for whom he died. He will keep them "and they shall never perish." Oh, it is a great feeling when a poor hell deserving wretched sinner finds in his heart a hope that he is numbered with those given by God the Father into the hands of the Redeemer, the Mediator and King of grace; and once placed there, it is an unalterable act. No power can change or undo the purpose of the great God of heaven.

"I am the good shepherd." How good? Sufficiently good to draw a former sinful rebel into the enjoyment of His love and mercy, to supply our ever needs, to stoop down and gather up a weak lamb to His bosom, and to protect his from the hands of Satan. *"Our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep."* Heb. 13:20. So great as to present to His heavenly

Father every member of His flock in a spotless condition, having atoned for them, and having cleansed them from sins, in His own precious blood.

"And he said: Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." John 6:65. God's sheep are not only made conscious of their fallen state, but are made willing to return. ***"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ps. 110:3.*** Are we so stubborn that we need grace to make us willing to return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls? Yes, dear ones, we are. We cannot of ourselves return. ***"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." 1 Peter 2:25.***

What a mercy it is when the sheep are manifestly brought up out of the ruins of the Adam fall. What a great death that fall was: it was not as many seem to think, losing the sight of one eye, the hearing of one ear, the heart becoming a little hard, a little stumble or slip; but my friends, it was a complete fall, complete blindness, a complete hardness of the heart, it was a complete, total death in trespasses and sins, a complete separation from all spiritual life. ***"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." Rom. 5:12.*** But what a mercy it is to have and feel the life giving operation of the Holy Spirit, to have our eyes opened, to have our ears circumcised, to be given a heart of flesh, so as to hear the voice of the Son of God in His sweet gospel.

Yea, though we are "wandering sheep" wandering is the outcome of our fallen state; but to know it, to feel it, to grieve over it, and looking up to Jesus and crying with a loud voice, "Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner" is a great favor in disguise.

The Lord makes manifest what His power can do, when he brings forth His own sheep from an ungodly world, when they are called out of the spots and places in which they have been scattered in their unregeneracy. He will then display the power of His divine grace in separating them from an ungodly world. He separates his sheep for himself. The Lord leads His people in paths that they have not known. He leads them into His own fold; therefore they become a separate people. Separate in their desires, in their needs, in their pursuits. ***"Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things; and I will receive you." II Cor. 6:27.*** It is indeed a great blessing when the sheep are drawn to follow Him. They will not be deceived in following a stranger very far, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"They hear my voice." The Lord makes a contrast between the elect and the unelect. The Lord's elect will hear the voice of the Son of God His sheep know His voice because a sovereign God imparts to them the capacity to hear, because ***"The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made both of them." Prov. 20:11.*** Oh, what peace and joy there is in our hearts when the Lord speaks to us in

His word. How sweet His voice sounds to a law convicted sinner as we know ourselves to be, when He speaks peace and forgiveness to our souls. How comforting when we are blessed with an inward feeling, divine testimony in our hearts, when we hear Him say, ***"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled"*** *Matt. 5:6*. To hear and feel the voice of Christ proclaiming mercy and pardon to our souls is a taste of heaven here upon earth. ***"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."*** *Isa. 1:18*, Each of the sheep belonging to the great Shepherd will hear when the irresistible call comes to them just as Lazarus heard while in the grave when Christ called to him to come forth.

"And they follow me." When many that were walking with Jesus turned back, Jesus asked the twelve "will ye also go away?" They said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Feeling our own inabilities and barrenness, where is there to go? The world cannot help us, man cannot help us. The Lord alone is our refuge. ***"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*** *Matt 11:28*. Let us go to Him in prayer. May He give us faith to lay hold of His precious promises, and feel them in our hearts and souls to be ours. May God bless us by His grace to follow Him, for He says, ***"My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."*** *II Cor. 12:9*. ***"Faith which worketh by love."*** *Gal. 5:6*. is

the mark of Christ's sheep, and it is of true believers that He speaks when He says, "I give unto them eternal life."

