

Glad Tidings

November

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

Next month families will gather together to celebrate Christmas, and as part of that they often participate in the exchange of gifts. Despite the materialization of the holiday season, I pray we understand the value of any gifts we receive is not found in the item(s) themselves but in the fact that we have people in our lives who love and care for us enough to do so. Despite the fact that Christmas is a man-made holiday, I pray our minds are focused on the reality that our God loved His people so much that He gave them the greatest gift in the history of the world-Jesus Christ!

This gift is rooted in the omniscient God foreseeing the ruin of the fall and making provision to rescue a vast number of Adam's descendants from the wrath He will justly carry out for sin. As Paul told the Roman church, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23)

The gift of Jesus Christ to this world was not for the purpose of making salvation a possibility for every human being but to successfully save God's elect. The elect are those God cast His love upon and chose in Christ before the world began, and it is only to them the imputed righteousness obtained through Jesus' shed blood was intended: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy be without blame before him in love." (Eph.1:4) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." (1 Pet. 1:2)

Jesus himself taught His death was not a sacrifice for all people. After stating "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11), He went on to say, "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." (John 10:26) The redemption He purchased is applied to His sheep in the new birth, which is brought to pass by God at His appointed time as He sends the Holy Spirit into the hearts of His children sometime in their lives, irresistibly drawing them to Him (inwardly) and quickening them from death in sins to spiritual life. This direct work of God is described in the following verses of the same passage by Christ: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:27-28)

As the "second Adam," Jesus- God manifest in the flesh- accomplished salvation for His elect/sheep who

He represented on Calvary just as surely as every human in the lineage of Adam, represented by him in Eden, is conceived a sinner. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. 5:18-19)

Much of the discussion about these concepts focuses on the fact God loves and has mercy on some and not others (Rom. 9:11-16), and that He sent Jesus to die for some and not others. However my friends, let us reflect on how glorious it is He loved YOU and gave His Son for YOU. As Paul wrote, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20) Our love for God and desire to serve Him is evidence of His great love for us. (1 John 4:19)

There was nothing whatsoever to merit such a decision on God's part toward us. We are no more deserving of this gift than those left in their condemnation, since we were by nature his enemies when He died for us and reconciled us (Rom. 5:10). The only reason is that He is sovereign, and it pleased Him to do so. Our only hope is grace (unmerited favor), and grace is best understood in terms of a person-Jesus Christ. God's grace was manifested by the sending of Christ into this world to save unworthy sinners. What a gift! "And of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:16-17)

This month we will celebrate Thanksgiving, and even if trials are encompassing you on every side, pause and reflect that because God has given Jesus for you, you in fact have everything. Reach down and draw water out of the well of salvation when you are in the desert of life and drink deeply out of it (Isa. 12:1-3). Also know that because of this great love He has promised to be with you no matter what. Let us be thankful for this gift of Christ during the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, as well as most importantly every day of the year, and let us seek first the kingdom of God.

"More about Jesus would I know, More of His grace to others show, More of his saving fullness see, More of His love who died for me." (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)

In this pressure packed world, we may sometimes be prone to make compromises but many times we are held up and embolden by the faith and courage of other saints. Paul was scourged, beaten with rods and in many perils for the cause of truth as he went preaching the gospel of grace. He was imprisoned with the intent to stop not only him but the spread of the gospel. Did this cause everyone else to give up and stop spreading the truth? On the contrary, Paul says, "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;...And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." (Phil. 1: 12, 14). The preacher may be bound but the word of God is not bound; the gospel was spread in the New Testament despite efforts to halt its spread by the forces of evil.

As we attempt to run our race with patience, we may grow weary with a tendency to abandon the race but we should be emboldened by Jesus who has left us a perfect example. The Lord knew our tendency to do this; therefore, he has left encouragement in the scriptures. Hebrews 12:3 says, "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Consider

Jesus and what He endured when we grow weary of the journey and remember He went through all this for sinners such as you and me. The truth is we will be a dropout if we are attempting to trust in our own strength and ability. We must remember that Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13).

The devil as our mortal enemy and adversary desires to rob us of the joy of our salvation and he will appeal to our weary mind set. How do we escape his temptations and maintain our course? We aren't left in the dark. Peter writes, "Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." (1 Pet. 5:9). Other brethren go through the same afflictions and still remain dedicated to finishing their course like the apostle Paul. If they can remain faithful, it should help us to also be steadfast and unmovable. It is sad to see saints drop out of church for one excuse (not reason) or another; it is evident they haven't considered faithful saints in God's word.

