

Glad Tidings

September

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

“For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thou father’s house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”
-Esther 4:14

These were the words spoken by Mordecai to Esther, his uncle’s daughter whom he had raised and was now the queen of King Ahasuerus of Persia. He is asking her to use her position to help save all her fellow Jews, who were set to be exterminated throughout the realm by way of a royal decree, which an evil royal official named Haman had tricked the king into signing simply because Mordecai did not show him what he felt in his pride to be the proper respect. Esther ultimately does this, bravely risking her life by coming to see the king uninvited and exposing the true nature of the plot, and the decree was reversed. This deliverance is commemorated every year by modern Jews as the holiday of Purim.

This book contains some of the most powerful teaching in all of scripture about the sovereignty of God in action. The biggest takeaway God’s people should have from reading it is to actively look for the providence of God in their lives!

This is important, because in addition to leading us in paths and to destinations we would not ourselves foresee, the Lord uses unexpected ways and even unexpected people. That is why we should pray for the Lord to burden our hearts so we can recognize when He is working and have the courage to act upon it according to the leading of the Spirit. For instance, sometimes a passing mention of something in an otherwise ordinary conversation might have far-reaching implications for someone, though the other person likely had no clue God is using him or her to help direct a path. A lingering impression to simply reach out to or check on someone could be the start of changing a life or a part of divine deliverance. God often uses small things to lead to big things. As the Lord asked through Zechariah, “For who hath despised the day of small things?” (Zec. 4:10)

Also, a seed planted through godly conduct, integrity, or handling a difficult situation, even in someone who you might not cross paths with frequently, can and is sometimes utilized by God in a powerful way later on, perhaps to open doors in a time of great need. This is just one reason why striving to act according to God’s word in every circumstance is

so important. Of course, the main one is because He has commanded us to do so!

An example of reaping the providential blessings of the Lord well down the line, but where it can make the biggest impact, occurs during this account. Mordecai found out about a plot to kill the king by two individuals and helped expose it. He didn’t receive any real credit for the act. It was filed away in the “book of the chronicles” and seemingly forgotten (Es. 2:21-23). Not fair one might say, but God had a bigger purpose for it. One night King Ahasuerus couldn’t sleep. The chronicles, including the information about Mordecai playing such a critical hand in saving his life, were read to him (Es. 6:1-2). What would seem random was not random at all; the hand of God was in it. When the king learned nothing had been done to honor Mordecai, God used this to not only have him honored but to begin the process of Haman’s downfall, thwarting his ambition and ultimately his evil plans. Sure, these things pertain to history-changing events, but many people’s experiences over the centuries and up to the present day show us God still works similarly in the lives of His children. Many pages could be filled with various testimonies. He truly does “move in a mysterious way.”

One thing we learn from Esther is that God is not reactionary. He knows all things and, if it is His will to do so, has a plan to overrule the wicked designs of man. Esther became queen because King Ahasuerus got angry and deposed the former one. Nobody should have any illusions that this pagan’s motives in the “audition” of sorts for the new queen that followed were pure or godly. However, God ensured he chose Esther. The king was, albeit unwittingly, a part of how God accomplished His will in the deliverance of the Jews. Indeed, “the king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.” (Prov. 21:1)

In the cited verse, Mordecai is suggesting to Esther that this monumental step she was to undertake was in fact God’s purpose in placing her as the queen in the first place, knowing the danger that would come. As inspired scripture, there can be no doubt that was the case. Another thing we learn is that, praise God, if it is the Lord’s will to bring about an outcome, He is not bound by what any specific fickle human being may or may not do. This is a comfort, especially when we consider the worrisome events of this sin-cursed world. Remember the Lord is on the throne and holds the true power. As Mordecai said, if Esther didn’t step

up to the moment “then shall enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place.”

Consider Mordecai’s question in the context of your own life. For what purpose might the Lord have placed you in your present circumstance? Most of the time it will have much less to do with you than what you can do for others, but you also can’t outgive God. Your service in His kingdom will always be returned to you to an even greater degree. As the hymn writer penned from the lessons of Eccl. 11:1, “cast your bread upon the waters, never asking if it pays, God has promised to return it to you after many days.”

A pastorate of a small church might not seem impressive to the world, but God sends men to His sheep and there will likely be things those specific people will go through in which that man’s biblical guidance (and thus the Lord’s) is what is needed at the exact right place and right time. Is an unexpected friendship or acquaintance because God wants to use you as mentor to someone who needs one or to share the gospel message so that someone might learn the way of God more perfectly?

Even down to all of our everyday lives involving our families, jobs, and home churches, God has you where He expects you to use your influence and spiritual gifts for His glory. Disciples doing what they have the opportunity to do individually are the building blocks of the kingdom of God. To quote Edward Everett Hale, “I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.” (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)

True love we have for God and mankind cannot originate from our depraved mind and heart which we once possessed because it is incapable of true love. When love for God and mankind is manifest in our lives, it can only mean that we have been born again. The apostle John says, “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” (I John 4:7). Also equally important is the fact that we are known of God as Paul affirms in II Cor. 8:3: “But if any man love God, the same is known of him.”

