Glad Tidings

FROM THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2027

Philippians 4:13 ***Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow*** *I Corinthians 15:19*

As we enter a new year, most of us probably have made “resolutions” for ourselves. Maybe you want to start exercising regularly, lose a few pounds, or aim for a promotion at work. These and others are of course very worthwhile, but more important are New Year’s resolutions regarding our spiritual lives. Many set a goal to read the Bible through in a year, and this is something that will help you grow tremendously in His word, no matter how many times you have done so. There are many others we could discuss, but doing a better job controlling our tongues is something we should all resolve to do.

James describes the danger of the tongue this way: “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.” (James 3:5-6)

I was recently reading a book about the history of the California gold rush and learned that large parts of San Francisco were destroyed by multiple fires during its early days. We have been in a pretty severe drought lately and under burn bans due to the threat of even a small fire getting out of control. Fire was an especially ominous threat during the days in which big cities had buildings that were mostly constructed out of wood. On October 8-10, 1871, Chicago, Illinois experienced one of the worst disasters in the history of our country in what has been dubbed the “Great Chicago Fire.” The blaze killed an estimated 300 people, destroyed over 17,000 buildings, left 100,000 residents homeless, and caused what would be the equivalent of almost 6 billion dollars of damage in today’s money.

How did this devastating fire start? From just a little flame. It is generally accepted that it started in a barn belonging to the O’Leary family, where a lantern was knocked over, either by someone or, as a popular version has it, by the family cow. Regardless, it fueled a historic conflagration. So many problems stem from sins of the tongue. Quick, poorly chosen words can lead to much strife in relationships between spouses, parents and children, friends, coworkers, and church members.

Getting control of the tongue is difficult, but oh so important. James explains that failure to control the tongue is a sign of one’s inability to control other fleshly desires. “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able to bridle the whole body.” (James 3:2) I know from personal experience it’s easy to overlook shortcomings in this area, but to emphasize how critical it is to discipleship the scripture declares “if any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.” (James 1:26)

We so often excuse our sinful speech in the world's language. I just tell it like it is, I certainly gave him a piece of my mind, and other such phrases are increasingly common among believers. However, the Lord tells us to “let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Col. 4:6) Even being treated with evil is not an excuse to explode with your tongue, because Jesus Christ endured the most unjust treatment in history yet blessed those that persecuted him, as we are instructed to do. (Lk. 6:27-28, 1 Pet. 2:21-23) As Peter writes, “not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.” (1 Pet. 3:9-10)

Furthermore, it is not simply a matter of refraining from vulgar language. Your attitude, tone, and body language/innuendo can communicate quite a bit and have the same sinful effects. As I tell my children, it is not necessarily what you said but how you said it. Preachers have a tremendous responsibility to be examples in their speech, and due to this they “shall receive the greater condemnation.” (James 3:1) Sadly, my experience is that some in the the ministry need to do a much better job of not spreading things about other preachers that, at best, can be easily misrepresented and cast a man's reputation into doubt without people knowing all the facts and the context. Of course, we have a responsibility to defend the truth, and this is often the excuse of those who partake in such gossipy behavior. This falls flat if it concerns someone with whom the person speaking has not, as the biblical pattern is, personally discussed the issue in private. Finally, even if something is true it doesn’t make it appropriate group discussion fodder in another part of the country. I seek to follow the example of my father, whom I never knew to say a negative thing about anyone, even when a person was in error or even had personally mistreated him. The task of preaching the gospel is so consuming we should spend all of our energy in His kingdom engaged in that task. Be sure the Lord will judge such sins.

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying,

that it may minister grace unto the hearers." (Eph. 4:29) We should always listen more than we speak and carefully ponder our words before we utter them. Once they leave our mouths, there is no undoing them and we have to deal with the damage they cause. A good litmus test for whether we should say something is: Is what I am thinking about saying true? Is it appropriate to say and will it be edifying? (Just because you can say something doesn't mean you should) And will saying it bring glory to God? If something fails to meet any one of these three criteria, we shouldn't say it. The good news is the same tongue that can cause such chaos can also be used for much good, as the scripture compares it to a bit in a horse's mouth that controls the whole animal and a rudder guiding a ship through the ocean (James. 3:3-4). Words have had some of the biggest positive impacts on each of our lives. May the Lord bless us all to improve in this area as we journey here below in the year ahead. (Jonathan Wise)

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EDITORIAL OFFICE

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Elder Jonathan Wise & Elder David Wise, Co-Editors

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

As we begin our journey through the year, it would be refreshing to acquaint ourselves again with the great love of God. We once again are able to see whom God loved, when He loved them and to what duration was that love. If God loved them Jesus did also, because Jesus said "I and my Father are one."

