

Glad Tidings

January

FROM THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

2025

“Buy the truth, and sell it not.” (Prov. 23:23)

Philippians 4:13

Strength For Today And Bright Hope For Tomorrow

I Corinthians 15:19

“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” -Luke 2:25-32

In this famous chapter often read from during the Christmas season, the scriptures go from Jesus' birth to him being presented (or sanctified) to the Lord. This was according to the instructions laid out in the law of Moses. The family also brought an offering of two turtle doves or pigeons to the temple in order to complete Mary's purification ritual. The law specified to bring a lamb for a burnt offering and a pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering, but if unable to bring a lamb, the law allowed someone to bring two turtledoves or two pigeons instead, one for the burnt offering and the other for the sin offering (Lev. 12:6-8). The fact that Mary and Joseph had to use a pair of birds shows the humble means that Jesus came from, something completely different than what worldly men would expect from a king.

Simeon had revelation from God that he would not die before laying eyes on the Lord's Christ. In one of the most remarkable scenes imaginable, he is holding the infant Jesus in his arms while at the same time he, as one of God's children, is being safely held in the mighty hand of the babe he is holding. We read in John 10:27-30, “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.”

Jesus Christ was the Son of God from eternity past, the Creator of the universe, and never ceased in his deity. Simeon expresses the purpose of Jesus' incarnation when he says, “mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” Because of our fallen nature, nothing we can do could ever satisfy the holy law of God, which

requires sinlessness. Christ and his perfect shed blood is truly our only hope. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you (1 Pet. 1:18-20).”

Dear friends, I hope you have rejoiced this holiday season (as we should all year) in the precious truth that Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make salvation possible but to accomplish salvation. “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day (John 6:38-39).” He was given the elect, those chosen in him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). He doesn't offer himself to people. Jesus, as the fulfillment of the shadows pictured by the law's sacrifices, offered himself to God for the sins of the elect, and that offering secured redemption (Heb. 9:11-15). Furthermore, we are born again not due to our choice but due to the fact we are already his children. “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father (Gal. 4:6).” This sovereign work of God is part of the covenant of grace which the Godhead entered into before the world began. All those chosen, redeemed, and regenerated will finally be in heaven without the loss of one.

Next, Simeon states some what were some truly earth-shattering truths to the Jews of his day. That God had prepared Jesus “before the face of all people,” not just the Jews, and that he was “a light to lighten the Gentiles.” Indeed, this was the fulfillment of much Old Testament prophecy. Isaiah 60:3 says, “And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” Zechariah tells us, “Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you. (Zec. 8:22-23).”

This was an unacceptable idea to many Jews, sadly ultimately the majority of them, which Simeon

prophesies shortly afterward when says “this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel (vs. 34).” However, the reality of the matter is that this worldwide “enlightening” was why he was the “glory of thy people Israel.” God didn’t call Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees simply to make Israel a prosperous nation or so God could forever keep non-Israelites in darkness. It was because of the promise that “in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (Gen. 22:18).” Jesus Christ was that seed, and his mercy and redemption extends to those “out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation (Rev. 5:9).” He set up his kingdom while on earth, and the gospel of his saving grace ultimately came to the Gentile world.

Finally, Simeon also says the child would be “a sign which shall be spoken against (vs. 34).” Remember, if Christianity is not offensive to the world, we are no doubt too conformed to the world. As we head into a new year, let us not be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ and endeavor to be more committed to following him and his word. (Elder Jonathan Wise)

EDITORIAL OFFICE

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Elder Jonathan Wise & Elder David Wise, Co-Editors

FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK By Elder Larry Wise (1944-2024)



As we begin a new year, we are all in the dark as what the future holds for us here below. However, we do know and are assured of a future in heaven that is reserved for the redeemed. On the road to that final destination, we encounter troubles that take us by surprise. I am made to think of a quote from Elder Michael Gowens in one of his sermons that says, “Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.” Here on this earth we are taught to walk by faith and not by sight and trust the **known** God to provide when troubles arise. We all need someone strong to hold and to trust when the future turns dark. We read in Nahum 1:7: “The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.” To get to the mountain top, we must of necessity go through the valley below.

Job’s future was bright as he steadfastly served the Lord as one that feared God and eschewed evil but the outlook suddenly took a dramatic turn as the bad news continued to arrive concerning the loss of his worldly goods and servants. The last news was the worst as he was told his ten children had been killed in a terrible wind storm. Job rent his mantle, shaved his head, and fell down on the ground, and worshipped, “And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this, Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.” (Job 1:21) Job’s bright future here below had been derailed in an instant of time but we read in Job 13:15, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.” The known God is able to provide even when our lives have been derailed as was Job’s.