With the love of God instilled in our hearts by the Spirit of God, we then can obey His commandments to love one another and serve our Creator. Anything that is done which is considered outstanding in the eyes of the world but not motivated by love or charity is without any profit. Paul said, “And 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.” (I Cor. 13:3). Only the Lord who is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart can discern true motives. Sometimes we are aware of what should be done but for some reason we are slack in our obligation and this becomes sin. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17). This is a sin of omission rather than commission.

Jesus laid down His life for us because of His great love even when we were enemies toward Him. In view of this we are told we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. The Lord has given us great capacity to demonstrate love but often we may by-pass this virtue. John illustrates this failure in I John 3:17: “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” We may very well have the love of God within but if we just say depart and be warmed and filled without showing love and compassion, we have failed both ourselves and God.

The apostle Paul tells the church at Colosse to put on as the elect of God seven things in the third chapter of Colossians. He crowns these additions with love as he writes, “And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” (Col. 3:14). How can we put on something we do not possess? We cannot but we can leave it off.

It is far easier to love those that love us but the love of God extends far beyond that. The Lord loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sins. In a similar manner we are told by Christ, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" (Matt. 5:44). By following this command, Jesus says we may be the children of our Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 5:45). This Father and child possibility can only be in a manifest way by following His orders because our eternal relationship has already been determined by the will of God. (Eph. 1:5). For those in Christ Jesus, Jew or Gentile doesn't avail anything but faith which worketh by love. (Gal. 5:6).

David loved Saul and served him as commander of his men of war; however, the time came that Saul became jealous over David as the women danced and sang "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." (I Sam. 18:7). From that day forward, Saul eyed David with the intent to kill him and cast a javelin at him twice which David did providentially avoid. Saul became David's enemy but he continued to play the harp before him at times and had opportunity to slay Saul but he just cut off his skirt saying, "And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD." (I Sam. 24:6). David would not harm Saul even though he had become his enemy as David was a man after God's own heart.

Some people get peeved when they feel they have not been recognized for some act of love. The truth is we aren't to do deeds of faith and love with the thought of being publicly praised or patted on the back. The Lord always recognizes any deed that is done out of genuine love for Him and the brethren. "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb. 6:10).

Some children of God manifest their love for Him in benevolent ways but never unite with the church as true followers of Christ. Solomon said that "Open rebuke is better than secret love." (Prov. 27:5). Love for the Lord is not meant to be kept a secret but to be openly declared among the people of God by uniting with the church of Christ. (March 2018)

EXERCISE

By Elder Jerry Wise
Pontotoc, Mississippi

Some years back, my wife and I invested in a high dollar treadmill, and that enthusiastic get healthy lifestyle lasted only a short time. This machine became

a catch all. From sweaters to other clothing of all kinds but it made a great hanger for things that didn't make it back to the closet. Running on a treadmill for long periods of time, I found laborious. Even as good for someone's health as advertised, it's just not worth my energy.

My doctor suggested taking long walks, and not stressing over every thing that comes along. I took his advice and found that those long walks helped me to focus on what's really important and improving my time with the Lord. I found myself in prayer sessions and memorizing scriptures and of course preaching to myself.

Nothing wrong with some exercise, but God's word says it profits little. I find a sensible diet with a somewhat busy day does me the most good. My mother used to mop her kitchen floor twice a week in her old age just to stay busy and feel some accomplishments. If she wasn't working in some capacity, she'd be reading her bible over and over. She started every single day with prayer and scripture reading, exercising what God had given her; Galatians 5:22,23.

Exercising in the word of God makes use focus on the real issues at hand: a) how to be a better servant in the fields of harvest; b) how to be a better parent; c) how to be a better husband, wife, son or daughter; d) how to be a joyful blessing to others; e) how to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. (Remember who's "working in you both to will and do his good pleasure." Philippians 2:13)

I stress Galatians 5:22,23; it's the bed rock of laboring in the kingdom church here. It's here I find a blessed gift of the Holy Spirit for my daily exercise in learning to make my calling and election sure; it's here I'm reminded that Christ Jesus taught all nine of these gifts.

Christ is my love!

Christ is my joy!

Christ is my peace!

Christ is longsuffering!

Christ is gentle!

Christ is all goodness!

Christ is my author of faith!

Christ is meekness!

Christ teaches temperance!

If you get to exercise today, be sure you exercise in Galatians 5:22,23. It will make you healthier in the word of God and those around you will sometimes see the change, but most importantly you will honor Jehovah God who looked upon you and blessed you by his loving grace to sacrifice his only Son for your unworthy soul.

So what do we owe Christ? Everything. Now get out today and exercise the fruit of the Spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's

have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:22-25)

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." -2 Corinthians 13:14

From the Master's table!!!
O Victory in JESUS!!!!!!!

Is Proverbs 16:4 teaching that the Lord created the wicked just so he would receive glory in their destruction?

by Elder Joe Nettles
Hamilton, Mississippi

"The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Prov. 16:4) This is the text in question. This is not teaching that the Lord before time purposed to create a people whom he would cause to be sinners so he could ultimately show his power in destroying them. It does teach that all of human kind is created by the Lord. He must be the creator of both the wicked and the just for there is no other. However, saying that the Lord is the creator of all humans is far, far different than saying the Lord created humans with the purpose for them to be wicked.

