

Glad Tidings

April

FROM THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

2026

“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

Ahithophel – The Downward Spiral of Bitterness & Unforgiveness

“And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David’s counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.” (2 Samuel 15:12)

Ahithophel stands as a cautionary tale for the dangerous downward spiral that bitterness and unforgiveness and a life-consuming personal vendetta will end up destroying your own life. In the Bible narrative, Ahithophel begins as a wise counselor to king David. His counsel and wisdom was so well regarded by both David and the people that *“it was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God”* (2 Sam. 16:23). It would be fair to say he was the wisest counselor in all the kingdom. However, Ahithophel went from David’s trusted counselor to his bitter enemy joining Absalom’s rebellion and plotting how he can help Absalom destroy David. What happened to cause this drastic change?

The answer for Ahithophel’s sudden hatred of David is found in piecing together the genealogies. Ahithophel’s son was Eliam, who was one of David’s mighty men (2 Sam. 23:34). Eliam’s daughter was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam. 11:3). David’s egregious sin of adultery was with Bathsheba, Ahithophel’s granddaughter. David also murdered his grandson-in-law, Uriah. Eliam was one of David’s mighty men, along with Uriah, no doubt having forged a great bond with him in their many battles together, in addition to being Uriah’s father-in-law. No doubt David’s mighty men and Eliam would have been in the battle against the Ammonites, and they would have seen Joab put Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle and then inexplicably retire from him purposefully that he would be killed. When it came out that David had impregnated Bathsheba and murdered Uriah, any allegiance to David that Ahithophel had sharply turned to hatred and bitterness that consumed his life in how he could now destroy his newly sworn enemy.

Let me first say that David was totally in the wrong at every step of the way in his sin with Bathsheba. His adultery and murder were inexcusable. He was judged harshly for his sins, as he ought to have been. However, it was the Lord’s responsibility to judge David, not Ahithophel. It should be noted that Ahithophel had a real reason to be bitter and hate David in a worldly sense. It was not merely a

miscommunication or fabrication. This was a valid, heinous offense. Also, while he probably put all the blame on David for relations with Bathsheba, let’s not forget it was a consensual affair; she was not forced. Yes, David did abuse his power, but Bathsheba was to blame as well, as a consensual participant in the affair. However, from Ahithophel’s perspective, it would have been easy for him to presume that David had used his royal power to force Bathsheba into this unwillingly and diminish any culpability of his granddaughter.

Sometimes people can allow small insignificant things to grow and fester and let a small mole hill of offense become an immovable mountain of unforgiveness in their mind. However, Ahithophel started with a real, true, valid mountain of offense against David. We see though that his hatred, bitterness, and unforgiveness did not hurt David, it only hurt him. God judged David for his sin. He lost his newborn son, and subsequently 3 other sons died in reaping the fourfold judgment he agreed with in Nathan’s parable (2 Sam. 12:1-7). He had rape among his children, murder of his son by his brother, rebellion of Absalom, and many other calamities. The sword never departed from his house all the rest of his life (2 Sam. 12:10). This is one of the most egregious series of offenses – adultery, murder, lies, and coverup – that anyone could be asked to forgive someone for. However, David was forgiven of these sins by the Lord (Ps. 32) even though he had to reap the effects of the sword he had sown the rest of his life. If God forgave David, then everyone else should forgive David as well. However, Ahithophel refused to forgive David for his sin, and he allowed that unforgiveness, bitterness, and hatred to destroy his own life, while it did not hurt David at all. It hurt other people – such as David’s concubines – but his unforgiveness did not hurt David, only primarily himself. Such is the case with all unforgiveness. We only hurt and possibly even destroy ourselves by refusing to forgive others; the other person is not hurt at all by our grudge and quest for revenge. Therefore, we must follow the command to forgive others who have egregiously hurt us just as God has forgiven us for Christ’s sake (Eph. 4:32).

Absalom’s revolt against David took place probably 12 years after his sin with Bathsheba. Ahithophel has been watering and fertilizing this root of bitterness and unforgiveness for 12 years to where his hatred and desire to exact revenge on David consumes his actions now that he finally has a chance to supposedly

exact revenge through Absalom. When Absalom finally asks for Ahithophel's counsel, he attempts to publicly humiliate David by Absalom going in unto David's concubines on the top of the house in the sight of all of Israel (2 Sam. 16). Anyone can clearly see the personal nature of his counsel. David was up on the roof top when he saw Bathsheba when he forced her (from Ahithophel's perspective). Now, he attempts to exact revenge on David because of what he perceived was done to his granddaughter; he has Absalom force David's concubines in a high elevated rooftop for all of Israel to see. A despicable act that was the result of Ahithophel's desire to exact revenge upon David in a similar lewd act of David's past sin. He did not care who he damaged in his quest for revenge against David, principally he did not care about the physical and emotional trauma to these ladies, David's concubines. Also, while Absalom's rebellion had a lot of momentum and popular support among the people up to this time, this heinous act showed publicly the wicked immoral character of Absalom and his counselor, Ahithophel, and actually severely damaged the popularity of Absalom's rebellion, exactly the opposite of what Ahithophel intended. I think David knew how Ahithophel's personal hatred of him had clouded his former wise judgment, and he had previously prayed for God to turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness (2 Sam. 15:31), which ended up happening.