We are told to be patient and establish our hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. (Jam.5:8). The pressures build when the bad news comes and how do we respond? If we respond by trusting in self, we are doomed; consequently, we consider others who have undergone such trauma. James goes on to say, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." (James 5:10). James tells us that the Lord counts them happy (blessed) that endure and gives the example of Job and how the Lord was pitiful and of tender mercy as He blessed him twice as much at the latter end than at the beginning. How many saints have been given boldness to trust the Lord by the example of Job who said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:..." (Job 13:15). We'll never know the answer on earth.

Our hearts may be troubled or at peace depending on how we have utilized God's gifts. It is difficult to be at peace when we seem to be hemmed in on every side; however, God's word says, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Col. 3:15). The peace of God evidently can be allowed to rule (govern) our hearts and we will have less anxiety because we know who our Governor is. This metaphor as I understand it is referring to the judge or governor of the olympic games who decided the winner and awarded any crowns. Paul wrote much concerning contests such as this. James confirms what Paul taught, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (James 1:12).

Paul was comforted by those others who had greater boldness to speak the word of God even though he was in prison. Paul wrote to those in Rome called to

be saints and longed to see them. Why was this true? He desired to impart some spiritual gift to establish them and then explains: "That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me" (Rom. 1:12). Here we see there was comfort by the mutual faith of both Paul and the saints in Rome. Children of God: Please don't forsake the assembly of the saints for there is mutual comfort, strength and encouragement as we meet to worship the Lord. Faithful saints have encouraged other saints for centuries and may we be among those that perpetuate this legacy. (November 2017)

BEING THANKFUL

By Elder Jerry Wise
Pontotoc, Mississippi

"I'm thankful but I'm probably not as thankful as I should be." How many of us have made that statement?

So how do we avoid being just a measure of thankful, or is there a growing trend towards real gratitude, aimed at doubling down on what pleases God and gives him total honor?

Let's be perfectly honest, children of God, there is our way; and the biblical way, in which we might be able to reach such a lofty order of a more achievable thankfulness. ("It will never be our way.")

Here are just a small fraction of biblical teachings, and those of God's people in scriptures, that you might take the time to look them up; who we could all look at and work off of for a greater degree of being thankful to work out our on salvation with fear and trembling!

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." (Philippians 2:13-16)

Winning Christ!! "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" (Philippians 3:8-9)

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold

fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thessalonians 5:15-23)

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Colossians 3:12-16)

"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!!!!!!!

I John 2:7-8 is confusing to me. What was John teaching?

By Elder Joe Nettles
Hamilton, Mississippi

"Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is now past, and the true light now shineth" (1 John 2:7-8). This passage tends to confuse because John seems to contradict himself. In verse 7 he denies that what's under consideration is a new commandment. Then in verse 8 he states that it is a new commandment. This needs to be rightly divided. Whatever is under consideration here must have been from the beginning AND in some way new in the New Testament church. What is under consideration here is love. This is made more evident by John's immediate condemnation in the next verse (v.9) of hatred. Love is an old commandment that has been from the beginning. In Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus neatly summarized the whole of the Old Testament in two commandments - "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". Christ taught that the whole theme of God's word recording his dealings with man in the OT is love. In what way, then, is it now "new" in the New Testament church? He gives the key by saying, "the

darkness is now past, and the true light now shineth". John was teaching that the old, wonderful theme of love is now more gloriously beheld by the New Testament church because we know that love personified, Jesus Christ, has come and sacrificed himself for us! We can look back through scripture and history and see the completion. We have felt the Comforter come into the church opening our eyes to the brilliance of the truth. What the OT saints looked for but couldn't see, we now see clearly...that "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). That love caused him to leave glory (John 17:5), live in poverty (II Cor 8:9), and suffer unspeakably for an elect people who in their original nature hated him (Romans 5:10). That sweet proclamation of love found in the gospel is forever new!

HOW WEALTHY ARE WE?

By Elder Rusty Wise
Tupelo, Mississippi

2 Samuel 12:23: "...But I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

When we add our assets and subtract our debts, what is the balance that remains? Of ourselves, we are buried in sin and have no hope.

All the gold of Ophir is not sufficient to buy us one ounce of what God give us freely; love, peace, joy, comfort, and reassurance from his divinely inspired preserved word, and his own Spirit that dwells within our hearts that whispers sweet peace.

Our wealth is not that which we have obtained, but rather that which we have been given to possess. It is not the corruptible wealth of this present evil world that may be stolen. But moreover, a treasure that is most precious indeed.

As our Saviour calmed the storms by the power of his voice, may he also calm the storms of our hearts. And give us that sweet understanding that our loved ones have made it to that far distant shore, where we will join them one day.

Our wealth is in being heirs and joint heirs with our Saviour Jesus Christ. It cannot be squandered, lost, or stolen. God the Father has given it, God the Son has secured it, and God the Holy Spirit assures us of it. And with it we receive the consolation, Colossians 1:27: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:"

May we rejoice in the wealth of God's eternal grace and his precious hope!