Remember, folks, we all fell into condemnation because of Adam's choice, not God's! The writer is here teaching that even the wicked, who are aberrant and abhorrent unto God and unto the righteous by their gleeful sinning and riotous living, came from the same lump of creation as the eternal beloved of the Lord. This is sometimes hard to believe when we compare the vile Saul of Tarsus to what he became in the Apostle Paul. To make a comparison between my Jesus-loving grandparents and the thug murderers in the prisons seems like comparing gold nuggets to mud pies! It's hard to comprehend, yet true all the same. The ninth chapter of Romans teaches us much the same concept. Paul wrote that our potter, the Lord, took of the "same lump" to make all humanity, some resulted in honorable vessels while some to dishonor. Yet, when teaching how they came to be honorable and dishonorable, he uses some conspicuous language. He states the wicked were "fitted to destruction" (v.22) but does not state that God made them to be so. We know Adam was behind that fiasco. However, Paul then plainly declares who gets credit for the honorable vessels, the elect of God, being what they are. We are taught that the Lord "afore prepared unto glory" (v.23) that innumerable host of humankind. We are all "for himself" in that he has dominion over all and will receive glory in both the felicity of the saints

and the eternal punishment of the wicked. The Lord chose the elect to be saved, but simply left the wicked in their just condemnation in Adam's transgression. I believe this is the rightly divided meaning of this verse.

MY CUP RUNNETH OVER

By Elder Rusty Wise
Tupelo, Mississippi

Psalms 23:5: "...my cup runneth over."

Certainly the blessings and goodness of God in our lives is so great, that we often forget to express our thankfulness. Like as a child at a party we are overwhelmed with the abundance of gifts. We are so busy opening up the next one, that we quickly forget about those that were previously given.

As we rose from our beds this morning, did we inventory those blessings? Breath, life, spiritual awareness,.....God!

Lamentations 3:22-23: "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

He is our deep well of mercy, an everflowing river of grace, an unending source of love, our only great hope of deliverance.

And by him we have been redeemed, and justified, and separated from our sin. The sin that is no longer remembered of God toward us. And in addition to all of that, we are given the earnest of our inheritance to enjoy until our ultimate deliverance into his holy presence!!!!

With all of this, I pray we are not only stepping out of bed this morning, but are ready to shout his praises. May we all shout together in perfect harmony the praises of our glorious God this day and everyday.

Holy Holy Holy, Lord God Almighty!!!!

Psalms 23:6: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

DRINKING FROM MY SAUCER

By John Paul Moore

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.
And as I go along life's way, I'm reaping better than I sowed,
I'm drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed.
Haven't got a lot of riches, and sometimes the going's tough,

But I've got loved ones around me, and that makes me rich enough.

I thank God for His blessings and the mercies He's bestowed,

I'm drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed.

I remember times when things went wrong and my faith wore somewhat thin,

But all at once the dark clouds broke, and sun peeped through again.

So Lord, help me not to gripe about the tough rows that I've hoed,

I'm drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed.

If God gives me strength and courage, when the way grows steep and rough,

I'll not ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough.

And may I never be too busy, to help others bear their loads,

Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed!

WHO CALLS THE SHOTS?

By Elder Tim Cunningham
Ethridge, Tennessee

"Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?" (Ezekiel 18:25; also v.29). Who determines what is "equal" (fair, just, equitable). The most fundamental question of the study of ethics is, "Who determines what is right or wrong, God or man?". If man is the ultimate determiner of morality, how can there be any sure standard of right and wrong, since one opinion would be just as valid as the next. This is why we often hear people asserting, "Don't impose your morality upon me!" If man is the ultimate arbiter of right and wrong, their demand is valid. However, if God determines right and wrong, the demand is meaningless because you and I are not the determiners of morality, justice, and goodness.

If man ultimately determines what is just and unjust, right and wrong, then who among us will call the shots? Obviously, it will be those in power. This is how the horrors and atrocities of a Nazi Germany could become reality. In such a society, only those in authority can impose their view of morality upon others.

Western civilization was founded upon the belief that there is a creator God and that only God has the right to determine right and wrong, good and evil, justice and injustice. When men drift from this view, anything goes.

When we look at history and God's relationship to past events, we are often tempted to cry like Israel of

old, "The way of the Lord is not equal."! When we remember God's cataclysmic judgments of old (the worldwide flood, the Canaanite wars, Sodom and Gomorrah, etc.), it grates our human sense of what is right, ethical, and just. But when we dare to judge God and His ways in such a manner, we are setting ourselves up as judge and arbiter of morality. There is a fundamental flaw with this whole procedure. Man is innately sinful, fallen, and incapable of recognizing his own moral flaws and shortcomings. How can a fallen being be qualified to determine what is just and right for other fallen creatures based upon our own flawed sense of right and wrong? The Lord proclaimed that it was Israel whose ways were unequal: "...are not your ways unequal?". And if we are unqualified to determine ethical standards for others, how can we possibly rightly judge the actions of the infinitely holy God? Only God has the moral right to determine what is good, just, righteous, and moral, because His ways are truly "equal."