Now Ahithophel is so hasty in his desire to kill David, he requests 12,000 men to go and pursue David to kill him (2 Sam. 17). However, the Lord brings Ahithophel's plan to naught by the counsel of Hushai. Ahithophel actually had a good plan for the rebellion, but it was the Lord's will to defeat his good counsel to bring calamity upon Absalom (17:14). Ahithophel is so distraught over his plan to kill David not being executed and his ego damaged and Hushai's plan being chosen instead, he goes home and commits suicide by hanging himself (17:23). His life-consuming hatred to kill David because of his past sins against his granddaughter and grandson-in-law, the end result was actually him being so in despair over unfulfilled revenge that he took his own life.

It should also be noted that while David was speaking prophetically of Jesus being betrayed by his own "familiar friend" (Judas Iscariot) that broke bread with him (Ps. 41:9), it is believed that David was also relaying his own personal experience of his own familiar friend, Ahithophel's, betrayal of him (see also Ps. 55:12-14). It is also interesting to note that both Ahithophel's and Judas' lives ended in suicide after their betrayal of their former familiar friend they broke bread with. It's never good to be compared to Judas Iscariot and its most likely that the Ahithophel's betrayal in David's life was the real life event that was used to speak prophetically of Judas' future betrayal of Jesus.

Ahithophel even let his own unfulfilled hatred lead him to kill himself, while if he would have not made that foolish decision, in only a few years, probably less than 10 years, his great-grandson, Solomon, would be king. If he had not killed himself, depending on his age, its possible he could have been the counselor to his own great-grandson as king. However, he let his unforgiveness and hatred of David consume him to such a degree that he removed his own ability to possibly even be the counselor to his great-grandson, Solomon, as the king.

Forgiveness is extremely hard, especially when there is a deep, open wound. However, the balm of Gilead for that gaping, open wound is not revenge against your offender, but the balm is the mercy, grace, and peace of Jesus Christ. The root of bitterness grows naturally in this world that is cursed by thorns and thistles. The seed of unforgiveness that grows into the root of bitterness will grow very fertility in our natural hearts if we are not purposeful to purge it from our hearts. If left unchecked, look where Ahithophel's root of bitterness led him to after letting that unforgiveness grow and fester for 12 years, that led to horrible counsel, the sexual abuse of innocent women, and culminating in his own suicide. While forgiveness is certainly a hard calling, let us forgive freely and quickly, always being reminded of how great a ten thousand talent debt we have been forgiven from lest we allow our unforgiveness of any one hundred pence debt (Matt. 18:22-35) to be the downward spiral that leads to the destruction of our own life. (David Wise)

EDITORIAL OFFICE

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Elder Jonathan Wise & Elder David Wise, Co-Editors

IMPORTANT UPCOMING CHANGE

Dear Friends, Due to the cost of printing and postage, the Glad Tidings mailings have been running a deficit the last few years, despite the very generous contributions of our readers and churches. With those fixed costs in mind, **beginning in May 2026 we plan to begin issuing Glad Tidings bi-monthly** – so 6 newsletters a year, rather than 12 – but do plan to increase the length to 15 pages (rather than 11), and see how the annual finances look in that arrangement. Also, managing 6 newsletters a year, rather than 12, will be much more manageable upon us both who are both in different seasons of life than our dad was when he was the editor. We are both bi-vocational, have young families, and numerous other ministerial responsibilities, rather than retired as our dad was as the previous editor. We want to continue to offer the Glad Tidings newsletter with no subscription fee, so we feel this new frequency can help us attempt to meet that goal. We are committed to continuing to provide this newsletter through the mail, as we know many people enjoy a paper copy. If you would prefer an email version to replace or in addition to a paper copy, please let us know at the email address above. We always appreciate your generous donations whenever you think of us. We hope this paper is a blessing to all our readers. God bless! -From Editors, Jonathan & David Wise

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

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the cornerstone of Christianity because without this great truth there is no resurrection of our dead bodies. Paul said, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." (I Cor. 15:13). Some of the members at Corinth were saying that there is no resurrection of the dead and Paul logically argues that if Christ is preached that He rose from the dead, there can be no reasonable conclusion that there is no resurrection. Why? It is because if the dead rise not then Christ is not raised; Paul's preaching is vain and everyone's faith is vain and they are yet in their sins. Not only is this true, but all those saints that have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (I Cor.15:14-18). Paul writes to the church in Rome: "For to this end Christ

both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." (Rom. 15:9)

We believe that the scriptures are the infallible word of God and the only rule of faith and practice because it originated in heaven. Jesus was on earth for forty days after His resurrection and He showed Himself alive by many "infallible" proofs and spoke of things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3). Jesus suddenly appeared to the eleven disciples after His resurrection and said, "Peace be unto you" and they were terrified as they supposed they had seen a spirit. Jesus gave them assurance it was not a spirit as He said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Luke 24:39). Jesus opened their understanding that they might comprehend the scriptures concerning Him. They were to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high; then shortly thereafter they saw Him depart and carried up into heaven. (Luke 24:51).