"I give unto them eternal life." There is an implication, therefore that they had lost eternal life, not in the mind and purpose of God; but by their fall in Adam and also by actual sin. This eternal life comes to every elect as a matter of gift. He did not possess it when he first entered into the world. Being born of a corrupt tree, they were born to die. Eternal life is not a product of the soil of humanity: it is a gift. Nor is it bestowed as a reward of service done. The term "gift" shuts out all idea of debt or of reward. We were spiritually dead; therefore, Jesus imparted to us a life which we had not before enjoyed. The Apostle Paul says, "You were dead, dead in trespasses and sins." "Eternal life" cannot be earned as a wage for good works, it cannot be merited in any way, because it is a free gift. He does not sell but gives. "Ye must be born again." What He gives, He gives freely and it is forever. ***"You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."*** *Eph. 2:1*. When He bestowed eternal life upon His elect who has it, He knew quite well every imperfection and failing that would occur in that man. Therefore what He saw in man would be a cause for not giving, rather than for giving, so it would be inconsistent with the gift of God for the gift to be disannulled. ***"The gift and calling of God are without repentance."*** *Rom. 12:29*. May we always be reminded of what we were by nature. Do we see the hole of the pit from whence we were drawn? for ***"The***

wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23. Man merits nothing but death, so life is the free gift of God. Now, to some this is a very humiliating doctrine, but to those who have been made alive to their terrible, fallen condition, it should be a precious doctrine. So may we remember the dunghill where we once grew.

Jesus says, "And they shall never perish." His sheep are said to be born again, so this new life within us is a divine life, so it can no more die than the life of God himself. We live because we are one with Christ. The elect sheep are referred to as the body of Christ. Shall Christ's body be dismembered? Shall He every now and then be losing one limb or another? No! It cannot be. The members of His body shall continue to live because He lives. The power that brought His sheep into this precious state is also the power that keeps them there: for **"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."** Phil. 1:6. The spiritual life in them shall never be starved out, beaten out, nor driven out. The elect himself shall never perish. You may feel at times you might; the devil may tell you that you shall. The Lord will seem to withdraw until we lose many joys and comforts; but "You shall never perish." My dear ones, "They shall never perish," takes in all the elect flesh of Christ. If we consider how this doctrine harmonizes with other doctrines of the precious words of God, we will find that these sheep were made "unto

honor." **"That He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory."** Rom. 9:23. If the saints of God, just one, should perish will Christ have kept His promise? He is not a man that He should lie. Jesus Christ paid the debt charged to His sheep; therefore, they have no debt to pay. If He has borne their punishment, they have no penalty to suffer. If He has stood in their stead, even justice as well as grace will demand that they be saved. **"It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" Rom. 8:34.**

"Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." All His sheep are in Jesus' hands. Can you think of a safer place to be? An acquaintance once said to me, "They cannot be plucked out, but they can slip out and perish." Does not Jesus say, "they can never perish?" Therefore they cannot be plucked out, slip out, fall out, jump out or any other out, they are definitely secure. There are those who, with false doctrine, would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. "Neither shall any." Not only any man, but the devil, fallen spirits, none will be able to pluck them out of His hands. Oh, what a blessed promise! **"Because I live," says Christ, "Ye shall live also."** John 14:19. May God bless you to live and rejoice in His precious doctrine and to feast upon His sweet promises is my prayer.

In hope of mercy,
Elder Joe L. Hamrick

THE SEVENTH DAY

I am in Baton Rouge, and for some reason I felt impressed to write on the following subject. I have no doubt in my own mind, but what it is scripturally and experimentally true, but I find myself so very imperfect, sinful and defiled, I want someone else to pass on it.

It needs many corrections in language and punctuation, but before I would have time to do all this, I might destroy it as I have other writings; which might be better in this case. I don't know why I've stayed up till after midnight to write it, as I needed rest very badly.

We seemed wonderfully blessed at Rehobeth Sunday, if I'm not deceived, and we tried to use this subject. I feel we were blessed to go into it more extensively than this writing.

I hope the Lord will see fit to bless us with true righteous Sunshine and Spiritual exercise in this dark, cloudy and eyil day of deception and de-gradation; when the spirit of anti-Christ is ascending out of that dark, bottomless pit. We are entirely dependent on Him to give us light and to keep us in it. Oh, how I do hope we have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light and glorious liberties of the children of God. We know all things work together for good to them that love God (I hope I am one of them) through his goodness and mercy. If so, no weapon that is formed against me will prosper, and every tongue of accusation will be condemned; because that wonderful Counsellor, who bore my sins, represents

me, having died in my stead I have had some desire in the last few hours, to write a few thoughts, that have been presented to my mind relative to the subject, as presented in Exodus 20:8,9,10, and 11. Please read these scriptures, before preceeding to read this writing.