THE FORGOTTEN SINS OF SODOM

By Elder Tim Cunningham
Ethridge, Tennessee

"49) Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50) And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good." (Ezekiel 16:49-50)

Most Bible readers are familiar with the account of the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah under God's severe judgment, recorded in Genesis chapters 18-19.

There were five cities referred to in Genesis 13 as "the cities of the plain", east of the Jordan River. Abraham's nephew, Lot, chose for himself this region when the land in which they dwelt was unable to sustain the abundance of cattle owned by these wealthy men. Lot chose the fertile, well-watered plain of the Jordan River Valley. We read that "Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly." (Gen. 13:12-13).

The sin for which Sodom is most notorious is revealed in Genesis 19, when the men of the city attempted to sexually molest the two angels who were sent to deliver Lot and his family from God's judgment of the city. This is one of the darkest, most depraved accounts recorded in holy scripture.

The despicable actions of the men of Sodom were in direct violation of the sexual ethics revealed by God in His divinely-inspired law (Leviticus 18). The New Testament writer, Jude, described "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them" as "giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh." Consequently, they are "set forth for an example" of God's "judgment of the great day" (the final judgment) by "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (Jude v.6-7)

It is easy to get the idea that this was the only sin that characterized the city of Sodom. But we would be greatly mistaken to draw that conclusion. There were other sins that produced a degenerative effect that led to their being - to use the apostle Paul's language - "given over to a reprobate mind." (read Rom. 1:18-32).

The prophet Ezekiel addressed the oft-forgotten sins that contributed to the ultimate judgment of Sodom. We would do well to give serious attention to the prophet's words.

While faithful stewards of God's truth will certainly address the sin of Sodomy at appropriate times, thankfully, it is not a sin with which most of our Primitive Baptist congregations are struggling. However, the prophet Ezekiel addresses the "forgotten" sins of Sodom. Even a casual reading of

this passage will reveal that these sins hit much closer to home for most of us as professed followers of Christ.

Consider carefully this inventory of iniquity from Ezekiel 16:49: 1) Pride; 2) Fulness of bread; 3) Abundance of idleness; 4) Failure to strengthen the hands of the poor and needy.

Much could be said about each of these sins. But we can essentially summarize these points by stating that Sodom was a prideful, gluttonous, lazy society that failed to care for the poor and needy, even though they were blessed with abundance. Sound familiar?

Our society is divided over whether or not it is the government's responsibility to care for the poor and needy. But one thing is for certain: it is without question our duty as the people of God, especially as members of the Lord's church (read James 2:14-26; 1 John 3:17-18). Far too many professing Christians are willing to ignore our duty and let the government do what the Lord has commanded the church to do. Any humane government should do what it can to care for its citizenry. But God commands us to do what we are able to do as individuals and churches to alleviate the burdens of others. The question is, are we doing what we can? Or perhaps, are we doing anything?

At the final judgment, evidence of those at the Lord's right hand who will enter the eternal kingdom, His sheep, will not be how doctrinally orthodox they were, nor how many special church meetings they attended, nor how often preachers skinned Arminians in their preaching. The Righteous Judge will say, "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me...Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:34-40). The wicked on the Lord's left hand, who will be condemned to everlasting fire, the goats, will be characterized by the absence of these compassionate virtues.

May God help us to seriously evaluate our lives in light of the forgotten sins of Sodom. May our lives more fully reflect, by His grace, the character of His redeemed sheep.

Examine Yourself So Others Won't Have To

By Elder Clayton Nowell
Headland, Alabama

David, by inspiration of the Spirit, provides an excellent example to us by saying, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." (Ps. 119:59) Notice, as he considered his own ways, he had to "turn" his feet to align himself with God's word. That, friends, is something we ought to do on a regular basis. While reading God's word, meditating on it, or hearing it preached, we should examine ourselves to

see whether we are in the faith. (see 2 Cor. 13:5) Paul also had taught, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." (1 Cor. 11:31) If we don't, we put a burden upon others to admonish or rebuke us for things we should have corrected in ourselves. Sadly, with the level of spiritual maturity that exists in many churches today, this last step often goes undone. It takes spiritual maturity to offer the rebuke correctly (in love); and, it takes spiritual maturity to receive such rebuke (humbly). But rest assured, as the above cited passage in 1st Corinthians 11 shows, God will deal with it whether men address it or not.

Now this exhortation to "examine" yourself is easily said and easily passed by without laying much consideration to heart. Right? So for those who wish to lay this to heart and give it some consideration, I offer some questions to guide you into examining yourself. It is by no means a complete list, but if you need help getting started, I think this will do.