God loved the world: Jesus talks with Nicodemus who came to Him by night and teaches him about being born again and the means by which He brings that miracle about. This birth must happen because of the great love of God which Jesus describes to this first century ruler of the Jews. Jesus said, "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." (John 3:16) God loved not every man and woman in the world but teaches Nicodemus that He loved people out of the world of the Gentiles as well as the Jews. This verse is not a proposition for eternal life but rather a dramatic declaration of life to the believer.

God loved the Church: The church is people who are called out. They have been called out of nature's darkness into the light of the Lord and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. These all constitute the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven. (Heb. 12:23) Paul writes how husbands are to love their wives by saying "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;" (Eph. 5:25) This church will finally be presented a glorious church before God without spot or wrinkle. (Eph. 5:27) There is the gospel church which is a called out body of believers but not everyone who is a member of the church of the firstborn will be members of a local assembly of believers.

God loved His own: Jesus left a great example of love and humility when He washed the disciples' feet. This is what John tells us precipitated that occasion. "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Those He loved were in the world but not of the world and they belonged to Him; they were His own. Paul tells us we aren't our own but belong to God because we are bought with a price which is the precious blood of Jesus. (I Cor. 6:19-20)

God loved Israel: God chose Israel to give his law and blessings out of all the other nations. He did this because of His love. Moses writes, "The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you…" (Deut. 7:8) God would keep His promise He had made to their fathers. Remember that not every Israelite was a spiritual Israelite (child of God) and God blessed forever because Paul said, "…For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:" (Rom. 9:6)

God loved Jacob: Jacob and Esau were twins born to Rebecca but before they were born or had done any good or evil, it was established that the purpose of election according to election might stand, not of works

but of Him that calleth. (Rom. 9:11) It had been written before that the elder would serve the younger and in addition “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” (Rom. 9:13) Can we question God in loving and choosing Jacob and bypassing Esau? No, we can’t because Paul goes on to write as he anticipates that mind set, “What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.” (Rom. 9:14) Remember also that Jacob’s name was changed to Israel.

When did God love the world, the church, His own, Israel and Jacob?: He loved them before the world began or ever the highest hill was laid. Jesus prayed for His elect in His high priestly prayer in John chapter 17 that the world may know thou had sent Him and had loved them as God had loved Him. (John 17:23) If we find out how He loved Jesus, we find out how He loved His people. Jesus prays, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” (John 17:24)

Duration of God’s love: God’s love has been from everlasting unto everlasting because that is the essence of God; therefore, Jeremiah tells us concerning his situation and every other heir of promise, “The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” (Jer. 31:3) Paul tells us there isn’t anything that can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:39) Security of God’s love for His people is irrefutable. How refreshing this is in the combative culture in which we live. (January 2020)

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SAVING HIS HOUSE

Elder Jerry Wise
Pontotoc, Mississippi

Noah was given a commission by God himself to build an Ark. He gave Noah specific instructions from the type of wood and the use of pitch, along with the architectural details. Would God give a person a task or command without giving them the skills or ability to which they needed to carry out His instructions? This work God delivers to Noah would seem impossible without modern technology of today. I believe God gave Noah every tool he needed and plenty of time.

Psalm 18:2 says “The Lord is my rock.” Each building is set on a rock if it is to stand. Noah already had his Rock: Almighty God; Jehovah; the word of the Lord is sure and steadfast, without question or hesitation. Doing life the Lord’s way with His instructions will make your Ark solid enough to survive storms on the horizon.