Job’s three miserable comforters didn’t do anything to help his situation but seemingly made it worse as they accused him of some grievous sin as the cause of his calamity. We don’t know the way we will go but the God of perfect knowledge does know and He especially knows those that trust in him. Job also said in Job 23:10: “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” Job had just lamented that he could not perceive the Lord on the left hand, right hand, forward or backward but the sovereign God knew the way he would take and in the end would be a bright shiny vessel of gold to honor his maker.

If we knew what the future held, we would know exactly how to pray. Since we don’t know, we pray unto One who does know. Paul said, “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” (Rom. 8:26). Paul says we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope. If we didn’t have a sweet hope (expectation) of a future in heaven on resurrection morning, we would likely be inclined to faint and give up. With this hope and faith,

we are saved from despair and pray unto One who knows us and all about us.

In the midst of all his troubles, Job acknowledges the sovereignty of God as he declares, “But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.” (Job 23:13). Imagine the terrible mind set of those saints who had their faith in the resurrection destroyed by false teaching by Hymenaeus and Philetus who convinced them that the resurrection was past already. However, their future was still intact because Paul goes on to say something was still sure and steadfast. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (II Tim. 2:19). These people evidently were the possession of God as they belonged to Him as He **knows** them that are His. God knows every human being, but He knows His bride in a special way just as a husband knows His wife in a more intimate way than he knows other women.

Abraham didn't know what the future held when the Lord told him to leave his country, his kindred and his father's house and go to a land that he would be shown. By faith he obeyed and went as directed but when the future looked uncertain he asked his wife to say that she was his sister because he feared for his life. This tells us that even the best of men and women have their times of weakness but overall Abraham was strong in faith giving glory to God. Abraham didn't know what the future held for him but was assured that the land of Canaan would be his and his seed. Abraham is referred to as the father of the faithful. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, but he was looking to another future known only by God. “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb. 11:10). (From Jan. 2018 Glad Tidings)

THE GOD OF NEW BEGINNINGS

By Elder David Wise (2021)

*“5) And he that sat upon the throne said, **Behold, I make all things new.** And he said unto me, *Write: for these words are true and faithful.*” (Rev. 21:5)*

Our God is in the business of making all things new. He is the God of new beginnings. As we embark on a new year, it can be a blessing to feel like you have a new year with a fresh, new, blank slate on which to write new blessings and new life experiences throughout this coming year. Each new day is like a new page in the book of our life. Every new year is like a new chapter in that book. God is in the business of turning the page to a new chapter in our lives. There are many examples in scriptures of those who endured very difficult seasons of their life – some very hard

pages and chapters – but then God turned the page and gave them a new chapter in their life. In like manner, we need to take this new year, this new day, as an opportunity for God to write a new, blessed chapter in our lives.

God has proven he is skillful at creating new, blessed, glorious things out of what we would see as ruined, worthless, or simply nothing at all. God took nothing and created everything new in the natural creation (Gen. 1). God takes our sinful natures and creates a new creature in a spiritual creation by the new birth (2 Cor. 5:17, Gal. 6:15). Essentially the entire story of redemption is God “doing a new thing” and bringing newness, beauty, and life to a sinful, dead world – giving beauty for the ashes that man made by sin. We are dead in sins by nature, and God did a new work in giving us a new heart where we can now serve God in newness of life. God will ultimately make this world new as well. At his second coming, God will usher in a “new heavens and a new earth” and finally make all things perfectly new in this world (Rev. 21-22, Isaiah 65-66). Then we will sing a “new song” for all eternity, singing “Worthy is the Lamb!” (Rev. 5:9, Rev. 14:3). God takes things that are old, bad, or even dead and brings forth new things to his honor and his glory.

Each new day is like a new page in the book of our life. Every new year is like a new chapter in that book. It is a great blessing that every day is the beginning of a new page and every year is the beginning of a new chapter in our lives. For the God who makes all things new can write a new chapter in your life beginning today which is much more happy and blessed than the previous chapters. God is in the business of giving *“beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness”* (Isaiah 61:3). Just because we've had a few bad chapters in our lives, does not mean that newness and blessing is not on the horizon. Even if we have had a few bad chapters recently does not mean that is the end of your story. On the contrary, in novels and movies it is when things always look the absolute worst with no hope, that is usually right before the hero shows up to save the day. As the old saying goes, “the night is always darkest just before the dawn”. Consider the life of Joseph. He started out very well in the first 17 chapters of his life. But then in chapters 17 to 30 he was betrayed by his brethren, sold into bondage, falsely accused and slandered, unjustly imprisoned, and forgotten. Despite those challenging times in Joseph's life, God began a new work and at age 30 elevated Joseph to second in command in all of Egypt and then chapters 30 to 110 of Joseph's life were abundantly blessed.