Are you bearing fruit of the Spirit? (Gal. 5:22-23) In good times? How about in bad? (Job 2:10) God is good to us all the time - especially when you remember that He has already given us His Son to redeem us from our sins. Are you seeking and drawing strength from the Lord in weakness? (2 Cor. 12:10) Are you being patient in trials? (1 Thess. 5:14) Can you find joy in tribulations? (Jas. 1:2) Not that you enjoy them, but you can find fellowship with the Lord when we suffer in well-doing. (1 Pet. 2:19) Are you walking humbly with God and Christ? (Mic 6:8, Jas. 4:6) Are you settled in the truth that to be great in God's kingdom, we must be serving and ministering for the good of others, not self. (Mat. 23:11) When we are mistreated, are we turning the other cheek? (Mat. 5:39) Are we willing to love/pray for our enemies? (Mat. 5:44) And finally, How are we showing that we love God? (John 14:15, If ye love me, keep my commandments.) That sums it up because loving God and loving one another fulfills His law. (Mat. 22:40, Rom. 13:10, Gal. 5:14)

So how did you rate? When we sincerely 'think on our ways' in the light of His word, we see our need to 'turn our feet to it.' And, Luke 6:41 should become very convicting as we hear Jesus say, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" By the way, your final grade on this exam will be based upon what you do in the future – not what you've done in the past.

13 QUESTIONS

By Elder Daniel Samons
Little Rock, Arkansas

KNOWING BRETHERN BELOVED. We do not know who all of God's people are in this world. We can identify some of them by their sincere conversion

under gospel instruction. The apostle Paul refers to this among the converts at Thessalonica when he said, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." (I Thessalonians 1:4-5)

PREACH TO ANY WHO WILL LISTEN. Nevertheless, in the business of Gospel ministry, we do not know who in any particular assembly are of the elect family of God. We don't know who has ears to hear. We don't know who is ready to follow the Lord in obedience. As a result, it is appropriate to broadcast gospel truth. In other words, we preach the truth among any assembly that is willing to listen and trust the Lord to work out the rest. While we know that only those prepared by God's regenerating work can receive the gospel's testimony (Romans 1:17), we also know that there will be those who have no such preparation. Primitive Baptists have at times been accused of "only preaching to the elect." This statement has some merit, for we know that only the regenerate-elect can be sincerely converted by the declaration of the gospel. But this does not mean that we try to determine one's state of grace prior to moving forward with preaching the gospel. "Can you prove that you are elect before I preach the gospel to you?" That is simply not true. We are willing to preach the gospel to any who are willing to listen. In that respect, our gospel activities may resemble those of other Christian orders.

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE. Where we part company from many in Christendom has nothing to do with the composition of the broadcast audience, but with the nature of the "gospel" that is preached. When someone says, "If you come, He (God) will give you eternal life," they are promoting a quid-pro-quo form of eternal salvation that denies the fundamental truth that regeneration precedes faith. It denies that anyone who sincerely desires to come to God is already in a blessed state of grace (Matthew 5:6) It denies depravity by implying that unregenerate (unsaved) men have an affinity and capacity for spiritual truth that the bible plainly states they do not possess (I Corinthians 2:14). In contrast, the gospel is not offering eternal life to all of humanity "if they will do X, Y, Z." The gospel is the proclamation of the finished work of Christ on behalf of His covenant people and it is attended by the assurance that those who believe it are among his sheep and the admonition to follow the Lord in obedient discipleship.

CONSIDER THIS. The following 13 questions draw that issue out more explicitly in a way that connects the salvation of God's people all the way back to its source in the covenant promises which were certain before the foundation of the world.

1. Can a man who is dead in trespasses and in sins "come" to Christ? No. (Ps 14:2-3, John 5:40)

2. If he can come to Christ, is he incapable of seeking God? No. (Romans 3:11)

3. Is seeking God a good thing to do? Yes, God often commands it. (Isaiah 55:6)

4. Is seeking God pleasing to God? Yes. Otherwise God would be commanding you to displease Him (II Timothy 2:13).

5. If seeking God is pleasing, must it be done in faith? Yes, without faith it is impossible to please Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

6. If a man has faith, is he in possession of eternal life? Yes. "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in me HATH everlasting life." (John 6:47)

7. Can a man who has faith do anything in order to obtain eternal life? No, he already has eternal life (John 3:16), thus anything he ever does is NOT done in order to obtain eternal life.