The Sabbath Day, literally in this instance, no doubt, is the remaining day of rest, - after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason, that if the Lord had finished all his work, there was nothing else for Him to do but to rest or to cease from his labor, as is stated here and elsewhere in the scriptures.

Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's work in creation; of Heaven and earth and all the hosts thereof, to say nothing of the righteous, holy, divine and wise purpose for which they were created, and which they all fulfill to a jot and tittle, to his glory and praise, and to the good of his people.

God gave his people the seventh day, as a day of rest, but gave them six days, before the day of rest, and commanded them to do all their work in these six days and to do not work on the seventh, but to rest or keep it holy; even as He had finished all his work in six days and rested the seventh. They were commanded under strict penalty of death, if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as gathering sticks to kindle a fire.

Now, dear reader, I am sure our finite minds are far too inferior, and our un-

derstanding is insufficient, to be able to express this wonderful, deep and solemn subject, but I desire to say, that I believe that every phase of each commandment and ordinance, was written aforetime, and was written for our learning, that we (even at the present) might have hope and consolation. Therefore, there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable now, or at least, that is my humble opinion. For example, the Ten Commandments were spoken by the Lord, himself, in fact they are his word. The scriptures say the word of the Lord endureth forever, from generation to generation.

In another place it says, whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. Then his words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is as much in effect today, in an anti-typical sense, as it was in a typical sense, when commanded by the Lord to Israel.

I want to be understood. I don't feel that we are under the literal commandment to abstain from all literal physical labor on the Sabbath day, as the Jews then were. We are not faced with that punishment of death in the literal sense as they were. There is a sense through Christ, after the inward man, that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is always when they have done fully six days work, after which they are always weary, faint or tired. In other words, it is after they have worked themselves out of tools and timber, and have fallen flat on the mercies of God, who through Jesus,

has finished the work of redemption and salvation.

Now, it seems clear to me, that this great subject is amply verified in the old and new covenants as expressed in the 8th chapter of Hebrews (read it). In the old covenant it is implied that they were taken by the hand to be led out of literal Egypt. They transgressed and were subject to the most serious punishment as a consequence. The new covenant was not according to the old. The Lord gives them a new and soft heart, and He makes a new covenant with them. He writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds in such a way, that they are safe from violation. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Also, in John's language it says. *"He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* Then if it was sin for the children of Israel to work on the Sabbath day literally, so it also would be, for God's people to work in this Gospel Sabbath day. Wherein Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (not lost now, but is saved), so Jesus finished the work which his Father gave him to do. It has been the Sabbath of rest, from that day till now and ever will be to his people, because the work is finished.

When the Light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from Heaven, in our poor benighted souls, then we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him. After six days of hardwork, we are brought to our wits

end, or to the ends of the earth. Then the blessed Saviour says, "**Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,**" Mark the word rest in this text. The six days are over, when the blessed Lord gives us this sweet rest, in foretaste.

The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but not so. He gives them rest. At his command, they take his yoke upon them, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ which is shed abroad in their hearts. And Oh, dear reader, how easy is that blessed yoke that Jesus gives his poor, humble and bewildered ones, who are weary from a full week's work!

This yoke Jesus gives them off from their own works and constrains them to cease from them and their burdens. They learn of Him, that He finished all the work of their salvation and their entire six days work is in vain, so far as saving them is concerned. How light is the burden of the precious Saviour to a poor, wayworn pilgrim. His thoughts and burden have been that he must do something. When he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, Oh, how light is this precious burden and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are yoked off from their works, and are given to rest. It is the Sabbath and they are yoked to keep it. That yoke is quite different from any yoke formed by earthly wisdom and skill, for they are yoked to rest. David described this when he said, "**He leadeth me beside the still waters; he maketh me to lie down in**

green pastures." Many others also described this beautiful, easy yoke and light burden of Jesus, the blessed Saviour.