The context of the verse quoted from the book of Ezekiel reveals that God holds individuals to account for their own sins; not the sins of others. God judges and rewards according to His infinite knowledge of man's ways. This is the epitome of true justice. And yet Israel accused God of injustice. This proves that no man is capable of determining what is just and unjust. Israel beheld the epitome of justice and righteousness by God's dealings with His people and yet declared His ways unequal.

God asserted concerning His thoughts and ways,"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). Our duty as His children is simply to humbly confess our lack of understanding and need of wisdom and to recognize that God's thoughts and ways are always just, right, and best.

May our prayer echo that of the apostle Paul,"33) 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! 34) For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Romans 11:33-34)

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

By Elder Bobby Willis (Deceased)

There was a song many years ago on the Pop Charts entitled "Sound of Silence." Sadly this title could be used to describe many family homes, even of those who profess to be Christians. One cannot be a true disciple of Christ unless prayer is a high priority in their home. Breakfast, lunch and dinner should begin with a prayer of thanksgiving and one of asking for the

Lord's blessing. Believers who are serious about their service to God engage in prayer on a regular basis.

Many well known historical figures of the Bible placed a high priority on prayer. Abraham, upon going into the land of Canaan, "built an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD." (Genesis 12:8). Any time we have a move of any significance to make, it would be far better to call upon the name of the Lord to make sure we are following His will and not ours.

Then there was the time in the life of Moses when the Lord told him to bring the people of Israel into the land of Canaan and Moses said unto the Lord, "Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way..." While it is true that Moses did not always do that which the Lord had instructed, we find that Moses was a praying man, seeking the direction the Lord would have him to go. Earlier, we find Moses crying out unto the Lord in prayer when he did not know what he should do. In his prayer, "Moses cried unto the Lord saying, What shall I do unto this people? They be almost ready to stone me." (Exodus 17:6). This might seem like a desperation prayer as Moses had begun to fear for his life. When the time of our life seems to be short and we know not what to do, our prayers almost become desperate in our need to know what would be pleasing unto the Lord.

Need often facilitates prayer. Even though it should not always be that way, we would be kidding ourselves to say otherwise. However, if prayer is a priority in your home, it should be exercised often, regardless of our circumstances.

One of the most known biblical occurrences of intense prayer is when David prayed that his young child be spared (II Samuel 12:16). A similar situation is faced by Elijah when the son of the widow woman who had made him a little cake, had no breath left in him. Elijah then "cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God,..." These were intense prayers by David and Elijah, but they were offered up as a matter of priority. These two men of God were accustomed to praying unto the Lord in whatever they set their hands to do.

Another example of prayer as a priority is found in Daniel 6:10-11, "Now when David knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God." Daniel was known for his prayers unto the Lord as he knew of their importance.

If prayer is not a high priority in your life, it is high time that you consider it for what it is, a commandment of our Lord. Even amongst the thieves which had defiled the temple, the Lord made this declaration, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer;..." (Matt. 21:13), Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46). The

Lord was quoting from the writing of Isaiah (Isaiah 56:7). It must be noted that the Prophet was speaking that which the Lord Himself had given him. Surely what the Lord says is worth taking note of and doing. "Think About It!" (May 2016)

YHWH

There was a moment when Moses had the nerve to ask God what his name is. God was gracious enough to answer, and the name he gave is recorded in the original Hebrew as YHWH.

Over time we've arbitrarily added an "a" and an "e" in there to get YaHWeH, presumably because we have a preference for vowels. But scholars and Rabi's have noted that the letters YHWH represent breathing sounds, or aspirated consonants. When pronounced without intervening vowels, it actually sounds like breathing. YH (inhale): WH (exhale).

So a baby's first cry, his first breath, speaks the name of God.

A deep sigh calls His name – or a groan or gasp that is too heavy for mere words.

Even an atheist would speak His name, unaware that their very breath is giving constant acknowledgment to God.

Likewise, a person leaves this earth with their last breath, when God's name is no longer filling their lungs.

So when I can't utter anything else, is my cry calling out His name? Being alive means I speak His name constantly. So, is it heard the loudest when I'm the quietest?

In sadness, we breathe heavy sighs.

In joy, our lungs feel almost like they will burst.

In fear we hold our breath and have to be told to breathe slowly to help us calm down.

When we're about to do something hard, we take a deep breath to find our courage.

When I think about it, breathing is giving him praise. Even in the hardest moments!

This is so beautiful and fills me with emotion every time I grasp the thought. God chose to give himself a name that we can't help but speak every moment we're alive.

All of us, always, everywhere. Waking, sleeping, breathing, with the name of God on our lips.

(Author Unknown)

"Those to whom God was gracious in his eternal counsels, and for whom he provided a ransom, he cannot execute his vengeance upon without a change in his affection and an alteration of his purposes." -John Brine

CHURCH NEWS

Bethany Primitive Baptist Church, Ecu, MS. Sept. 12-14, 2025. Everyone is invited to the annual meeting at Bethany Primitive Baptist Church, 5 miles west of Ecu, MS on Hwy 346, the 2nd weekend in September, 2025 (Sept. 12-14). Services Friday night, Sept. 12, at 7:00pm. Saturday, Sept. 13, at 10:30am, followed by lunch. Sunday, Sept. 14, at 10:30am, followed by lunch. Elder Michael Gowens is the invited minister. Elder Jeremy Wise is Pastor of Bethany.