8. Did he produce that faith naturally or was it a gift from God? Faith is a gift of God, not the produce of the natural man. (Philippians 1:29, I Corinthians 2:11)

9. Does faith produce regeneration or does regeneration produce faith? Regeneration produces the capacity of faith in a child of God (Galatians 4:6, John 3:3), otherwise man's flesh would be profitable unto salvation and the Lord expressly forbid such. (John 6:63)

10. Why is anyone regenerated? God's people are regenerated "because [they] are sons." (Galatians 4:6)

11. How did they become sons? "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," (Ephesians 1:4-5) They become sons unconditionally based on election.

12. Is it possible that one of God's chosen people could somehow end up in hell? No. It is a covenant promise of the Lord Jesus Christ "that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:2)

13. So did Jesus Christ save his people from their sins? Absolutely, yes. (Matthew 1:21, Romans 8:31-39). Indeed that is the core proclamation of the gospel and the reason that it is good news.

Having provided sound answers to those questions ask yourself this: Is the gospel a quid-pro-quo offer of salvation to all of humanity or a proclamation of the finished work of Christ on behalf of his people?

CONCLUSION. Biblical answers to these 13 questions establish in no uncertain terms that God's people are saved as the result of what God has done by covenant on their behalf plus absolutely nothing else. It follows that being saved by grace is not the result of any "seeking" on the part of the sheep. Rather, salvation is the result of the abiding love and unyielding diligence of the Great Shepherd and Savior of the sheep - the Lord Jesus Christ - apart from any

assistance on the part of his people whatsoever. It is precisely as the apostle Paul declared saying, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14)

CHURCH NEWS

New Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, New Albany, MS. Nov 23, 2025. New Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, New Albany, MS will have a Thanksgiving service on Sunday night, November 23, 2025 beginning at 5:30pm with Elder Ben Shettles bringing the message, followed by sandwich supper.

Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Randolph, MS. Nov. 30, 2025. Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Randolph, MS will host the 5th Sunday night fellowship meeting in November 2025 (Nov. 30). Worship at 5:30pm, followed by supper. This meeting rotates between New Prospect, Laodicea, Bethany, and Hopewell Primitive Baptist churches.

Bethany Primitive Baptist Church, Ecu, MS. Dec 14, 2025. Bethany Primitive Baptist Church, 5 miles west of Ecu, MS will have its annual Christmas singing on 2nd Sunday night in December 2025 (Dec. 14) singing beginning at 5:30pm with refreshments served afterwards. Come and worship the Savior in song with all the saints. Elder Jeremy Wise is Pastor of Bethany.

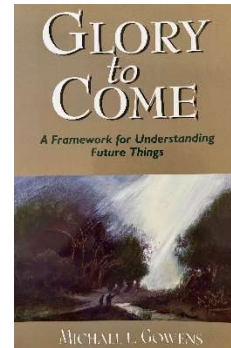
Laodicea Primitive Baptist Church, Lafayette Springs, MS. Dec 21, 2025. Laodicea Primitive Baptist Church, Lafayette Springs, MS will have a Christmas singing 3rd Sunday night in December 2024 (Dec. 21) singing beginning at 5:30pm with supper afterwards. Elder Steve Weaver is Pastor of Laodicea.

OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES

My nephew, Charlie (7 years old), told his father, "Dad, God sends me a lot of messages". To which his dad asked, "What does he say?" Charlie said, "Behold, do not watch strange movies." We all should follow Charlie's advice, and behold, don't watch strange movies or strange tv shows. (David Wise)

"We may trust Him fully, all for us to do; They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true." -Frances Ridley Havergal, from the hymn *Like a River Glorious*

FEATURED BOOK



Glory To Come, By Michael Gowens

Today's believer has lost something precious and its recovery is of paramount importance. Pastor and author Michael Gowens writes: "The modern Christian...has lost the pilgrim perspective that was so characteristic of the early church."

The loss of this heavenly focus has resulted in a spirit of pessimism, cynicism, and hopelessness. "Into the darkness of postmodern despair," says Gowens, "the glorious gospel must once again shine with the triumphant message, "Behold, He cometh!" Glory to Come will fill your heart with anticipation and renew your perspective on the present as you contemplate the future.

You may purchase this book at the link below:

<https://www.sovgrace.net/product/glory-to-come-a-framework-for-understanding-future-things/>

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/>

<https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/dm00769/>

Living Sacrifice by the Renewing of your Mind

By Elder Michael Ivey
Ocean Springs, Mississippi

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:1-2

This scripture indicates a renewed mind is necessary in order to provide our bodies (natural-self) as a living sacrifice to God. Thus, believers whose thinking is influenced by corrupted values, ideas and

motives that drive the thinking of fallen humanity are not living sacrifices to God.