In the 4th Chapter of Hebrews it is said, "**There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God**" Just the opposite to what blind nature believes and advocates. They all believe and advocate works as essential to salvation. It is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working in order to save themselves, or some-one else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day; and by this you may know, it is Monday, so to speak, with them. And to clearly show this same doctrine, it is almost universally believed that anyone can help in the salvation of sinners. It must be remembered in the anti-type, no man, nor his manservant, his son nor his daughter, nor his ox nor his ass, is to do any work on this holy day. That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor his ox, which all have their anti-typical place and meaning.

Now there is quite a difference in the old and new covenants. Under the old so far as Abraham and his seed were concerned, after the flesh, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He remembers that Sabbath day to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic efforts of nature, but after the inward man or the new man. "**For if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a**

new creature." He has the new covenant of Grace. He has the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death.

He believes In his heart, although when delivered to the fleshly mind, he will at least to some extent, practice works just like anyone else. But as Paul said, ***"It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me."*** So then, the being, soul or spirit that is in the child of God, or that he possesses, sins not, and he always remembers the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, through the light and influence and yoke of the blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. ***"They are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them."*** So it is a good work that is worked in them to remember the Holy Sabbath of rest, of the finished work of redemption and salvation.

Christ said, ***"I have finished the work"*** Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Saviour reveals this to us, we cease from our works. We enter into that rest the Saviour gives. How sweet it is to the poor, humble child of God, when this beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil to a full week's work, which has been all in vain. When the Sun is above all the timber, and shining above the brightness of the noonday; when the blessed Saviour gives us that rest and trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are over-

come with joy and gladness; and this is truly the Sabbath of the Lord.

The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy. But as long as we are in the flesh, there will come other days of the week, and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshy mind. The light of this beautiful Sabbath will often be obscured and we will, to some extent, become burdened in our experience. The blessed Saviour visits us again and again and restores the joys of our salvation, and gives us rest and peace and, blessed satisfaction in him. The eternal Sabbath is in existence, so to speak, even as all the host of Heaven and earth, are finished, but we are only given the earnest of our inheritance here below, which means the interest on the whole. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested or given to us, are so sweet and glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal or the fullness of this inheritance be in that rest beyond the shades of death and the shores of time, when we shall have laid down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan and weep and mourn?

When we come forth formed and fashioned like our blessed Saviour, without sin and corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toil, groans and afflictions, as we are subject to in the flesh, but eternal, glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation 14:13, ***"And I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, sayeth the Spirit, they shall rest***

from their labors; and their works which follow them, are the works that God works in them, both to will and to do his own good pleasure."

Also in Revelation 7th chapter we find that John saw these same people (who are given to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy) stand before God in white raiment So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried salvation be unto our God and unto him that sitteth on the throne. Notice what they cried; and look around and see who they are. They also have washed their robes, not in literal water nor human cleansing, nor in their own works, because they have remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. Therefore, they have ceased from their own works as God did from his. (See Hebrews 4th chapter.)

The best of Revelation 7 is where He said, *"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."*

Oh, dear child of the heavenly kingdom, how I humbly hope at times, if not deceived, that I am one of those that have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden and rest of Christ the Saviour. And that some day all tears of sorrow shall be wiped away and I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Saviour forever and ever, with all those who have come out of tribulations.

Elder R.W. Rhodes

THE FUTURE



At this time I want to notice the following Scripture: *"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us (2 Cor. 1:9, 10)."* This is a history of the apostle's salvation. Is it the history of yours?

Let us notice John 6:37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have in this passage three of the fundamental points of doctrine. Election, effectual calling, and the preservation of the saints, is clearly and emphatically taught here. To deny one of these points is to deny the whole. If one is left out of God's choice; if one thus chosen is not brought; if one thus brought is not kept, then the doctrine is worthless. This is the history of the salvation of the people of God. Is it the history of your salvation?

What did this declaration of truth do for you? Not the first thing. The choice of God did not bring you to Him; the declaration of His effectual work in bringing men and women to him, and in keeping them from every enemy that would arise did not do a thing for you. God's truth must be made to live in us; there must be a manifestation in our lives of the doctrine. This manifestation was made to one, a pattern left on the sacred pages of the New Testament, to wit, the apostle Paul.

This work is shown in types and shadows, in figures and allegories all through the Bible, but brought to its full prominence in the history of Paul's life, and in a marked degree in every child of God.