Tombigbee Fellowship Meeting. New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, Hatley, MS. Sept. 19-20, 2025. The Tombigbee Fellowship Meeting will be held with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, in Hatley, MS the 3rd weekend in September 2025 (Sept. 19-20). Services Friday night (Sept. 19), with supper at 6:00pm and worship at 7:00pm. Saturday (Sept. 20), at 10:00am with lunch and 1:30pm afternoon services. Elder Tim Cunningham is Pastor of New Hope.

Friendship Primitive Baptist Church, Winona, MS. Sept. 27-28, 2025. Friendship Primitive Baptist Church in Winona, MS will have its annual meeting the 4th weekend in September 2025 (Sept. 27-28) Services Saturday, Sept. 27 at 10:00am followed by lunch and afternoon services. Sunday at 10:30am with lunch. This is an open meeting. Elder B.T. Strum is Pastor of Friendship Church.

New Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, New Albany, MS. Oct 10-11, 2025. New Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, Fairground Rd. New Albany, MS will have a meeting the 2nd weekend in October 2025 (Oct. 10-11) Services Friday night, Oct. 10 at 7:00pm. Saturday, Oct. 11, at 10:00am and followed by lunch. No afternoon service. Elder Michael Gowens is invited minister. All are invited and pray the Holy Spirit will come and bless efforts and send revival among God's people so come and dine.

James Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Tremont, MS. Oct 17-19, 2025. Everyone is invited to the annual meeting at James Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Stateline Rd, Tremont, MS the 3rd weekend in October 2025 (Oct. 17-19). Services Friday night, Oct. 17, at 6:00pm with Elders Jerry Wise and Steve Weaver preaching. Saturday, Oct. 18 at 10:00am with Elders Buddy Abernathy and Joe Nettles preaching. Lunch served at noon, followed by afternoon services with Elders Jonathan Wise and Morgan Sims preaching. Sunday services, Oct. 19, at 10:30am with Elders Victor Quick and Braden Rogers preaching.

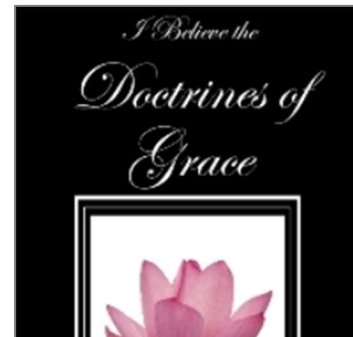
Clear Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Maben, MS. Oct. 25-26, 2025. Clear Springs Primitive Baptist Church at 55 Tahoe Rd in Maben, MS will have its fall

annual meeting the 4th weekend in October 2025 (Oct. 25-26) Services Saturday, Oct. 25 at 10:00am, followed by lunch, and 1:30pm afternoon services. Sunday worship, Oct. 26, at 10:30am with lunch. Elder Tim McCool is the invited minister, and we plan use other ministers to preach as well, as the Spirit guides. Elder David Wise is Pastor of Clear Springs Church.

OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES

We were in West Virginia during our vacation this summer and Isaac was getting frustrated because it was raining a lot. He was concerned that clouds and rain would obscure the views of the New River Gorge Bridge, which we were traveling to an overlook for. I told him, "Son, there is nothing you can do about the weather; you can't change it, so you've just got to roll with it." To which his 5-year old brother Eli added from the back seat, "Yeah, we're not Jesus!" (Jonathan Wise)

FEATURED BOOK



I Believe the Doctrines of Grace, By Michael Gowens

Salvation by grace alone is the heart of the gospel message. Apart from God's sovereign initiative to bestow blessing on people who deserved his wrath, heaven would be vacant and a thousand hells filled to capacity. The good news of the gospel is that salvation, from start to finish, is all of Divine grace and none of human works. Salvation is of the Lord.

You may purchase this book at the link below:
<https://www.sovgrace.net/product/i-believe-the-doctrines-of-grace/>

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**GAIUS AND DIOTROPHESES
(The Third Epistle of John)**

By Elder Matt Jordan
Arab, Alabama

The wellbeloved Gaius. John is writing to Gaius and addresses him as wellbeloved. John tells Gaius he loves him in the truth and that he prays for Gaius' prosperity. What an encouraging greeting!

John had received some brethren who testified of Gaius' commitment to the truth and his walk therein. This report had been a source of great joy to John. Evidently, Gaius had been taught by John and John considered him as one of his own children in the gospel. John's greatest joy was to receive this kind of report about 'his children'.

Gaius' commitment to the truth was greatly evident in his charitable walk. John encourages Gaius to act faithfully toward the brethren in this charity. But Gaius had also acted charitably toward strangers. And it seems that both the brethren and the strangers had borne witness of Gaius' charity before the church. Gaius must have been a great blessing to those brethren as well as to the strangers! John's confidence in Gaius' charitable manner of life prompted him to conclude that Gaius would be more than willing to support these people in the journey they were taking. John told Gaius if he would do that, "thou shalt do well." This seems to be the reason John wished Gaius would prosper and be in health, so that he could continue to run his charitable course well.