Paul's imperative to provide natural-self as a living sacrifice to God by a transformative renewal of the mind hearkens back to his description of man's fallen nature in Romans chapters 1 through 3. There, he declares none are righteous through human nature by asserting fallen man is inclined to deny the truth of God, not want to know God; and has instead "worshiped and served the creature more than the creator." (Romans 1:18-28) Paul thus invokes David's conclusion from Psalms 14 and Psalms 53 regarding the morally fallen nature of humans: "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3:10-12)

Because human depravity greatly influences worldly values, the logic of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices to God cannot be grasped by those whose thinking conforms to this world. Therefore, Paul urges believers to "be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." Renewing is translated from the Greek word ἀνακαίνωσις pronounced an-ak-ah'-ee-no-sis. It means: to renovate, to completely change for the better. This is the same word Paul used in Titus 3:5 to describe the work done by the Holy Ghost when a person is born again; which is: "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Regeneration is a direct and immediate operation performed by the Spirit of God on the heart/soul of an elect person. In Romans 2:29 Paul characterizes it as circumcision which "is that of the heart in the spirit." (See also Colossians 2:10-13) In other words, the Holy Ghost isolates the heart, which is man's soul (where one's innate sense of personal self being exists) from all else of one's corrupt human being. He effectually quickens the elect person according to the Covenant of Grace of the Godhead (See Ephesians 2:4-6, Colossians 2:13-15) by applying the blood of Christ which cleanses the soul from sin, which application Paul refers to as "the washing of regeneration."

The Holy Ghost quickens the elect person with new life by the seed of God which remains in the renewed or, renovated, new creature.

Where before fallen nature is wholly oriented to sinful pursuit, rejects knowledge of God and instead worships self and self-made gods, the new creature hates sin and loves God. (See Romans 2:15, 1 John 4:19) Yet despite having been renewed by the Holy Ghost the new creature is still personal self who exists in and identifies with our physical being that is not effectually changed by regeneration.

This means even after a person is born again guilt from sinning produces a sense corruption and bondage in one's mind. Just so, new creature self is subjected to suffering when we indulge our human-nature/carnal selves by "fulfilling the desires of the

flesh and of the mind." (Ephesians 2:3). In Romans 8:20 Paul describes this as "the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

In Romans chapter 7, Paul characterizes this conflict between born again self and unchanged human-nature/carnal self as a warfare which causes wretched sorrow as an inward sense of worthlessness owing to guilt from sinning. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:18-24

Paul's language indicates this warfare is conducted in our minds. He begins by saying, "I know," which implies thinking. He cites the role of his will: "for to will is present." He writes of good and evil, which are mental concepts associated with moral values of right and wrong. Inwardly, in his born-again self, Paul asserts he delights in the law of God. Yet, he also experiences mental sensations of wretchedness as the emotional response to doing evil. For this reason, because the battlefield is in our minds, in Romans 12 Paul exhorts believers to transform thinking by the "renewing of your minds."

Leading up to this exhortation in chapter 12, Paul mentions Abraham as an example of one who did not linger on a mindset of doubt and discouragement when thinking about God's promise of an heir. Instead, by faith his mind was renewed and transformed away from thinking about God's promise with doubt and discouragement due to the natural implications of the deadness of He and Sara's flesh in regard to procreation, to a hopeful mindset. Looking to God for help, Abraham was able to lean on hope because he believed God raises the dead and thereby, with renewed mind, he was able to hope in the promise and power of God without regarding he and Sara's failed flesh. With faith in God, which transformed the focus of his mindset from doubt in his own flesh to hope in God, Abraham confidently anticipated God returning "the time of life" to he and Sara who would then conceive and have a child. (See Genesis 18:10,14)

In Romans chapter 8:35-38 Paul alludes to the victory-in-Christ orientation of renewed minds that are transformed by the confident and convicting realizations of eternal security through God's love,

which he contrasts to the defeatist and fatalistic pessimism of worldly thinking. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Elsewhere in scripture Paul provides additional information regarding the necessity of renewed minds in order to serve God and thereby fulfill our purpose. In Philippians 2 he identifies the Savior as our example of trusting in God; and how we as His servants are to think of ourselves. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:5-8

He concludes his pastoral letter to the church at Phillipi by identifying subjects which should occupy our renewed minds. These replace worry with confidence in God's love and concern for us accompanied by thankful attitudes. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." Philippians 4:6-8

In conclusion, the transformative impact of a renewed mind causes believers to think and make decisions in our lives according to God's will. Faith guides us to consider and make choices with a mind that is set upon understanding and doing "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2) By faithfully trusting God believers experience the "peace of God" from the "God of all peace" as justification by faith, which can neither be attained nor even understood by worldly thinking.

ENDURING HARDNESS AS A GOOD SOLDIER

By Elder Jerry Williams
Tampa, Florida

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." -2 Timothy 2:3

When we read Paul the Apostle's epistles, are we not struck by the frequency of his use of military comparisons and metaphors? This is constant in his description of our station as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. This comparison with warfare is relentless and enduring.