Those who are older and more aged might be tempted to feel there is nothing left for me to do in the kingdom. Many faithful, elderly saints often struggle with why they are still here, especially when their health might begin to fail and so many of their loved

ones have already passed on to glory. Well, the God who makes all things new is not limited by your age. Actually, most of what is made “new” is formerly “old” right? God can begin a blessed, exciting, new chapter in the lives of old disciples as well. Abraham was called by God and left his homeland at age 75. At that age, many people are settling into retirement and not up for new, exciting adventure into a land they’ve never known. Instead, God opened a new chapter in Abraham’s life at the old age of 75 and that older chapter of life is what is highlighted in scripture. The only thing we know about Abraham prior to that point is that he was a pagan idolator (Josh. 24:2), but it is this new chapter in his life (that just happened to coincide with his old age) that gives us the example of justification by faith and many other blessed lessons by our knowledge of his latter life.

Moses also had a dramatic shift in the story of his life. The first 40 chapters of his life were extremely blessed in the eyes of the world. Then Moses chose to forsake the sin of Egypt and serve God, but his zeal was not mature enough to lead God’s people and led to him killing an Egyptian. The next 40 chapters was Moses isolated in Midian on the backside of the desert obscurely shepherding sheep. All of that was to prepare Moses for the last 1/3 of his story that began at age 80 when he led Israel out of Egyptian bondage. At the age when most of us think we are washed up and just waiting to pass away, at age 80 God began a new chapter in Moses’ life that was the most exciting and blessed time of his entire life. We cannot think that our life is too old, dead, or useless for God to use us in a mighty way. No, our God makes all things new, and he might even see fit to open a new chapter and new door in your life at an older age. Our God is able – he makes all things new.

We never need to limit in our minds what God can do. We must remember that God is able to do “*exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*” (Eph. 3:20). God’s ways are so much higher than ours and his thoughts so much higher than us, we simply can’t understand what God is doing all the time in his sovereign will. Despite our limitation of understanding, we never need to think that any situation is too far gone, any person too messed up, or any relationship too broken to where our God cannot “make all things new”. God is able to do so much more than we can even fathom in our mind, and we never need to limit God for what new thing he can do in our lives.

Some people might think that their mistakes in their past might be too much to overcome for God to write a new chapter in their life and be mightily used in God’s service. Let us consider a brief survey of some people in scripture who had horrible pasts, but God began a new work and made all things new in their lives by his life-transforming power.

Abraham the Idolater – When we first find Abram, he is worshipping false gods in Ur of the Chaldees (Josh.

24:2-3). But then, God calls him to be the father of his chosen seed of the Jews, and ultimately the seed of the Messiah and figuratively of the elect. All of our stories of Abraham are after this new work calling in his life from age 75 to the end of his life. (The Thessalonian church had a similar testimony, turning from idolatry – “*how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God*”, 1 Thess. 1:9)

Jacob the Supplanter – In the early portion of his life, Jacob is characterized by deceit, lies, and manipulation. He even had to flee his homeland in fear of being murdered by his brother, Esau, for stealing his birthright. Then, later in his life, Jacob was converted and was blessed by God to be the father of the nation of Israel.

Moses the Murderer – Moses left Egypt in fear of the Pharaoh because he murdered an Egyptian. He then spent 40 years in exile before returning at age 80 to lead Israel out of Egyptian bondage. Moses was blessed by God in a special way to lead Israel for 40 years, in spite of his past murder in Egypt.

Rahab the Harlot – Even though Rahab was converted and joined Israel from Jericho, scripture still characterizes her by her past sinful profession, as a harlot. Despite her past sinful lifestyle, Rahab married a godly Jewish man, Salmon, and was blessed to be in the lineage of both King David and later the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Ruth the Moabite – Ruth showed up in Israel as a Moabite (the enemy of Israel during the time of the judges) and a widow. She was a maligned, prejudiced foreigner. But she was blessed to meet and marry the godly man, Boaz, and ended up being the great-great grandmother of David and in the lineage of Jesus Christ.

Matthew & Zacchaeus the Publicans – God called Matthew as his apostle from his former profession as a publican. Publicans were probably the most hated people in all Judean society because they were viewed as traitors to Rome and also getting rich by oppressing their fellow Jews with taxes. But it’s a publican who God chose to call into a new life as his apostle, and Matthew immediately left his job as a publican and followed Jesus. We also see Jesus calling Zacchaeus from a former life as a publican as well. The same could be said for the “sinners” with which Jesus ate as well, accused of eating with both “publicans and sinners” (Mark 2:14-17). These were people who were known publicly by their sins, their life was characterized by sin. Despite their past sinful lives, Jesus came and began a new work in their life and opened a new chapter in their lives in following him in discipleship

Unnamed Woman caught in adultery – In John 8:1-11, we find a woman caught in adultery trying to be stoned. Jesus stands up and defends this adulterous sinner, convicts her accusers, and they all leave trying to stone her. Jesus then tells her “Go and sin no more”.

We don't know anything else about this woman in scripture, but we know that Jesus gave her a new lease on life. Instead of being slain for her sin, she was called to go and live a new life in service to God.