If you’re like me as having already raised children and sent them out into the world and hoping they build their Ark of life on God’s word as their anchor is Christ Jesus to hold them steady will cause you to pray every day for them. O yes, if I knew then what I know now about God’s instructions, my Ark would have been as Noah’s, I believe. Sad isn’t it? My Ark was built on my way influenced by the worldly. Oh, I had godly people all around me, but my Bible was rarely opened.

God’s instructions on building our Ark aren’t grievous or dull. Marriage between a man and a woman. Praying together and in His word every day without fail. Realizing there’s only one to give praise: Jehovah! Raising children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Reminding ourselves each day we are not our own but are bought with a price. The blood of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus.

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” Psalm 127:3 Treat them as such. Well, my Ark could have sunk, and should have, as it deserved to; but thanks only to the merciful God Jehovah, he kept it afloat.

So to every young couple thinking about marriage and having children, think about the Ark; it was to the saving of Noah’s family. So, will you build your life or your family’s Ark as God has instructed?

To those of us who are now up in age, we too still can help the youth to look to Noah’s Ark as an example as to how to build their Ark in life. It all starts with faith in God and his instructions.

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7)

“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!!!!!!!

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IMPORTUNITY

By Elder Joe Nettles
Hamilton, Mississippi

Luke 11:5-13 *"And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; [6] For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? [7] And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. [8] I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. [9] And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek,*

and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. [10] For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. [11] If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? [12] Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? [13] If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

We know that our Lord loves to give gifts to his children. No believer should ever doubt this, seeing as the Father gave the greatest, perfect gift, Jesus Christ our Lord, for us. That being said, however, we often get frustrated because those temporal, Earthly blessings for which we pray are often withheld entirely or not granted in a timely manner according to our impatient, preconceived notions. Why do we have to spend so much time knocking, asking, and seeking?

Part of the answer is realized when we fully accept that our Lord is the sovereign of the universe and eternity. If the Lord never gave us another blessing, He is fully within his righteous character to do so. Thankfully, though, He showers us regardless. He will, however, invariably give in His right time. Cool your jets.

Another aspect came into my mind as I dug back into my memories of raising my children. They asked for a lot of stuff, bless their hearts. The requests for big stuff, little stuff, planned stuff, spontaneous stuff, etc, was frequently being voiced. I loved treating my children, but I knew giving all of their desires could spoil them rotten (and, unlike their heavenly Father, it was financially impossible for their natural father to obtain it all).

Remember, kindred, that God knows you infinitely better than you know you. He knows your present strengths and weaknesses, your potential strengths and weaknesses, and how you and others around you would respond to such requests being granted. God knows that His righteous granting of a good gift to you will stir envy in others around you - Ecclesiastes 4:4 "Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit." God also knows that our basic, original nature is prone to squander - James 4:3 "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." All of this realized should satisfy us to trust in the Lord's perfect judgment; nay, it should take us past satisfaction all the way to rejoicing!

Seeing that kids tend to ask a lot very often, how can we discern what is really important to them? I knew it when they kept asking day after day. Young folks, like immature Christians, are impetuous and easily distracted. What kids may weep over today may never cross their minds tomorrow. It must be a pretty special desire to keep their attention consistently in spite of all the distracting squirrels in their periphery.

Friends, I've learned over the years that if it's worth asking our Lord for, it's worth asking him over, and over, and over again for it. Those times when a heartache strikes viscerally, a need is acute, or a cause is strikingly noble, we get impressed with a heavy, driving desire for intercession and prayer. The vanity of our fleshly wants are daily swept aside by this perceived need. Does it make your heart tremble? Do you find yourselves crying, "Abba, Father"? Is this desire in accord with the revealed will of the Lord found in the Bible? If so, then pray. Pray tonight, tomorrow, and the next days. Pray while you genuflect in worship; pray while you're stuck in traffic. Pray before you eat your omelet; pray while you're beating the eggs. This is how we can know a desire is worthy, and if it's worthy, expect your Lord to take good heed. He loves the importunity of his children in prayer.

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WIDOW'S TWO MITES

By Elder Rusty Wise
Tupelo, Mississippi

Mark 12:42-44 "And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

What do we offer up to our God? Do we run by the house of God, maybe to get a little refill or to make a showing, or just to say to ourselves "well I've done my part for the week, now I can get on to other things". Or we may even think to ourselves "well I may not have done much but I do more than most".