Hardness (or being hardened) is defined as "not easy to wear out or cause to give way." Our steadfastness in standing requires not wavering or faltering in our faithfulness as a good soldier.

What are these good qualities of a "good soldier?" What is necessary to endure hardness? The Lord does not require of us anything for which He has not equipped us. As the hymnwriter wrote "Gird thy loins up Christian soldier, Lo thy Captain calls thee out."

What is a good soldier? He is one well-equipped. He has the necessary weaponry of warfare in order to "fight the good fight." It is not reasonable to expect a soldier to discharge his duty without the right equipment. Paul itemized the equipment of a good soldier in Ephesians 6. He details the armaments that "*ye may stand against the wiles of the devil.*" That context is in battle. A good soldier has sufficient shoes needed for a rugged run. He would be in much trouble if he lost his shoes. He has his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel. The Cave of Adullam, a refuge for David and his soldiers, was not accessible by horseback or carriage but rather by foot; thru rocky and steep terrain that bare feet could not scale. Necessary footwear is required of the good soldier: then and now. There is no substitute for the preparation of the gospel. Paul also tells us to take the shield of faith, with which we are empowered to quench and extinguish those fiery darts and onslaught of wickedness. He further describes the sword of the Spirit; the word of God. A soldier equipped with a sword recognizes that the sword is an extension of his arm and is a part of his body. Oh, that we today might view the "more sure word of prophecy" as an extension of our being, equipping us for every turn and trial!

Paul said in 2 Cor 10:3:5, "*For though we walk in the flesh,) we do not war after the flesh. (For the weapons of OUR warfare are not carnal, but mighty thru God to the pulling down of strongholds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God...*" In America today, we citizens want our military to have the finest equipment available. This equipment must be of the best quality and durability. Is our spiritual equipment less important? Of course not. Because we have the sufficient equipment, in quality and quantity, He expects us to use it properly and consistently.

Paul tells Timothy that the man of God, equipped with scripture is throughly or fully and completely furnished unto all good works. We are not partially furnished, but fully or completely furnished. Our necessary equipment is completely sufficient.

A good soldier is trained. Without proper training, the excellence of our equipment will be of little use. A good soldier is trained in the art and science of warfare and in the use of his equipment. Training requires discipline. Paul told the Corinthians in 1 Cor 9:25-27, *“And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body; and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, which I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”* Training requires discipline, focus and consistency. When we begin a project, don't we envision the end result whether on paper or in our mind? We like to see the end result so we can move toward the goal. A good soldier is trained not only with his equipment; he is trained by beginning to think like a soldier. He thinks tactically and strategically.

The training of a good soldier is never complete; it is ongoing and continuing. Paul's desire is that we grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord and that our knowledge increase more and more. Just like that sword, we should view the Bible as an extension of our arm. It should be worn and used.

If we went to school to be a teacher, we should begin to think like a teacher, or a lawyer as a lawyer, an engineer as an engineer, and so on. The discipline with which we think molds our character. Proverbs 23:7 tells us, *“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he...”* Even our “down time” is molded by what we think. Psalm 1:2 tells us that the blessed man's *“delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”*

An equipped and trained soldier should be devoted. A good soldier must be faithful to his oath. The Lord told us in Luke 16:13, *“No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”*

Good soldiers are taught obedience by example. They see the lives and actions of their superiors and are inspired by their devotion, which makes them better soldiers. Our greatest example of obedience can be found in our Leader and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul explains it this way in Hebrews 5:7-9, *“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a*

Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;” Our Inspiration was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Finally, a good soldier is valiant. Valiance is the possession of courage, bravery and stoutheartedness; having the character of valor. David wrote in Psalm 108:13, *“Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.”* David was blessed to see that any victory he enjoyed was given to him by the Lord. Therefore, act bravely and courageously. Among the greatest Biblical examples of valiance is found in the Book of Numbers. God took Israel to see the land He gave them to possess. Spies were sent into the land to view God's blessing to them. They returned amazed at the bounty of the provisions. However, they murmured that the land was unattainable because of the giants as sons of Anak. Everyone that had spied out the land said in unison that we cannot take this land because of the obstacles. Except Joshua and Caleb. They alone said that we can possess this land because God has given it to us, and He will give us the victory. The response of Israel was to stone to death Joshua and Caleb. They exhibited the virtues of a good soldier in valor, bravery, courage and stoutheartedness. Is it not amazing that these two alone possessed the land? In Numbers 32 the Lord tells us, *“surely none of the men that came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land ... because they have not wholly followed me: save (or except) Caleb...and Joshua ... : for they have wholly followed the Lord.”*

We today, are admonished and encouraged to endure hardness as a good soldier. May we, as believers on the Lord Jesus Christ, who have taken up our cross to follow Him, rightly use the equipment He has given us. May we seek the training of a good soldier. May we have increased devotion to Him, and may we live valiantly as good soldiers. May our God strengthen us for the tasks ahead.