We should seriously consider what John is saying about Gaius. Being committed to the truth goes far beyond defending doctrine and fighting error. No doubt, Gaius would be right there beside those seeking the old paths and those who were fighting error. But how many of those engaged in defending and fighting would have been by Gaius' side as he charitably supported those in need? This particular need involved those going forth "for his name's sake", who had taken nothing from the Gentiles.

Commitment to truth that is heart-felt changes our manner of life and is most strongly manifest in how we minister to others. A charitable manner of life is a testimony to the truth that prompted the charity!

Truth without love (charity) is cold and harsh and becomes only academic. Love without truth lacks purpose and often becomes self-serving. Both situations dishonor the Lord.

The spirit of Diotrophes. But then we come to another man...Diotrophes. The characteristic that John identifies first regarding this man is he "loveth to have the preeminence." Whereas Gaius loves Christ, Diotrophes loves himself. He loves it when all eyes are on him. He probably likes to hear himself talk.

Gaius is identified with a group who follows Christ; Diotrophes is identified with a group who follows Diotrophes. Gaius was well loved by the Apostle John.

Diotrophes was well loved by Diotrophes and those in his group. Gaius loved Christ's church. Diotrophes tried to make it his church.

Diotrophes might have claimed that he was defending the doctrine and the order, but he was actually discontent. He was probably not content with either Christ or himself, truth be known. He certainly wasn't content with his own little group; he tried to destroy those who disagreed with him, speaking malicious words against them. Not only would he refuse to receive John and the brethren, he would forbid others from receiving them. And those who tried to have some fellowship with the ones Diotrophes opposed, he would start a campaign to have them cast out of the church.

Apparently, one of John's main purposes for writing this letter is to let Gaius know that he plans to come visit him soon so they can speak face to face. And it seems that John also attempted to write to a church nearby, or one that Gaius was familiar with, where Diotrophes called home.

We're not absolutely certain of the past history, if any, between Gaius and Diotrophes but one thing is certain: John was planning to visit that area and if the opportunity should arise, John was planning to confront Diotrophes. John wouldn't confront him in the same manner Diotrophes confronted people. John could remember a time when his spirit was not what it should have been and that helped John to keep his own spirit in check. But he also knew that someone like Diotrophes was such a detriment to the cause, an attempt ought to be made to correct his self-centered, aggressive and demanding spirit.

John's simple admonition to the beloved... "follow not that which is evil, but that which is good." The self-centered and uncharitable attitude of Diotrophes was from a spirit that knew not God. Charity is from a spirit that is of God. Follow that spirit.

Two men... Gaius and Diotrophes. Who do I look more like? When I look in the mirror of God's word, I see a glimpse of Gaius but I see way too much Diotrophes. Any little bit of Diotrophes is too much.

With whom would I rather associate and fellowship? Others out there who are more like Gaius... that's who I want influencing my life. Those who are following that spirit, which is of God.

THE PRE-EXISTING FACT OF JUSTIFICATION

By Elder Dan Samons
Little Flock, Arkansas

Some say, "Justification by faith is the heart of the gospel." This is like saying, "Believing in God is the heart of the truth." While believing in God is important, it is not the heart of the truth. God exists whether you believe it or not. His existence is a PREEXISTING FACT. Believing that fact does not make it true.

Believing that fact simply aligns your beliefs with what IS true and allows you to enter into the joy and benefits thereof.

And so it is with the justification of God's people. If our justification by Christ is not a PREEXISTING FACT, by covenant or cross, then believing it will not make it so. If someone says, "You've won the lottery," believing that declaration will not make you a lottery winner, if winning the lottery is not a PREEXISTING FACT. But if it IS a PREEXISTING FACT, then believing that declaration allows you to enter into the joy of knowing that truth and living in accordance with it.

Likewise, justification by faith is not the heart of the gospel; justification by Christ is the heart of the gospel (Romans 8:33) because the gospel is a declaration of justification accomplished, not an offer of justification extended (John 19:30).

JESUS—THE GOOD SHEPHERD

By Elder Ralph E. Harris (Deceased)

The relationship which Christ sustains toward His people as a Shepherd is one of the most beautiful, delightful, and comforting that could ever be contemplated by those who have been made partakers of the Divine nature. To David, who was himself a shepherd, and, as such, a type of Christ, it was especially appealing to view His Lord in this light. And, based upon the popularity of the 23rd Psalm we would have to conclude that this appeal has a very broad base and extends to all God's people who are experimentally familiar with His word.

It is particularly pleasing to consider the care the Lord takes of His people and the gracious provisions He makes for them daily; to think of the many wonderful deliverances he was wrought on their behalf; the comfort and rest He has afforded them to feel in His covenant promises; the renewings and revivings He has wrought for them in their seasons of depression, discouragement and fear; His leadership and instruction in the ways of truth and righteousness which has fitted them to serve Him and honor Him acceptably; His watchcare and protection over them in all the dark seasons through which they have passed; the many bountiful feasts He has prepared for them even when surrounded by a cruel and unfriendly world, and the joyous manifestations of His love and mercy to their souls which has given them fresh assurance of future mercies and has brightened their hope of dwelling in His house forever.