It was a flesh and bone body that the disciples beheld, and it will be a glorified body of the saints that shall behold our Lord in the resurrection. Job said, "And though after my skins worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." (Job 19:26-27). Job's declaration by inspiration of the Spirit of God could not be realized without the resurrection of the redeemer that Job knew lived.

Job knew that his redeemer was living as he spoke those words and that redeemer is Jesus Christ that Peter writes about in I Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Jesus, the living redeemer laid aside His glory with the Father and came to redeem His people from the curse of the law and thus save them from their sins. The Apostle John writes concerning Jesus: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18). Jesus ever lives, seated at the right hand of God, to make intercession for the people of God.

There is not anything or anyone that can condemn the child of God in eternity because of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. Paul declares, "Who us he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. 8:34). This is not only a New Testament declaration but also an Old Testament declaration as judgment was meted out upon Christ and not on His people. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall

prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 54:17).

Jesus left the portals of glory and was made in the likeness of men but without the sinful nature of men. He was made flesh and blood because it was flesh and blood that violated the law of God, bringing great condemnation, and it must be flesh and blood that would perfectly keep the law of God and make atonement for the sins of the elect. Just as sure as Jesus was made in the likeness of men, His people will be resurrected in His likeness. David had this assurance in Psalm 17:15: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness." The final change is coming when Christ returns as Paul writes in Phil. 3:21: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." What a day that will be! (April 2017)

CAN THESE BONES LIVE?

By Elder Jerry Wise
Pontotoc, Mississippi

Mankind is limited in abilities for good reasons. Remember the serpent said, You'll be as gods; that didn't work out for any of us.

When was the last time man diverted a tornado or a hurricane? When was the last time man calmed the seas by simply saying peace be still or by any other means? Can man change the seasons or alter the weather? Can man slow down the aging process? (he thinks he can) Well, you get the idea about man's limitations. Can man direct the Spirit of God?

I read that three leaders of different countries were discussing organ harvesting so man could live forever. How ungodly a subject and ridiculous. Everything eventually dies.

We shouldn't be surprised by the unregenerate man in his arrogance, wanting to play God for this is as old as Adam. As we find man is limited in all phases of his life with no ability on his own to even breath without God.

God asked Ezekiel about some dead bones living again. Certainly, man has not the power in which to bring back the dead. These are not flesh and blood with all the internal organs to work with and all they would need for life to breathe into them again. But these are bones dried up, baked in the sun like potato chips. Since man can't breathe life into a body or dried up bones, how dead is the unregenerate person? dead in trespasses and sin? If the dead can't make themselves alive or others, how can he born himself again and live?

Can man direct the Holy Spirit? Do the dead in trespasses and sin even care to live spiritually in peace with his Creator? Did the dying thief on the cross just make up his own mind or change his unregenerate dead in sin self to suddenly ask Jesus to remember him? One does not believe in order to have life but believes because they have been given life. Does life precede action or action precede life? "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)

Adam was made by God fully formed but couldn't make himself live. He was as lifeless as the dead bones Ezekiel saw. It took a power beyond our comprehension to breathe the spirit of life into Adam. Remember Adam was dirt; what are we?

As God breathed life into Adam to be a living human being, so does God quicken the dead sinner to a life in Christ by instant Holy Spirit regeneration? When God speaks it's done. "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 Cor. 4:6)

Once the word of God goes out in an individual just like he spoke the world into existence it will not return to him void but it will accomplish its purpose. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11)

"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?" (Isaiah 40:13) How did the dead come out of the grave at Jesus' resurrection?

"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matt. 27:52-53) We can't lose what God has put in us!! Hallelujah!

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5) "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" (Eph. 2:5)

Can these bones live? "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:" (Ezek. 37:5)

"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!!!!!!!

THE FAMILY OF CHRIST

By Elder Joe Nettles
Hamilton, Mississippi

Matthew 12:46-50 – *“While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. [47] Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. [48] But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? [49] And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! [50] For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”*

Some valuable points of fact can be gathered from this account:

1. We know Jesus was born of a mother, but many deny that Mary went on to have other children with Joseph. Even further, they advocate that Mary remained a virgin to the end of her life, a doctrine called "the perpetual virginity of Mary". This assumption is purely based on notions which have no scriptural basis, as evidenced here. Additionally, if the brethren who accompanied Mary were not familial by physical relation, then the point Christ was obviously teaching was not valid. The Lord was pointing out that his relation with those who crave the will of the Father transcends any earthly relationship. If Matthew intended the term "brethren" in v. 46 as something above earthly relations, then Christ's contrast lacked basis and would be confusion rather than revelation.

2. Any elevation of Mary to a level of veneration (called Marian worship) seems to be plainly contradicted by Jesus' declaration. Mary, as honourable and admirable as she rightly is, holds no greater status among the elect than anyone else.