As we look in on the Apostle in his second letter to these Corinthians, it is with delight that we read of his knowledge of the travel of a child of God. He had learned contentment in whatever state that he was in (Phil. 4:11), and his afflictions and his comfort were all tied in with the past and the present and the future. This sentence of death was not something acquired or apprehended or intercepted, but it was placed in him by the Spirit's mighty power. I have the Scriptures on my side about the past, both as to my experience and Paul's; likewise it is on our side about the present. If his testimony by inspiration, and mine (I hope) by revelation, does not convince, then it is not because of the weakness of what he and I have been delivered from, but because that the sentence of death is lacking in unbelievers. His trust for deliverance was justified just before his death, was made manifest in complete triumph. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Were the disciples ever commanded to have faith in themselves? Did the New Testament writers give us one example whereby we were to have faith in ourselves or in one another?

Trees always come before fruit. It is the tree that makes the fruit. The fruit does not bear the tree, but rather the tree bears the fruit. Any source of fruit receives credit for the fruit. Have we

got a tree, either in reality or in a symbol, that is set in the nature of men, which will enable us to have faith in it for the future? Which of nature's gifts will we have faith in? It can not be the sword, for if we use that, we shall perish by it (Matt. 26:52); it can not be the natural mind for certainly our hope for the future must be in something more than foolishness (1 Cor. 2:14; it can not be, in the carnal mind for it is not, and can not be, subject to the law of God and is death (Rom. 8: 6,7); it can not be money for it had to perish with the user long ago (Acts 8:20); it can not be by the mighty and wise and noble, for but few of that kind are called and in that call they become the least; then in what shall we believe in for the future? Where is our faith coming from? It is all coming to us as a fruit of the Spirit. Faith is the gift of God, the product of the mighty working power of the in-wrought energy of God's Spirit (Eph. 1:19, 20; 2:8; Gal. 5:22). This faith is in God.

We sing:

*" 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.*

*Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."*

And we haven't had a hymnologist or chorister that would dare make two

kinds of grace out of the experience of John Newton or Paul, but we sometimes, in this enlightened day, find folks preaching two kinds of grace. One kind saves, the other would, if you would. My future, as well as the future of the church of Jesus Christ is dependent on saving grace.

There are two kinds of looking to the future. One is begging God to lead and show us the way; the other is a dead traditional belief in the past, resting (not in his love Zeph. 3:17), but in laurels of long ago, pointing with pride to this man or that man or the other. What are we looking to for deliverance? Is our hope in God that raises the dead? Or is it in the name of yesterday's leaders? I would feel indeed sorry for the man that is not worried about present conditions among the Old School Baptists, but as bad as his condition would be, it is not as bad as it would be if I got to the place that I believed that about face was all that was needed to remedy the situation. How full of unbelief I am when I say one that has wandered away is able to find the way back. If the future of the church has depended on that in the past we are singing the wrong song, and we are preaching the wrong doctrine, and it would be becoming in us to change accordingly. If I did not know the way any better than to deviate from it, and my works were not the kind that keeps me, I feel mighty poorly about me getting to a former position. Lack of wisdom will not improve one's perception of the right way as we travel along further away; then I do not see how to get back. Lack

of power to stay in the right way will not improve as I remain without it; then I do not see how that I can return, seeing that I am weak in both wisdom and power.

But, dear brethren, there is something much better than all of this, for, if you have been on a prodigal road, you learned that all this is a mess of husks. This kind of doctrine (if you will, God will) was placed on our brethren many times in the past. It is a galling doctrine and the church has not come to where it is by trusting in it. Grace and the in-wrought righteousness of Jesus Christ is a balm for the poor and needy. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3). It was given to the poor, and the poor we always have them with us (Matt. 26:11), thus as long as we have them with us they will have the kingdom of heaven. It used to be the pleasure of our heavenly Father to give the kingdom to the little flock, which is as poor as it is little. If he gave this kingdom to the poor, since when has it become their's by their wisdom, ability, riches of the flesh?

The poor own this kingdom. It is a rich kingdom, and they are joint heirs with the King of it. The subjects of this kingdom are brought into its pleasant borders by the quickening power of God's Spirit. Being begotten again to an inheritance that is beyond this life, they are not left to shift for themselves, but are kept ready for that which is to come. Let me state here that if I am not deceived, my being kept ready is just as sure as the inheritance is safe in its laid up place (Psa.