Unnamed Malefactor on the cross – One of the two malefactors crucified with Jesus lived a very wicked life, so wicked that he was condemned by the Romans to death. Not just a petty thief, but a violent malefactor and criminal, he had lived a very sinful life. Although, he only knew Jesus for just a few moments before his death, God did a new work on him in the cross and is arguably one of the greatest examples of the sovereignty of God in the new birth in all of scripture (Luke 23:39-43). God gave this malefactor to us as this example, despite his life of sin.

Many healed by Jesus – Jesus gave a new life and opened a new chapter in their life to so many he healed from their physical diseases. Healing of blind man in John 9. Casting out devils of the Wild Gadarene in Mark 5. The 10 lepers cleansed in John 17. Mary Magdalene out of whom the Lord cast 7 devils, and then she was the first one to see the resurrected Jesus. So many more examples could be given of God beginning a new work in the lives of those who were in physically sick conditions. God can heal any of his people and begin a new work in their life.

Peter the Denier of Jesus – Even though Peter promised to never forsake Jesus, when the temperature got hot, Peter denies Jesus 3 times and went out and wept bitter tears. He was ready to leave everything and just go back to his former life of fishing because what use could I be in service to Jesus after I denied my Lord? But despite Peter's denying of Jesus, the Lord used Peter in a mighty way in establishing the early church – preaching the sermon on the Day of Pentecost, opening the door of the gospel to the Gentiles by preaching to Cornelius, and ultimately being the Apostle to the Jews. God used Peter in a mighty way, even though he failed and denied Jesus in the most important moment in his life.

Paul the Persecutor and Murderer of Christians – I'm sure Paul could never get over his past persecution of Christians after his conversion. It wouldn't surprise me if these past persecutions and even murder of his fellow Christians was the thorn in the flesh that Satan used to buffet him. After he was born again on the Road to Damascus, as he sat blind and without food for 3 days, I'm sure he felt there is no way that God can use him at all in his kingdom because of the past sins he committed. But God took Paul the murderer of Christians and did a new work and turned him into the greatest apostle of the New Testament. The Apostle Paul proves there is no one beyond the life-changing power of God to be used mightily in the kingdom of God.

The converted sinners in the church at Corinth – “9) Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators,

nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Cor. 6:9-10). People who live these kinds of lives don't belong in the church, do they? We don't want people that have soiled pasts like these in our churches – fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers or extortioners. Well, that's who the Corinth church was made up of – “*And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*” (1 Cor. 6:11). There is no past that is too sinful for God to begin a new work in you and begin a new, fresh, God-honoring chapter in your life. Many more examples from scripture could be given, but you get the point. There is no past so sinful that God cannot begin a new work in you and use you mightily in the kingdom of God.

Maybe your struggle is not that you have lived a life of past sins, but that someone else has wronged you. Maybe you've done nothing wrong but someone else has wronged you in this chapter of your life. Well do not be discouraged because you are in good company. Don't be discouraged because God can write a beautiful new chapter in your life, despite how someone else has hurt you in the past.

Jesus Christ himself was unjustly hated and killed without a cause, but Christ's story does not end with his death. Instead, the story actually only begins with his resurrection. If you are hated or treated poorly without a cause, you are in the great company of the Savior.

Joseph was unjustly sold into bondage, imprisoned, slandered, and forgotten. He did nothing wrong but others injured him. Nevertheless, we know that God still blessed him in the end, in the latter chapters of his life, to be a great blessing to others and save many people's lives from starvation.

David was unjustly hated and spent years (don't know how many, but maybe even 10 years) running from Saul. He did nothing wrong but the only reason why Saul hated him was due to jealousy. David was blessed with avoid Saul's persecution all those years and was still blessed to be ultimately be king after enduring years of unjust persecution.

Paul – Alexander the coppersmith did him much evil, but Paul still commended him over to the Lord (2 Tim. 4:14-15). Then, when he stood trial at Rome, every man left his side (just like Jesus) but God still stood with him, when everyone else forsook him (2 Tim. 4:16-18)

*“19) Behold, **I will do a new thing**; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? **I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.** 20) The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in*

the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. 21) This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.” (Isaiah 43:19-21) We might have gone through a difficult season and chapter in our lives. We might even be in a wilderness right now where it looks like there is no way out of this bad situation. Praise the Lord we serve a God who makes all things new! We serve a God that makes a way in the wilderness and can make a river in the middle of the desert. Not just making a river to look good, but to make a river in the wilderness “to give drink to my people, my chosen”. Even if we are in the middle of a wilderness right now in our life, God can and will make all things and new give us a refreshing drink of his goodness, love, grace, and mercy even in the middle of a parched desert. Let us embrace the new blank page we are given every day for God to begin a new work and begin a new chapter in our lives. Praise God we serve a Lord who makes all things new!