3. Isn't it stirring to be identified as a brother to our Lord! Though believers are referred to as "brethren" throughout the New Testament with the plain implication that the transcendent relationship is meant, other than the text under consideration there are only two other references in the New Testament where the elect are directly and inarguably referred to as the brothers of Jesus our Lord. What we understand from those texts:

-Jesus has known, loved, and promised to save his brethren before the world began and will have them all when earthly time is no more. (Romans 8:28-30)

-Jesus suffered for his little brethren's misdeeds, then (unlike what I would do) was not angry, distant, or ashamed of them afterwards. (Hebrews 2:10-11)

-Jesus, though unashamed of us, would not be expected to engage in fellowship and worship with us. However, that's just what he loves to do! (Hebrews 2:12)

-Jesus boldly proclaims that he takes full responsibility for his little brethren. No accusation, no

fault, no amount of time, nor any power could overcome his preservation of them. (Hebrews 2:13)

-Jesus recognized our need from the foundation of the world and made everlasting peace happen for us. (Hebrews 2:17)

Please don't mess with me. I have a magnificent Big Brother!

A Study of John 3

By Elder Jackie Smith
Fulton, Mississippi

In the book of John chapter 3 verses 1 through 16 we hear a conversation, a dialogue Jesus has with a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. We also get the setting and the mood as we learn the following:

The same came to Jesus by night, ... The conversation starts as this ruler of the Jews speaks to him, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (verse 5) Nicodemus saith unto him, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus answered and said unto him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered and said unto him, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" (verses 11 & 12)

When we read this dialogue, we see that Jesus is telling Nicodemus of heavenly things which can be known while here on earth. When Jesus tells him a man must be "born again", this "again" speaks of being born from above. Being born from above allows us to see, what we cannot see, if we are not born from above. The *kingdom* he speaks of, which we are trying to see, is the spiritual kingdom that exists for the saints while we are here on earth. He explained to Nicodemus that he must be naturally born and spiritually born to *enter* into this *kingdom*, which we read in verse 5 of the scripture. We know it is to be understood this way, because he confirms in verse 6

what "born of water and of the Spirit" means. It is described as "that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." So we can see and understand that we must be naturally born into the world and still presently be in this world, in the natural flesh and we must also receive from above, from the Spirit (the Holy Ghost), or as it is termed "be born again" to see the *kingdom*. The same terms have to be met in order to enter into the *kingdom* as we live here.

There is then the matter of seeing and entering, or following, which we will consider, but first what else has the Lord shared with Nicodemus? Jesus continues in verse 13 to say, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Jesus is here, but yet he is also "in heaven". The King is here, but remember he will later tell Pilate (John 18:36), "My kingdom is not of this world". Yet, another vision seen with a spiritual eye. The next question for the Christian is, Will he/she follow their King? Well, we cannot follow him into the heavenly kingdom, not right now. But as he told Simon Peter (John 13:36), "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." So if we can't follow him into that heavenly kingdom now, let us now consider what Jesus said about entering into the kingdom (verse 5), about receiving the witness (verse 11), and about believing what was said (verse 12).

We do this by examining verse 14, as Jesus begins to relate to Nicodemus an account from the scriptures (Numbers 21:5-9) where "the people spake against God, and against Moses". Because of their indignation, "the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Seeing this natural result, the punishment in this world from their indignation to God who "is a Spirit" (John 4:24) and to his servant Moses, the people came to Moses and asked him to pray on their behalf to the Lord. Moses did pray for the people, God did hear his prayer, and the Lord made a way for natural salvation from the deadly bite of the fiery serpents. He told Moses to "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." Moses obeyed and "made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Understanding this account, verse 14 & 15 directs us to look upon the Son of man, Jesus Christ, our Lord, "lifted up", who is our salvation from the deadly bite of our own sin. We must see him lifted up, we must see him as that one who came down from heaven, and we must see him as that one which is in heaven. We see this with our spiritual eye, we believe this with our spiritual gift of faith. Then, when we naturally lead our life in belief while we live here on earth, the Spirit then

assures us (Romans 8:16 - "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:"). This assures us, give us confidence of our "everlasting life" that is promised in verses 15 and 16 - "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Dear brothers and sisters, let us enter into the kingdom today by receiving his witness and believing what he said and what he did for us. We can do this by following his instruction given to all his children to perform throughout time upon his departure, (John 13:33-35 - "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.")

May the grace and peace from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and always. Amen.

Serve me up more of "that good part"

By Elder Rusty Wise
Tupelo, Mississippi

Luke 10:40 "But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me."

When the master comes into our home, when he is ever present in our lives, when he visits he visits the assembly of the saints, are we "cumbered"? Are we "careful"? Are we "troubled"?

What is our excuse for ignoring our Saviour? Is there anything in this world, that is more important than what he has to say to us? Perhaps maybe our job, or the entertainment of our children, or physical impairments. Oh how quickly we forget.

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

When the Lord is present, it is time to set all else aside, and enjoy "that good part". To sit at his feet, and to forget all the things that burden our soul. Whereby we may feel a peace that passeth all understanding. Do we hear the voice of Jesus as he speaks to us?