Jesus declares that this little widow did more than all the rest, she gave all that she had. When we come before the presence of the Lord, do we give all that we have? Do we come with the thought of being there before time, so as not to be rushed, with our focus on him? Do we come with a prayer on our lips that God would bless our efforts? Do we sing from the heart, and make a joyful noise unto the Lord, do we pray as the message is being delivered, that God would speak to our hearts, and fill it with joy and peace? Are we truly thankful once again to be in the public worship with all of the saints? When we leave, are our hearts turned to thoughts of when will we be able to gather together again?

The widow gave all that she had in the service of God; what are we withholding that hinders us from serving him? How much of ourselves are we willing to surrender? I pray that we all find the treasure in serving a most wonderful, amazing God.

[1] All to Jesus I surrender, All to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him, In His presence daily live.
[Refrain:] I surrender all, I surrender all; All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

[2] All to Jesus I surrender, Make me, Savior, wholly Thine; Let me feel Thy Holy Spirit, Truly know that Thou art mine. [Refrain]

[3] All to Jesus I surrender, Lord, I give myself to Thee. Fill me with Thy love and power, Let Thy blessing fall on me. [Refrain]

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The Amen Corner – Poverty & Wealth
by Elder Ricky Harcrow
Fort Payne, Alabama

In our nation today poverty is a great concern and truly it ought to be. Those living below the poverty level are increasing by leaps and bounds in every geographical area in the nation. In the southern mountains, commonly called Appalachia, there are many who live in poverty with no hope of having anything much better. Many have lived in the circumstances so long they do not know anything else so therefore it is accepted as a way of life in the region. Many elderly today struggle every day to have some sort of dignified lifestyle in the so-called "golden years."

In the Bible, however, the term poverty or "the poor" does not always mean penniless. But there is a certain principle that is woven through the term. There are terms in the Bible that refer to one called a PAUPER, another term means BEGGAR, or someone who is completely destitute. Our Lord used the term to describe the "poor widow" who gave to the Lord all she had (Mark 12). Paul also used the term to describe the "poor saints which were at Jerusalem" for whom he was taking an offering as he traveled (Rom.15:26). A dramatic occurrence is seen in Rev. 2:9 where the Lord speaks of the believers in Smyrna. Materially those believers were destitute; no job, no money and few possessions. I would just ask us to examine ourselves and think how many of us would be such stalwarts if we were in such circumstances.

Further, however, what do true riches consist of? For the child of God that question demands an answer. I affirm now that I have gotten a good bit older and hopefully a little wiser that true wealth is not based in material things that we can lay our hand on but rather in many things that we cannot see with the natural eye. I prove this by the words of the Lord to the church at Smyrna; "I know thy works and tribulation and POVERTY but THOU ART RICH". What a statement to consider. They were poverty stricken but yet they were rich by the Lord's standards. Paul referred to his own hardships in the same way: "As poor yet making many rich; as having nothing and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:10).

The reverse is also true. In dramatic contrast to the church at Smyrna who were materially poor but spiritually rich, the Laodicean believers were materially "Rich and increased with goods and had need of NOTHING" but spiritually were "wretched, blind, poor and naked" (Rev. 3:17). In my long experience of preaching in many places I have stayed with those who have been blessed in a financial way and many other material ways and I am thankful for that blessing toward them. But I tell you the truth, most (not all) of them let what they had take the forefront when it came to the church. On the other hand I have stayed among the poor who had little but they were more than happy to GIVE me (sinner as I am) the best that they had. I could relate an experience that a great man did for me in conveying me to an appointment to preach and letting his own responsibilities take second place; it was such a sacrifice for him but he was a willing character to help such as me. I can never forget such kindness and the spirit of self-sacrifice that the old brother manifested even though he was not blessed much in a material way.