There are many characteristics possessed by sheep which make it needful, yea, *necessary*, for them to have a shepherd, and likewise there are many distinctive traits and peculiarities possessed by the born again children of God which makes it necessary

for them to have a *heavenly* Shepherd. Sheep are by nature fearful, timid and feeble, and are subject to many harmful and dangerous circumstances. When left to themselves they are virtually helpless and defenseless, and if they should be left unattended for an appreciable length of time they would soon destroy themselves as a result of their own habits. These things can likewise be applied to God's people in a spiritual sense. Though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak, and when the Lord blesses them to see themselves, in a measure, as *He* sees them, they are made keenly aware of their frailty and inability to overcome the onslaughts of sin, Satan and the world in their own strength. Yet, they are prone to stray away from their Shepherd, their heavenly Guardian and Protector, without whose providential care and safekeeping they would soon perish.

Such straying results from their temporary forgetfulness of how greatly dependent they are upon Him and what awful dangers they are exposed to when they are out of fellowship with Him and looking too much to their own strength and ingenuity to guide them through this "present evil world." Seeing that there is sufficient analogy between God's people and sheep for Him to speak of them as such, and for Him to apply the title of "the good Shepherd" to Himself, surely it should behoove them to stay as close to Him as they possibly can and to submit themselves as wholly to His kind care and keeping as they are capable of doing (James 4:7). It is not reasonable to turn from the loving supervision, the attentive providence, and the wise and unerring leadership of One who is all-sufficient, to rely instead upon the weak, unstable and capricious arm of flesh.

There is every reason for God's people to trust *Him*, and every reason *not* to trust in *themselves* and their own strength and ability. He is the *Chief* Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4), and we should therefore submit ourselves, in the way of obedience, to His supremacy, lordship and authority. He is the *Good* Shepherd (John 10:11, 14), and we should acknowledge in all our ways that he knows far better what we need than we ourselves, and that is far *better*, and in the end much *easier*, to follow the path in which He *leads* us than to stray off into any other path we might choose for ourselves. He is the *Great* Shepherd (Heb. 13:20), and therefore *can* be, and *should* be trusted in all conditions and circumstances to ably and wisely provide all the care and protection He has promised. It would do us little good for Him to be the *Chief* Shepherd and the *Good* Shepherd if He were not the *Great* Shepherd. He is not only high above all others and infinitely gracious, but He is also omnipotent and therefore immanently qualified in every particular to direct, protect, and provide for the sheep of His fold. May we humbly acknowledge at all times our deep and abiding need of all the precious things He provides us as an all-wise, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-glorious, all-sufficient and

altogether suitable Shepherd, and may He help us to ever keep close to Him and not become scattered and entangled in the thickets of worldly care, confusion and strife.

(From "Advocate and Messenger", March 1985)

The AMEN CORNER:
By Elder Ricky Harcrow
Fort Payne, Alabama

"First things First"

The words of the poet say, "*He who could for sin atone, must have no blemish of his own*". We agree with the writer of long ago. Although He had no sin He was made sin (not sinner) for us "**that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him**" (II Cor.5:21). He came as it was written of him in the volume of the book to do the Will of God. Thus in all that he did and all that he became the Will of God was manifest. By himself he has fulfilled the law, cancelled its demands, borne its penalty, suffered the vials of almighty wrath, poured out his soul unto death, descended into the grave and encountered and conquered the king of terrors on his own ground in his own house. To add to that, we could say that Christ has despoiled the enemy of his sting and robbed the grave of its victory.

The testimony recorded that, as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, Christ also took part of the same. That through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject unto bondage. He took not on himself the nature of angels but rather 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**" (Heb. 2:14-17).

The captivity and bondage of God's people was in the relation in which they stood with Adam. "**Therefore by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation**" (Rom.5:18). It took a sacrifice above that which the old covenant could provide in the sense that the law was weak through the flesh. It took more than a relationship to Abraham, a worldly sanctuary, the blood of animals and carnal ordinances to emancipate them from that government. The Son of God must be made flesh and dwell among them, he must be made like them in all points and yet be without sin; and although like them in the point of humanity, yet holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.

It is not hard to understand that His sheep (people) were held captive in the prison house of death and God's Justice kept the door. However, through the

suffering and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus the full demands of the law were met and Justice could ask no more. Having done all and suffered all the law could demand and justice could inflict, he could enter into a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands by his own blood. In doing so ONCE He obtained ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOR US. Those SHEEP Christ redeemed he does most assuredly CALL. We say that He knows his sheep and CALLS His sheep. He says, "**I know My Sheep and are known of Mine**". I add also; HE knows those who are NOT OF HIS SHEEP. Romans 8:29 says, "**Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also CALLED, and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified.**" It is scriptural to say that this is a holy calling that is not based on the work or obedience of the object (man) but according to his (God's) own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ before the world began (II Tim.1:9). It is an effectual call; that means the call is valid and has power to perform and produce its designed effect. If the call was NOT effectual it would NOT be a HOLY calling and would be defective. BUT A CALLING THAT IS HOLY CANNOT BE DEFECTIVE. It must secure the design of HIM who calls. HIS calls are NOT GENERAL calls to all mankind without exception, as the Missionary Baptists and the followers of Campbellism assert, but rather special and particular to the Sheep without a defective design (Jn.10:27-30).