Luke 10:41-42 "... (My Name, My Name), thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen "that good part", which shall not be taken away from her."

Are we like Martha, trying our best to serve up a better meal, than the one that is already being served? It is time to dine with the master. As we go into the house of the LORD today, may we enjoy "that good part", which is "the living Word". And let it be so!

CHURCH NEWS

Pine Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Ripley, MS. April 3-5, 2026. Pine Hill PBC will host a meeting for the revival of the living. We are praying for a gracious rain from above, and we humbly ask for your presence to come be with us the 1st Sunday weekend in April. Friday (April 3) sandwich supper at 6:00pm, and worship at 7:00pm. Saturday (April 4) at 10:30 am, lunch, 1:30 pm worship. Sunday (April 5) at 10:30 am with lunch. Our invited speaker is Elder Ronald Lawrence from Goodlettsville, TN. Come praying for revival not only for us, but for all of the churches in the vineyard of God. We are looking forward to an uplifting Holy Spirit filled and blessed meeting. A time when we can come with thanksgiving and praises unto our God for he is worthy to be praised. Brother and Sisters please come! Elder Rusty Wise is Pastor of Pine Hill.

Chewalla Primitive Baptist Church, Potts Camp, MS. April 10-12, 2026. Everyone is invited to the annual meeting at Chewalla Primitive Baptist Church, Potts Camp, MS the 2nd weekend in April 2026 (Apr. 10-12). Services Friday night (April 10) at 7:00pm. Saturday, (April 11), at 10:30am followed by lunch. No afternoon service. Sunday at 10:30am followed by communion service and then lunch. Elder Gary Rhodes, pastor of Fuller Chapel PBC in North Little Rock, Arkansas, is the invited minister. We would love to have you come and worship with us. Elder Jerry Wise is Pastor of Chewalla.

Sulphur Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Caledonia, MS. April 10-12, 2026. Sulphur Springs Primitive Baptist Church will, Lord willing, host her annual meeting on April 10-12th, 2026. Elder Branam Hooven is the specially invited minister, but we also typically use other visiting preaching gifts as we feel led. Meeting schedule:
 Fri - supper 6pm, service 7pm
 Sat - service 10am, dinner, service 1:30pm
 Sun - service 10:30, dinner
 We are located at 40283 Wolfe Rd, Caledonia, MS (no mail, GPS only). We have members' homes available to keep guests. If a hotel is preferred, please contact Eld Joe Nettles by phone or text at 912-585-9025, and we will be pleased to make accommodations for you.

Clear Springs Primitive Baptist Church, Maben, MS. April 25-26, 2026. Clear Springs Primitive Baptist Church at 55 Tahoe Rd in Maben, MS will host her annual spring fellowship meeting on the 4th weekend in April 2026. Services begin Saturday (April 25) at 10:00am, followed by lunch, and afternoon services beginning at 1:30pm. Sunday (April 26) worship services begin at 10:30am, followed by lunch. This will be an open meeting, so all ministers and our kindred in Christ are invited to attend. Elder David Wise is Pastor of Clear Springs.

Beulah Primitive Baptist Church, Saltillo, MS. May 1-3, 2026. Everyone is invited to the annual May Meeting at Beulah Primitive Baptist Church in Saltillo, MS on the 1st weekend in May 2026 (May 1-3). Friday night (May 1), supper at 6:00pm, and worship at 7:00pm. Saturday (May 2) morning worship at 10:00am, lunch, followed by afternoon services. Sunday (May 3) worship at 10:30am, followed by lunch. Elder James Isaacs and Elder Ronald Lawrence are invited ministers. Elder Tony Lester is Pastor of Beulah.

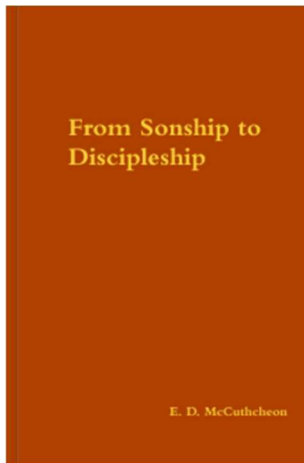
Bethany Primitive Baptist Church, Ecu, MS. May 15-17, 2026. Everyone is invited to the annual May Communion Meeting at Bethany Primitive Baptist Church, 5 miles west of Ecu, MS on Hwy 346 on the 3rd weekend in May 2026 (May 15-17). Services Friday night, May 16, at 7:00pm. Saturday morning worship at 10:30am, followed by a fish fry lunch. Sunday, May 19, at 10:00am with communion, followed by lunch. Elder Ronald Lawrence is the invited minister. Elder Jeremy Wise is Pastor of Bethany.

Laodicea Primitive Baptist Church, Lafayette Springs, MS. May 31, 2026. Laodicea Primitive Baptist Church, Lafayette Springs, MS will host the 5th Sunday night fellowship meeting in May 2026 (May 31). Worship at 5:30pm, followed by snacks afterwards. This meeting rotates between New Prospect, Laodicea, Bethany, and Hopewell Primitive Baptist churches.