LEAD ME TO THE ROCK HIGHER THAN I

Elder Clayton Nowell

In Psalm 61:2 we read David saying, “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. This verse is very telling. It is thought (according to various commentaries) that the setting and the concern of this psalm was during the time when King David was fleeing from Absalom, his son. The inward struggle must have been immense: having an enemy that has driven you from your throne and also from your most sacred place of worship, who is also your own son – among the last persons on the face of the earth who you’d want to fight, and certainly not destroy. It is no wonder that David is overwhelmed!

But at the very time when he was about to go under, he turns to his greatest source for strength and help. This, also, is wisdom; and, may it be a lesson that we will remember always! There are many things that will arise that are far bigger than we can handle. And like great mountains, our problems can tower over us and over-shadow everything that is good and joyful in our lives. But before you sink in despair, turn to your Rock, cry for His help, and beg for Him to lift you up above your troubles. He is far greater than all our troubles, He has all the answers, and He has all the help that we will ever need!

Pause for a moment, and compare this to what Psalm 40:1-2 teaches. David said, “I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.” There is a lot here that powerfully describes what God does for us in regeneration; but by it being in response to David’s

cry, here is another time of great distress and of our Lord coming to save. Again, the needs and the remedy were the same! Not only is our Rock a great and solid footing to rest upon, but He also is the one who reaches down to lift us from the depths of despair. Resting upon Him, “our goings” are established instead of being bogged down in the mire. Through Him, we can rise up valiantly above our troubles with renewed hope for better days ahead.

Friends, some of the great benefits derived from reading your Bible are that we find real people with similar struggles to what we have today. By faith they cried unto the Lord and found deliverance from their despair. That joy of deliverance can be ours today!

Food For Thought For Your Week
(November 18, 2024)

THANKFUL HEART

Morris Nowlin (1915-2011)

With thankful hearts this song I sing,
A song, my God to Thee,
For all the mercy, grace, and love,
Thou hast bestowed on me;
I thank Thee Lord, for breath, for life,
And for the food we eat,
And for the fellowship we have,
When with the saints we meet.

Forgive my feeble efforts,
Lord, it is the best I know,
But with thy tender grace and love,
More grace and love bestow;
I love to mingle with Thy flock,
My voice in rapture raise,
A song of joy and peace and love,
That gives Thee all the praise.

And when my brow is cold in death,
My tongue in silence be,
With saints and angels
I shall sing Thy praise eternally;
When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
on that celestial shore,
We’ll sing and sing, and sing and sing,
His praise forevermore.

Psalm 28:7-8: “7)The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him. 8) The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.”

CHURCH NEWS

Laodicea Primitive Baptist Church, Lafayette Springs, MS. Jan. 12, 2025. Laodicea Primitive Baptist Church will have a deacon ordination for Brother Chris Easterling on Sunday, Jan. 12, 2025 at 4:00pm. We invite everyone, particularly the ministers and deacons from our sister churches, to come and be with us during this service to ordain this brother to serve in the office of deacon. Finger foods will be served after the ordination service. Elder Steve Weaver is Pastor of Laodicea,

Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church, Ackerman, MS. Feb. 22-23, 2025. Macedonia Primitive Baptist Church in Ackerman, MS will host an open meeting the 4th weekend in February 2025 (Feb. 22-23). Services begin Saturday, Feb. 22, at 10:00am followed by lunch and afternoon services about 1:30pm with a fellowship at pastor's house in the evening. Sunday morning worship at 10:00am. Everyone invited to come and worship. Elder David Wise is Pastor of Macedonia.

Gulf Coast Fellowship Meeting at Palm Chapel Primitive Baptist Church, Crestview, FL. March 27-30, 2025. Schedule is as follows: Services:

Thursday: Worship beginning at 6:30pm

Friday: Worship beginning at 10:00am. Lunch at 12pm. Afternoon services at 1:30pm. Supper at 5:30pm and worship at 6:30pm

Saturday: Worship beginning at 10:00am. Lunch at 12pm. Afternoon services at 1:30pm.

Sunday: Worship beginning at 10:30am. Lunch at 12pm.

Church Address: Palm Chapel Primitive Baptist Church, 201 Cadle Drive, Crestview, FL 32539

Accommodations available at hotels in Crestview, FL (about 5-15 minutes away) and in Niceville, FL (about 25-30 minutes away)

Contact:

Pastor, Elder Todd Nunley, phone: 214.415.2810, email - jamestnunley@outlook.com

Deacon Brother David Cadle, phone: 850.865.1475, email - dec55@cox.net

Deacon Brother Gavin Purvis, phone: 850.902.0098, email - joannpurvis@gmail.com

Deacon Brother Peter Cannon, phone: 850.612.2486, email - elvis24682000@yahoo.com

REVIVE US AGAIN

Revive us again, fill each heart with thy love.
May each soul be rekindled with fire from above.
Hallelujah! Thine the glory, hallelujah! Amen!
Hallelujah! Thine the glory, revive us again.

Psalm 85:6: "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

Habakkuk 3:2: "O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

Hosea 14:7: "They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon."