THANKSGIVING DAYS

By Sister Hattye McCutcheon (Deceased)
*(Sister McCutcheon was the wife of the late
Elder E. D. McCutcheon—Editor)*

Yesterday, today or tomorrow may not be the historically established thanksgiving day that Abe Lincoln proclaimed in 1863, but it is thanksgiving daily. Never can we praise the Lord enough for the natural life we are permitted to live, and much less for the love in our hearts. Every one of these blessings had its beginning with the Father above. He preserves us in this world and is our Master who delivers us.

As timely creatures, who are we any way? It is so blessed to realize our heavenly Father is our all in all.

What is more meaningful than for us to say in our heart, and in our lives, thank you Father for loving us enough to be our creator, our saviour and redeemer, our prophet, our priest, our king, but also our elder brother.

We could not cause ourselves to be born, to live in the world or be caught up into heaven when our time is ended on earth. What is there to deter us from stopping every day long enough to pray and thank him for giving both natural and spiritual life, and being our guide to see us through this life. More gifts for thanksgiving are given to us every day. We assemble in his great name to adore the King of heaven—of the whole universe. The fact that he has commanded us to take up our cross and honor him as we live on earth is enough to cause us to thank him forever. “We are bound to give thanks always”.

Every time we meet in his name for worship, we feel the sweet consolation, being in one accord. This is another measure of “thanksgiving”. Some times we meet and do not feel the Lord’s presence as we ought. We are commanded to pray to be given his grace, but before we reap, we are instructed to sow seeds to his glory.

Every good and perfect gift that comes down from the Father of lights is one of thanksgiving for us. Let us pray to be able to count many more and give thanks for each one.

(From “*Glad Tidings*”, November, 1984)

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

By Elder Rickey Taylor
Booneville, Mississippi

Genesis 1:27 “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

What does it mean, for man to be created in the image of God? Man is not an exact copy of God in the human body. Everybody looks different in human form from one another. So it cannot be this way that man is created in his image. Image comes from a Hebrew word that means a representative figure. So Adam and Eve were created to represent their Creator, in a way to bring glory and honor to him. There are 3 things that God put in Adam to be a representative to him.

1. Man was originally a moral being. Moral means to do those things which are right, in the eyes of God. Those things which are not pleasing to God were immoral. Man was originally made to be morally upright. He was inclined to do the right moral thing.

2. Man was made to be spiritual towards God. He was grounded in reality, but his thoughts would be toward a world that could not be seen with the naked eye. He would have a deep respect for all of God’s laws. He was compassionate, curious, open hearted,

courageous, and kind. His thoughts would be toward God and what he desired of him.

3. Man was made to be highly intellectual like his Creator. Adam was one of the smartest individuals that ever walked upon the earth. We read in Genesis 2:19-20 that Adam named all the creatures of the earth and sky. God gave him a superior intelligence over all the rest of his creation, giving him the dominion over all of them.

Then God gave him a help meet, by causing a deep sleep to fall upon him and taking a rib from him. With this rib he made a help meet that Adam named Woman. Adam would refer to her as bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. They both loved one another upon first sight. They were created originally in this way and God was pleased with them and all his creation **Gen 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.** So why did it not stay that way? What happened?

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: Notice that sin had not yet entered into the world at the time of Adam and Eve’s creation. It would come later as our text in Romans says. God did not create sin, nor did he put sin in the world. It was Adam who brought sin into this world, by disobeying God. Adam was made inclined to obey God. However, God gave him the option to allow him to be disinclined by choosing against him. When Adam chose to obey God, he did that by his own choice, therefore giving glory and honor to God. This he did until Genesis 3 when Satan beguiled Eve to take of the forbidden fruit of the tree of good and evil, and she gave of the fruit for Adam to take of, and he did. This action brought sin into the world. And death by sin. Now these two people who were made in the image of God. Would find it much harder to bear the image of God by having sin added unto them. God would drive them out of the garden, and they would struggle with it until death overtook them. For the penalty of sin is death. That’s how sin came into the world. Regeneration was not necessary until Adam brought sin into the world. After that every human being was born with a nature of sin. Psalms 51. Then God began to regenerate a portion of the human race, that are his children. We cannot serve God with our sinful nature. So God causes us to be born again, so we can live close to him. When we walk in that inward nature he gave us upon regeneration, then we bear the image of God, and bring glory and praise to his name. (R. L. Taylor)

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