NEW MEMBER AT SULPHUR SPRINGS PBC



The congregation of Sulphur Springs Primitive Baptist Church in Caledonia, MS was blessed when Avery Cummings came forward asking for a home in the church on January 11. Bro. Avery (left) was baptized on February 8 by his pastor, Elder Joe Nettles (right). We pray for this dear brother and that he will grow daily in His walk with Christ.

FEATURED BOOK

**From Sonship to Discipleship,
By E.D. McCutcheon**

Elder McCutcheon's masterful treatise on the very important subject of discipleship and growing in the knowledge of grace and Christian responsibility.

Note – Elder McCutcheon (Brother Mac for all those who knew him well) was the original founder and editor of Glad Tidings, began in the 1980's as just a 2-3 page newsletter, and father in the ministry for many in North Mississippi. We are so thankful for Brother Mac's ministry and this book explaining a vitally important distinction in scripture of sonship from discipleship that has endured for many years.

You may purchase this book at the link below:

<https://www.lulu.com/shop/david-montgomery/from-sonship-to-discipleship/paperback/product-1jqy8mgd.html?page=1&pageSize=4>

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/>

CHILDREN AND SALVATION

Elder Daniel Samons
Little Rock, Arkansas

QUESTION: My question has to do with the practical implications of teaching young children about God's sovereignty in regards to salvation. I am part of a church and school community where we teach that salvation is a one-sided work of God, but the practical result, sadly, is a great deal of passivity and the attitude (not necessarily expressed, but alive nonetheless) that, "If salvation is a one-sided work of

God and I can do nothing towards my own salvation, then I might as well live as I please, because God will convert me if that is what He has decreed to do, and if not, there is nothing I can do about it." I gather you have children of your own. Could you explain how to teach young children about the sovereignty of God without fostering an attitude of hopeless despair or passivity? (Anonymous)

ANSWER: First off, thanks for taking a moment to reach out. I'm encouraged to hear that you have an interest in teaching children. Being a father of three, I have some experience and interest in that domain as well. The question you raise regarding the practical implications of teaching God's sovereignty in salvation to children is one that the apostle Paul fully anticipated would attend a proper teaching of salvation by grace, not just to children, but to adults as well. So expected was this reaction, that he built a direct response to it into his epistle to the Romans. After spending 5 chapters teaching the absolute sovereignty of God in salvation, the apostle Paul raises the following rhetorical objection: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1)

In other words, Paul knew that many, whether child or adult, would respond to the preaching of grace by saying, "Well, if that's the case, I'll just sin all I want." He states in no uncertain terms that this is a totally inappropriate response to the grace of God in salvation, saying, "God forbid" (Romans 6:2a). That is because the sheep have been saved unto good works not saved so that they continue in the practice of sin that created the need for their redemption in the first place. Indeed, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:2b)

Consider this: A godly father loves his son based on his relationship to the child. He cares for his son because the child is his and because he loves him and wants what is best for him. This father might say to his son, "I'll always love you," or "My love for you is totally unconditional," and this testimony is true. If the son responded by saying, "Since your love is unconditional, and since I didn't do anything to acquire it, and since I can't do anything to lose it, I'll just live in open rebellion and hatred toward your instruction and loving care." That is an evidently inappropriate, selfish, short-sighted, and unloving response to the father's unconditional love. We recognize this inappropriate attitude when we look at the matter on a horizontal level between father and son. How then can we suggest that this response is appropriate when the relationship under consideration is between God and man? It makes no sense. The son's response is inappropriate whether in reference to an earthly or a heavenly father.

Those who harbor this illogical response to grace are invited to consider the following, "Should you disobey your father's good advice just because he will love you anyway? Or is it better to listen to his loving advice and enjoy the blessings of the father/son relationship that is born of respect and thanksgiving?" While the advice and instruction given to us by our earthly parents is not always correct, nevertheless there is no error in the teaching of our heavenly Father. Much of the New Testament deals with how God's people should live in response to the gospel of God's grace. Paul refers to it as their, "reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) Grace teaches us that we do not obey God so that we can obtain eternal life, but rather because we love God, and believe that he has taught us how to have a more abundant life (John 10:10) that enjoys and profits from the gift of eternal life we already possess.

There is a distinction between KNOWING one is saved by grace and LIVING in accordance with that truth. One might know that smoking causes cancer. They might sincerely believe that fact. Nevertheless, if they choose to smoke anyway, their academic affirmation is of NO PRACTICAL BENEFIT to them. Those who oppose the practical conclusions that arise from this truth - namely that smoking is contrary to good health - will not reap the practical benefit of that instruction.