ELDER ORDINATION

On Saturday, November 23, 2024, a presbytery of 15 elders and 21 deacons from 8 states met together at Grace Primitive Baptist Church in Pearl, MS to consider Brother Morgan Sims for ordination to the full work of the gospel ministry. During questioning by Elder Randy McCarthy, Brother Morgan preached powerfully the things most surely believed among us. Elder Joe Nettles delivered the ordination prayer, praying for God's blessings upon Brother Morgan's ministry and to remain faithful to the cause of Christ. Elder Steve Wilkinson and Elder David Pyles delivered timely and pertinent charges to Brother Morgan in his work in the ministry. We are thankful for the preaching gift and servant's heart that has been displayed by Brother Morgan, and we trust and pray the Lord will abundantly bless his ministry. Elder Morgan Sims has been called to serve as Pastor of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church in Clanton, AL.

Pray that God will continue to call faithful men to the ministry to be pastors and stewards of the mysteries of God. The harvest is white, but the laborers are few!

UPCOMING DOCUSERIES

GOSPEL FREEDOM MOVIE: COMPLETE IN HIM



Several years ago I became acquainted with Elder Luke Hagler and Sister Margo Wieschhaus. Both of these dear saints shared their journey to finding and understanding the message of salvation by grace alone with me. I was both captivated and encouraged by their stories. They both lived out John 8:32 – they found the truth and it made them free.

I began to dream about putting their stories together and making it into a documentary film. Through the help of too many people to name we were able to film their stories as well as bible commentary from Elders Ben Winslett, Michael Gowens and Tim McCool.

The docuseries will be released in four parts. We plan to release episode one on January 1, 2025, with subsequent releases on Jan 15, Feb. 1, and Feb. 15, 2025. Anyone interested in this project can find links to our YouTube and social media accounts at GospelFreedomMovie.com

Please consider subscribing to the YouTube channel to receive updates as episodes are released.

I ask that you all pray that this film will be used for the glory of God and the furtherance of His truth.

God bless,
Elder Josh Coker, Pastor of Vestavia Primitive Baptist Church, Birmingham, AL

OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES

My 6-year old nephew, Charlie, was taking a bath and asked his mother, “Mom, I want to join the church.” She said, “Well, you will have to ask your Dad.” To which, Charlie jumped out of the bath, ran to find his Dad, still dripping wet and no clothes on, and asked, “Dad, can I join the church?”

We should all display this type of zealous child-like obedience to follow Christ. Not waiting for a more convenient time, but immediately following the command to obey Christ. (David Wise)

FEATURED BOOK

We plan to include a section in each Glad Tidings edition going forward a featured book authored by a Primitive Baptist writer each month. We hope you will consider purchasing these books to grow in grace and in knowledge of the truth.



What Is A Primitive Baptist? By David Wise

“From the author: When I tell others that I pastor and attend a Primitive Baptist Church, it’s very common for their first question to be “What is a Primitive Baptist?” Well, my short answer to that question is usually something like this: “We as Primitive Baptists believe that Jesus Christ finished the work of eternal salvation on the cross apart from any action or work of man, and we are saved to heaven by Jesus Christ’s blood and by God’s sovereign grace alone. We worship in a simple manner in accordance with the New Testament scriptures; we sing, we preach, we pray, and we fellowship. We hope you will come and worship with us as well.” Actually, there are quite a few aspects of the doctrine, worship, and practice of the Primitive Baptist Church that are considerably different than the general teachings in Christianity today. We attempt to maintain the original apostles’ doctrine and simplistic worship and practice we see in the scriptures of the Original (Primitive) Baptist Church. In this book, we hope to consider the identifying marks of the Lord’s church in light of the word of God.”

You may purchase this book at the link below:
<https://marchtozion.com/books/what-is-a-primitive-baptist/>

A free PDF of this book can be downloaded here:
<https://macedonia-pbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/What-Is-A-PB-Final.pdf>

You may visit the websites below to find an extensive library of Primitive Baptist books:
<https://www.sovgrace.net/shop/>
<https://marchtozion.com/book-table/>

THE POOR IN SPIRIT

Elder Ben Cordes

Lexington, Kentucky

(Part 1 of 8 in Series on The Beatitudes)

"1) And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: 2) And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, 3) Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:1-3)

Christ's Sermon on the Mount stands as a distinct example of God's excellent wisdom stated in profoundly simple ways. And though Christ spoke in simple terms, it remains for God's people to study what Christ preached so that we can uncover the truths buried deeply in the message.

The blessings spoken by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount are called the Beatitudes (which means a state of great joy). The Beatitudes are declarations of the state of existence for God's born-again children. It must be said that it is only by the grace of the Holy Ghost that a person comes to realize their own spiritual existence. The characteristics that describe the child of God are the result of a change God has made in the individual and are not attitudes that are simply learned or selected. These are discoveries made by God's people, not inventions, and the discoveries only come by God uncovering them for us.