31:19; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:8). I do not see any way for enemies, inwardly or outwardly, to get into that sacred abode and destroy that inheritance. He who called me, as I humbly hope, out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, has promised to never cast out, never leave, not to leave comfortless.

In the days of Gideon a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Daniel a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Elijah a remnant according to election was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the apostle's day there was, at the precise time of which he spoke, a remnant according to the election of grace and they were saved by grace. If we are preaching what Paul preached, we, as boldly as he ever said it, are preaching salvation by grace for the fiery trials ahead, and, since I believe that when the Lord comes the second time without sin unto salvation that he will find faith in the earth, I feel just as sure as God is on his throne that those faithful people will be saying then, That there is a remnant today according to the election of grace.

This church was alright when I came to it. I am not condoning the evil among us; I will rebuke and reprove, exhort and admonish as long as I find it in my people. I will thank God for this church as long as breath is in this body, just like Paul did the Corinthians, even though I find in the body things that ought not to be there just like he did there. That little church is still alive down in Alabama that gave me my

first taste of heaven below in a church capacity. As I have said, she was alright then, and as I have many times since then sat in her midst, sharing her joys and sorrows, I feel today that she is still faithfully keeping house for the Lord. Her membership has rose and fell over the years, but I am sure that when it was the least in numbers that God was taking care of her then; that every blessing belonged to those members as much as when the membership was larger. Now that I am a member in Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, I feel that I can thank God for her, as I can thank him for past blessings down in Alabama. The two churches will survive as long as it is the will of our Father. They will be in a sad way when Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or some weakling like the writer, has to back track and get them on the right road. But how happy and contented is that church, at home, abroad, on the land, on the sea, in times of sorrow, in times of weal or woe, in times of thanksgiving, in times of brotherly love and affections is blessed to sing:

*"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."*

for ere long we shall sing the song of triumph in yonder's world and shall render all praise and honor and glory to the Captain of our salvation, past, present and for all time to come.

Elder W.D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1999

Mrs. Lowella Chaney, VA	\$2.00
Lowell Hopkins, VA	2.00
Eld. Alan Terry, VA	2.00
Eld. Larry Hollandsworth, VA	2.00
Maurice W. Webb, IL	2.00
Mrs. Audrey Glidewell, NC	2.00
Mrs. William A. Ramsey, AL	5.00
Mrs. Vivian W. Viverette, NC	5.00
Mrs. Lorne Thurman, VA	2.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, SD	82.00
Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX	2.00
Mrs. Caroline Martin, WA	7.00
Floyd Oakley, AR	2.00
Mrs. Delores Weatherford, VA	2.00
Mrs. A.D. Heppler, VA	2.00
Mrs. Erma Sowers, Va	2.00
Everett & Ruby Hill, NC	2.00
Mrs. Sylvia W. Conner, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

MARY BELLE TOWNLEY NEAL

Mary Belle Townley Neal may God be with me.

It is with great sorrow and sadness that I try to write this obituary of our dear sister in Christ. Mary Belle Townley Neal of Benton, Arkansas passed away at her home Thursday June 3, 1999. She was 56 years old, She was born October 15, 1942. To Elder John Clovis Townley and Frances Rhodes Townley. She joined Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church at

Fordyce, Arkansas September 15, 1996. She is survived by her husband of 30 years, George Franklin Neal. One stepson and wife Willie and Charlet Neal and Family of Benton, Arkansas. One stepdaughter Izeta Vallijos of Barstow, California. Her mother Frances Rhodes Townley of Benton, Arkansas. One sister Barbara Fish of Malvern, Arkansas. Nine grandchildren, one nephew and family, two nieces and family.

She was faithful to her church and went when she was not able. She loved the church, and all the associations of our faith. She will be missed by all that knew her. The funeral was held at Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church on Saturday June 5, 1999. Elder Thron Jones her Pastor preached the funeral. Which the Family deeply appreciated. Burial followed at Chapel Hill Cemetery close to Sparkman, Arkansas.

This is written by her Mother on request of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church. May God be with all of us for our loss is heaven's gain.

Her Loving Mother,
Frances Townley

PSALM 143: 5-7.

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, least I be like unto them that go down into the pit.