It occurs to me that the "I'll just sin all I want" response exposes a false belief that lurks in the minds of many - namely that living in sin is a sort of heaven-on-earth, an indulgent carnival of earthly delights full of fun and fulfillment. That is a lie, though it is one that God's people are apt to believe. Jesus instructs us to obey his commandments because doing so is best for us in the here and now and because this is how we express our love for the Lord and for the brethren (John 14:15). While the bible certainly makes reference to the "pleasures of sin" it is important to note that this pleasure is "for a season" (Hebrews 11:25) and that season comes to an end sooner than you think (Proverbs 23:32). While Jesus has paid the eternal sin debt for his covenant people, nevertheless, the practice of sin still has temporal consequences in this lifetime that can be devastating to one's life. Want to go drink your fill of sin in this lifetime? You are at liberty to do so, even if you are a regenerate child of God, but, "be not deceived, God is not mocked. for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Galatians 6:7) Want to drink and gamble? Have fun, but know that sickness and poverty may not be far behind. Want to indulge in sex outside of marriage? You will find a lot of carnal company in that endeavor, but do not be surprised when you end up with an STD, an unwanted pregnancy, an abortion to cover your tracks, or an inability to engage in proper marital relations that may affect you for the rest of your life. The bible is literally filled with examples of saints of God who went down some of these roads with

devastating consequences to their temporal lives (David, Samson, Solomon, Lot, etc.).

All that said, I would point out that there seems to be an indication in the question that you believe that the sovereignty of God in eternal salvation is the same as the absolute predestination of all things. In other words, if God has predestinated and directly and causatively brought about our eternal salvation, then he therefore has absolutely predestinated, directly and causatively brought about everything that ever comes to pass, including every act of heinous sin that has ever been committed. This is not the case. God does not MAKE you sin - and that observation is critically important to a proper view of divine decrees. If God MAKES us sin, then responding that, "God will convert me if that is what He has decreed to do, and if, not there is nothing I can do about it" is reasonable. To avoid this crass error, we must maintain two biblical observations:

1. God does not force us to sin, but rather long-suffers (permits) us to rebel against him. That difference may seem subtle but it is important to avoid casting God as the direct cause and author of sin and to avoid the errors of fatalism (absolutism). "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5)

2.. God's provision to help us avoid sin is always available to his children. We are admonished to avail ourselves of it. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

There is much to say on this topic and it is one of the most difficult matters to discuss without stepping on a logical or unscriptural landmine, but I will leave it be for now in the hope of avoiding a ponderous response. Thanks again for reaching out. Let me encourage you in your endeavors to teach children the sovereignty of God in salvation. It is the truth of how God saves sinners. When properly understood, it comforts the mind and inspires the soul to worship and serve Him in obedient discipleship.

WHITER THAN SNOW

Elder Ed Long

McKenzie, Tennessee

(written during cancellation of Sunday services during the winter storm on Jan. 25, 2026)

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Psalm 51:7)

David lamented in Psalm 51 that he was shaped in iniquity and burdened with sin. He understood the foundational truth that we as humans are more than

just sinners, we are conceived in sin. No one person can redeem themselves and provide payment for the debt we owe. Unfortunately, the first picture shows our true nature. A dark, defined nature of sin.

“For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.” (Jeremiah 2:22)

Jeremiah further explained our futility in attempting to cleanse ourselves. The second picture is representative of that fact. We should all fight our sin nature and live moral, caring, giving, loving lives to show the love of an obedient child living without sin. We attempt to commune with the Spirit and follow His commandments. We attempt to take the yoke of Christ upon us and live as He lived and love as He loved, but we never fully wash the nature of sin away.

“And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (Revelation 7:14-17)

The final picture shows pristine snow. Snow that has never been fouled by sin. The Lamb of God is the only Just One who is able to completely take away our sin. There will be no remnant of darkness on us, no shadow of disobedience and despair. When we arrive in His presence, sin will be banished and perfection will be achieved.

Take a moment to look outside at the crisp, white snow and rest easy knowing that your Savior lives and that He has already shed His cleansing blood. Work hard to follow His commandments even though you continue to fail; because His promise is secure. He has purged us with His hyssop and we are cleaned only by His perfect sacrifice. Let us rejoice and be glad, and praise Him for His gift!

Opposing the Devil's Wiles

Elder Michael Ivey

Ocean Springs, Mississippi

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” -Ephesians 6:11-12

Before deploying to Vietnam in 1970, the Army issued me green camouflage gear suited for jungle warfare. More recently, soldiers have been issued

beige camouflage gear for desert theater of war operations. The purpose of issuing theater-and-enemy-specific gear is to provide soldiers the best possible opportunity to perform their duties and survive in a hostile environment.

God's armor is likewise theater and enemy specific. It equips us to engage in a spiritual theater of war against Satan.

"Loins gird about with truth" implies believers embrace the core truth of God and our relationship with Him, that: He is the Creator. He is morally sovereign. We are sinners saved by His grace.

"Breastplate of righteousness" indicates we are to protect our affections with the righteousness of God, who demands we forgive those who spitefully use us even as He forgave us by grace according to the atoning blood of Christ, who by his sacrifice to the Father is our example of righteousness. Moreover, according to His righteousness, we must repeatedly repent and be converted from employing Satan's evil tactics.

"Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" indicates our daily walk is to be measured and directed according to the principles, examples and the perspective of godliness supplied by the teachings of the gospel.

We are to hold up the "shield of faith" whereby we defend ourselves (and others) against Satan's tactics through personal and shared belief, confidence and trust in God.