The first Beatitude is to the poor in spirit. Usually, we do not regard poverty as being a blessing. To be monetarily poor is regarded as a hardship in life. By the world's standards, the rich and wealthy are the blessed ones. However, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus demonstrated an Old Testament truth regarding God's nature versus man's nature:

"...the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7b)

"8) For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9) For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Samuel and Isaiah learned that God's perspective is far greater than man's. Jesus also revealed in the Sermon on the Mount that what God considers important is not always what man considers important, and vice versa. Man typically only considers the appearance, but God looks deeply at the heart and soul of the inner man. God does the same when examining righteousness and holiness, to Him they are more than just appearances.

As Tevye, from the musical *The Fiddler on the Roof*, said to God in a prayer, "it's no shame to be poor, but it's no great honor, either." Tevye humorously sang about how he would live frivolously if he possessed a fortune. Though the point is made as to why Tevye didn't have great riches (as he would make waste of

it), he still understood that God is rich and He gives of those riches to men. The truth is, we are all poor, and what we have is not our own. We are stewards of God's things. The same is true with spiritual things. Every person is spiritually destitute and what we possess does not originate with us.

Why, then, is it a blessing to be poor in spirit? The blessing is not the sole fact that mankind is spiritually poor, but that we realize we are spiritually poor. When God shows us our spiritual emptiness due to the presence of sin, we can then begin to understand our great need for Him. It is a blessing to see God as a wealthy Father, and to consider our pathetic state of utter emptiness in contrast. It is at that point when we begin to understand that only God can give us what we desperately need.

"4) But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:4-6)

Spiritual riches are what God gives to His children. The man who trusts in himself and feels no need for God is not capable of understanding his own spiritual penury nor the importance of God's riches. He is dead in his sins. Those who are alive in Jesus Christ are the poor in spirit and, by His grace, will realize they are such. They long to be filled with the supply that only our rich and generous God can give.

In God's economy, it's not gold or silver that are given to enrich the poor in spirit, but rather the greater riches of love, joy, mercy, forgiveness, faith, and peace. It is only through the blood of Jesus Christ that our redemption has been secured and the costly gifts of salvation have been supplied to a people who were once dead in sin but are now alive.

God has a kingdom in store for the poor in spirit. Not an earthly kingdom with conflict and sorrow, but the heavenly kingdom of God's righteousness, joy, and tranquility. God allows for us to receive a portion of the kingdom of heaven after we have been awakened to our spiritual poverty and confess our need for the Savior, Jesus Christ. Through repentance and baptism, we press into the kingdom and are blessed with the joy of salvation that our abundantly merciful and loving God gives to those who follow His gospel instruction (Luke 16:16).

If you feel you are in need of forgiveness. If you long for peace and separation from the sins and mistakes of the past. If you believe that God is unbelievably kind to you despite your faults and failures, then you are among the blessed poor in spirit. However, poverty is not your end, because you have a rich and generous Friend! Jesus Christ is the elder brother of the poor and afflicted children of God. You have an inheritance because of Him, and He has made you part of His royal heavenly family.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32)

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for we have a King who freely gives to us all things. What a blessing it is to know of our rich Heavenly Father.

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

By Elder Guy Hunt (Deceased)

Jer. 23:6₁ "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

As the prophet Jeremiah was speaking these beautiful words of our Savior, we recall that God has always been particular in naming individuals. This may not seem like a good name to those who boast themselves in the multitude of their own riches, or trust in their own wealth, but to the poor and needy sinner this is a wonderful name.

This name would be downgrading news to those clothed in their own righteousness, with enough to spare to help others. But to those poor, naked, destitute sinners, knowing if left to their own works, heaven they will never see, this is a wonderful name. To the Pharisee, even the thought of what this name means would puncture his ego like a pin a balloon. To the humble poor it brings tears of joy and shouts of thanksgiving.

To the fleshly mind this name would be no more than four words without meaning. To the spiritual mind, and the hope and revelation of what this name means, it has meaning, day or night, during joys and sorrows, heat or cold, in youth or olden age, in health and in sickness. This knowledge gives us people in the world, of whom the world is not worthy, a little oasis here and there, where those who know the meaning of this name can meet together and shout that his praise is our blessing, because of this Christ our Lord.

As I take stock of myself, my sinfulness, my weakness, I feel depressed, even through these dark clouds I see the beauty of the Savior, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. It causes me to want to serve the people of God in my little way, whether visiting, speaking to God's children of the mercies of God, or printing a little church paper. I am glad that my little service is not necessary to clothe anyone in righteousness, but I am glad of the sweet feeling I receive in my heart, of living with a people who trust in Christ Jesus THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

If this is the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and he is our righteousness, who should we fear? If he is our righteousness, what power or element of time could hinder us from enjoying the everlasting blessings of God? If he is our

righteousness, is this sufficient? Is it complete? Do we need a surety for Christ? Did he receive his name, because we helped him by accepting him? Can you think of anything more complete or satisfactory than the righteousness of Jesus?