The Arminian will teach that God may call but the will of man may very well render the call INEFFECTIVE and the charge goes up from these same religious teachers, who know not what they affirm, that He may call some that are not his and endeavor to make them his but alas, He may often fail in the enterprise if men are NOT willing to obey. They say of the Primitive Baptists, "*You hinder the preaching of the Gospel, make the church ineffective, destroy the zeal of the young and hinder the unsaved from coming to Christ who might otherwise be saved.*" I say that such a charge is false and the burden of proof is upon those who levy the charge to prove it.

I do say this and let it be understood in no uncertain terms. There is not a Primitive Baptist Preacher that I know or ever heard of that does not believe in preaching the gospel, but no matter how able the preacher, no matter how blessed the church or how zealous its members, it will NEVER add one soul to heaven's number. The will of man nor the preaching of the Gospel is not designed or relied on to perform such a task. The very thought of dividing the honors of salvation between the savior and the sinner is to say the least, foreign to the Word of God. NO MAN can add to his faith until he is in possession of faith; faith is a fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God and without it we cannot please God. No man can let his light shine who has no light to shine. The breaking of

the pitchers of Gideon's 300 men could have produced NO LIGHT if the lamps had not first been in the pitchers. We say, as does the bible, that God has delivered us from the POWER of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; given us an inheritance among the saints in light; constituted us as children of the light; commanded us to walk in the light and let our light shine. The reason; **"For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"** (II Cor. 4:6). AMEN.

(From "Share The Word", February 27, 2014)

BEHOLD THE MAN!

By Elder Rickey Taylor
Booneville, Mississippi

"Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!" (John 19:5)

The presentation of Christ by Pilate as he stood before the Jews that had delivered him into the hands of Rome for him to be crucified. Pilate had hoped to release Jesus, realizing that the Jews had delivered him for envy. Now Jesus comes before the judge and his accusers with a plaited crown of thorns and purple robe that the soldiers had placed upon him in mockery. Pilate thought he would present to them Jesus in his humiliation. However, we know that wouldn't be enough for his accusers. He was later crucified.

Behold the Man! is a term that goes all through the Bible. Telling us to look and see the man Christ Jesus. Behold means to observe, see, or bring attention to. As Pilate told his accuser to observe, give attention, and look upon this man. When the serpent beguiled Adam and Eve and caused them to bring sin and death into this world. The Lord told the serpent that the woman that he deceived would bring forth children, and from her seed would come the redeemer to bring them back to the good standing that they had originally with God. Satan had bruised the heel, but Christ would bruise the devil's head. (Genesis 3:15) Behold the Man!

This prophecy is fulfilled in John 1:14. When the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us! The shepherds near Bethlehem were told by the angel to go see the babe in the manger. Go and see, Behold the Man!

We read of a man named Simeon that was waiting for the coming of the Son of God, was moved by the Spirit to go see the baby Jesus in the Temple. He took the babe in his arms and said now Lord let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. (Luke 2:25-30) Behold the Man!

Through the four gospels we read of the woman at the well, (John 7:6-28) the centurion's faith, (Matthew

(8:5-12) the woman who touched the hem of his garment, (Matthew 9:20) the woman who gladly would take the crumbs from her master's table! (Mark 7:26) These and more looked upon Jesus and saw that he is the Son of God. Behold the Man from Nazareth!

Now let's go to a sad place known as Calvary. The smell of death is all around. Many malefactors had died on this hill. Now Jesus was here hanging between heaven and earth, on the cruel cross. The breath of life slowing being cut off from his lungs as his body was slowly collapsing upon them. He said few words, but what he said was profound. One small sentence he said as he gave up the ghost. "It is finished". Behold the Man hanging upon the cross! The work of redemption was finished right there on Calvary. The serpent head bruised! Now the children of God have once again, a good standing in the eyes of God. Behold the Man!

On the third day Christ arose! Death had no dominion on him. Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene. (John 20:14-17) Afterward the disciples saw him. Then around five hundred people saw his resurrected and glorified body. (1 Corinthians 15:6) The disciple Thomas who was not among the disciples who first saw Jesus. When the disciples said they had seen him and talked with him. Thomas, in his old Adam nature, said I don't believe you, and I won't unless I see and feel the prints in his hands. There was a day when the disciples were all together, and Thomas was among them. Jesus suddenly and quietly appears in the midst of them. Straight to Thomas he goes and says to him. Feel the prints in my hands. Reach and feel my pierced side? Stop this unbelieving, for now you see me risen from the grave! (John 20:25-29) Behold the Man! A man like no other, who defeated death, and delivered his children!

All through the word of God we see the face of God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6)

We who know that we have been saved by the grace of God. We know that our salvation lies not in our works, but in the Lord Jesus Christ. Behold the Man! (September 2018)

Hebrews 10:12-13: "*12) But THIS MAN, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.*"

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