Our thinking is protected by the "helmet of salvation" worldview whereby we process every challenge and rebuff all temptations with a mindset governed by God's grace and mercy in the which He "hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: And we trust that he will yet deliver us." (2 Corinthians 1:10)

Finally, prayer is our method of communication with the "Captain of our salvation" from whom we receive tactical directions.

Our true enemy is Satan. He hides this fact and his presence by misdirection intended to deceitfully convinces us our warfare is against other people. He tempts us to lay aside the "whole armour of God" and to instead employ hateful tactics, such as thinking evil of others and by engaging in ad hominem personal attacks by use of labeling (name calling), generalizations and stereo-typing those with whom we disagree. When we do so, we are not withstanding the devil, to our shame, we are aiding him!

Ours is a spiritual warfare. Our foe is the "prince of the power of the air" His strategy employs "spiritual wickedness in high places." In this regard his battlefield does not have physical boundaries and neither does he command standing armies in the field. Because his attacks originate in the spiritual realm he can strike with deadly intent from any direction. Just so, he attacks both sides of given conflicts at will as opportunities arise. He attacks without the camp and

within. To be sure, he employs wicked people to pursue his goal of misery and death against us. But he also works within the camp of God's people by probing our minds through spiritual means of "manifold temptations." (1 Peter 1:6)

Friends, we cannot use Satan's tactics to successfully resist Satan. Jesus specifically makes this point in Luke 11:17-20 in which refutes the notion that by Satan's power he was casting out devils. Moreover, Satan gains a tactical victory against us each time we use his methods, no matter how just the cause may be.

We've been given "the whole armor of God" to resist and defeat Satan's wiles when by deceit and misdirection he tempts us to employ ungodly language and behavior to oppose others. Faithful followers of Christ Jesus understand our warfare is not against "flesh and blood." Rather, we recognize our war is against Satan who is wickedness itself and whose base of operation is spiritual. Therefore, we must put on the whole armor of God to defeat him.

CONFIDENCE

Elder Rickey Taylor
Booneville, Mississippi

Hebrews 3:14: "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;"

Paul is addressing Jews that are considering to depart from the faith to returning to the Old Law service. Paul uses the word confidence to these people. According to Webster's, confidence means "a firm trust" - the state of feeling certain about the truth of something." The certain truth under consideration here is "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that salvation is by grace." Since they were departing from that faith, which they originally embraced, Paul warns them that if they did so they would suffer consequences for their mistake. He uses the word "if" which implies a condition to has to met in order for them to be blessed in their service to Christ.

There are two kinds of promises that God makes to his children. One is an unconditional promise - such as the rainbow that God put in the sky to promise us that never again will he bring a flood upon the earth to destroy mankind. Another is the promise that he made to all his children that they have a home in glory. Christ accomplished our redemption for us on the cross. It is our gift that he promises to us, with no strings attached whatsoever. The other kind is a promise when God lays a condition upon it. Such as the one here that puts a "if" upon it. That promise is only given to us if we meet the condition that is put before us.

What is the condition here to the churches of these Hebrews? Our text says if we hold the beginning of our

confidence steadfast unto the end. Confidence means something that they were certain about, and what they were certain about was that Jesus is the Christ. When they first had the gospel preached to them and seeing the signs and wonders that the ministers were gifted with, they embraced the preached word of Jesus Christ. This was their original confidence that had of Christ and him crucified. When the ministers left to spread the gospel in other places, ungodly men crept among them and began to preach to them to return to the old law service. This they were going to do. So Paul tells them that they were forsaking the original confidence that had in the gospel and Jesus Christ. They were not "steadfast" in their service. God had promised them a rest if they remained steadfast in their belief of the gospel.

There would be no rest to come if they forsook the original confidence they had in Christ. If they believed that Moses and the law was their salvation then they would not enter into the rest promised to the gospel believers. Romans 10:4 "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth". Paul follows this up in the following verse by using the story in Numbers 13 and 14 about what Israel did after they were told about the land of Canaan from the ten spies who had spied out the land. Moses sent out twelve spies to view that land. Two of the spies - Joshua and Caleb - said they could take the land from the inhabitants. But ten of them said they could not take it because the people were much greater than they were. Now these same people of Israel had seen the plaques that the Lord brought on Egypt and Pharaoh. They had witnesses - the parting of the Red Sea, the water that God brought out of a rock. They witnessed the manna sent from heaven to feed them in the wilderness. Yet ten men give a bad report of some giants in that land that God had promised to the heirs of Abraham. They forsook the original confidence that they had in God and began to start back unto the very Egypt that God had delivered them from. There was no reason that they should forsake the certainty or confidence they should have had and not wanting to return to Egypt. Therefore, God punished them and they all died in the wilderness of Sinai. Paul was showing them that they now wanted to do the same thing that Israel did in the wilderness. This is also a warning for us today. We have confidence that God will bless his gospel church today if we do not forsake the assembling of our churches. Also we rest in the fact that Jesus died for our sins, and we have a home in glory. We rest upon that truth and are certain of it. Let us not forsake it here in this time world. (R.L. Taylor)

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