Do we pause to think how thankful we should be? How can we best show his praise? Are we believers in THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS?

This is in his name. He lived up to his name. Heaven will be populated by the saints of God pure, because of Jesus Christ, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (Jan. 1965; From *"The Best of Elder Guy Hunt"*)

What did Paul mean in Philippians 3:20 when he said "For our conversation is in heaven..."?

By Elder Joe Nettles

The word "conversation" in scripture means basically your way of life, including speech, actions, choices, etc. How is our manner of life "in heaven"?

First, all of the saved in Christ can have the joy of knowing that they are in heaven right now. How can that be while you are here in your home reading the newspaper? We are in Christ positionally - "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ...and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:5-6). It's as if the elect are all in heaven right now, even ones not yet born into this world. Inseparably, eternally locked in Christ Jesus is the reality for the beloved of God.

Secondly, your life's Spiritual knowledge comes from on high. Peter's belief in Christ came from heaven - "Blessed art thou...for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17). James taught of true wisdom - "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure...peaceable...gentle..." (James 3:17). Take heart that if you know God, it was revealed from on high (Matthew 11:27).

Thirdly, our works in this life are wrought from heaven - "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works..." (Ephesians 2:10). To further prove this point, look at the source of all the talents which the servants were given to invest wisely in the Parable of the Talents in Matthew chapter 25. The Lord was the only source.

Next, we see our hope is anchored on high, "which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus..." (Hebrews 6:19-20).

In addition to all these aspects of our lives which are "in heaven", all of our providential blessings and answered prayers come from on high - "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32); "But this man, because he

continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood... seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:24-25). Let our prayer be that the Lord will stir us to have a more heavenly focus day by day.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

By Elder Buddy Abernathy (2014)

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." (Psalm 62:5)

"It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD." (Lamentations 3:26)

God's providence in our lives refers to his guidance (Psalms 32:8), provision (1 Kings 17:16, Neh. 9:21, 1 Kings 17:16, Luke 22:35), and protection (Deut. 33:27). It speaks of his involvement in the daily affairs of our lives. God is an active participant, not a passive observer. Predestination is that part of God's covenant of grace which fixes the eternal abode of his people (Rom. 8:29). Everyone he foreknew and chose in Christ before the world began, he also predestinated unto the adoption of children (Eph. 1:4-5). Christ redeemed them (1 Pet. 1:18-19), saved them from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), reconciled them to God (2 Cor. 5:19), and justified them (Rom. 3:24, 5:9). While they live in this world he quickens them (Eph. 2:1), imparting eternal life, thereby making them fit subjects for the gospel (2 Tim. 1:9-10). One day he will return to claim his own and carry them to mansions above (Mat. 25:31-34). Providence is distinguished from predestination in that the former affects our life in this world while the later ordained life in that world to come. Providence concerns the temporal, predestination concerns the eternal. Providence sustains us in the journey, predestination fixes our final abode.

"The Absolute Predestination of All Things" is a false doctrine which perverts the meaning of predestination and misapplies the providence of God. It teaches that all the events of time including the course of nature and its consequences, along with all the thoughts and actions of men are the result of the predetermined counsel of God.

In the words of the hymn writer, a correct understanding of predestination coupled with a trust in divine providence provides, "strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow". David expressed his understanding of providence when he said, "My times are in thy hand..." (Psa. 31:15) and later, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Psalm 16:6).

It is important to recognize that God's providence is not random or unpredictable. The enduring mercy of God saves us from his consuming wrath (Psa. 118:1, Lam. 3:22, Psa. 103:10, Psa. 130:3). Nevertheless, we

generally reap what we sow (Isa. 1:19-20, Gal. 6:7, Luke 6:44) in greater abundance that we sowed (Mat. 13:8, Hos. 8:7).

Moses emphasized this great principle of divine truth in his farewell address to the children of Israel, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." (Deu. 30:19).

THE HOLY BIBLE

Frank Blair Jr.

Each word between these covers
Is food for hungry souls.
Tis Peace for all who labor
Within the Master's fold.

Tis joy and light and gladness
When all outside is void.
And for each one who's burdened
Sweet peace to be enjoyed

It warms the coldest winter
Makes bright the darkest night.
And marks the narrow pathway
Once hidden from human sight.

They span the widest valley
They chart the deepest sea.
Make worlds one tiny object
Transversed by Majesty.

And further yet they lead us
Into eternity.
The perfect way for Christians
Faith, Hope and Charity.

-Written on October 28, 1951 while on the sea of
Japan en route to South Korea

Psalm 19:7-10: "7) The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. 8) The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes... 10) More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

God be with you until, by God's grace, we meet
again in the next Glad Tidings or in heaven.