The question now for us is, which type of riches do we desire? Are we willing to give up something or anything for the cause of Christ? So many talk as if they would give up anything for the cause but in reality everything comes ahead of the cause of truth. I don't have very much. I have not accumulated a lot that one can see but I have laid up a few treasures that a thief cannot steal nor can rust or moth corrupt nor destroy. The love and affection that many among God's people have shown me is a REAL TREASURE and the love I have for them is an affection that will never die as long as I live. As long as I have a somewhat clear mind those treasures and riches keep bearing interest for me personally and as I draw nearer to close, that precious faith that was once and for all time delivered to the saints makes me rich in a world that does not know the meaning of such wealth. "Blessed are the POOR in Spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Amen. (January 2013)

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What is the gospel?
What is the purpose of the gospel?
What is the goal of the gospel?
Elder Gene Thomas (Deceased)

First, the basic meaning of the term gospel is good news, or glad tidings. If this definition can be understood and the actual meaning of the word gospel can be recognized and accepted, a good

understanding of the teaching of Primitive Baptists might be recognized and appreciated.

In order for there to be any "good news" or "glad tidings" there must be some events to have taken place. The gospel must be based on some actual facts that have taken place. The gospel of salvation is the "good news" of salvation. The "good news" declares the wonderful success of the workings of the Triune God in achieving the actual factual salvation of the family of God.

There is much comfort to a child of God when he can believe the gospel ("good news"). However, the fact of salvation accomplished by the sovereign workings of God is a fact whether the report of it is ever made, or not. The preaching of the gospel (the announcing of the "good news") does not add anything to the actual work of salvation. The failure of the gospel (good news) to reach the elect does not negate the actual work of salvation.

The fact of salvation must be accomplished in order for there to be any "good news" to announce. Thus, the purpose of the gospel is for information and knowledge concerning the facts of the actions of the Trinity.

The gospel has no power to transport the family of God from earth to heaven. The gospel was not designed for that purpose; the gospel was designed to give the information of who and what will provide that transportation from earth to heaven. The transportation will take place even for the members of the family of God who do not have the understanding of how it will take place. The design of the gospel is to provide information that will be helpful in giving understanding to a child of God while he lives here in the world. The simple point of the gospel is to remove ignorance and to impart knowledge and understanding.

The gospel makes a revelation of the righteousness of God as stated in Romans 1:17, and the gospel brings to light the life and immortality that a child of God must already possess before it is possible for that life and immortality to be shown. Therefore, the gospel does not produce the life and immortality; it only reveals what is already there. (II Timothy 2:10)

When a person can understand the truth of the gospel he will experience a great timely deliverance. He will no longer ignorantly labor to establish his own righteousness as demonstrated by Romans 10:1-4. He will recognize that his righteousness is actually in Christ and believing this will "save" him from the error of thinking that he must establish his own righteousness. The gospel is the power to save from ignorance while one is still living in the "here and now".

When one can understand the purpose of the gospel, he will see the actual importance of it. It is designed for the comfort and instruction of the family of God while they live in this world. The overwhelming majority of the family of God are in ignorance. The power of the gospel is to tell the children of God the truth and to deliver them from ignorance. The minister of the true gospel has a great task of letting the children of God know the "good news" of the accomplishments of Christ and to open their understanding to the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. The work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit is not dependent upon the proclamation of the gospel, but the knowledge and understanding of the children of God is increased by their appreciation of the truths of the gospel.

Wherever there is ignorance and lack of understanding of the "good news", there is a field of labor for the gospel minister. His message of truth will not take anybody to heaven, but the message will tell of the One who will provide the transportation based upon the work of the Triune God. There is plenty of work to be done because there is much ignorance in all areas of this world, even in the supposed "Christian" countries.

In conclusion, please notice the work of the Triune God beautifully described in these words of scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:14 "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."

Another beautiful expression is found in this scripture: Job 23:13 "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."

These are "gospel" words that bring "good news" and "glad tidings" to the family of God who need to know that the "warfare" has been accomplished.

Just read Isaiah 40 from beginning to end and relish the "good news" that brings comfort to those who are victorious through the grace of God. What a "power" to blast ignorance is found in the explosive dynamite of the gospel of Christ when delivered by a minister who has been called of God and sent to deliver it!!!

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An Open Letter to Parents Looking for a Church

Elder Chris Folsom
Kingsland, Georgia

If I may, I'd like to offer a different perspective. When someone asks, "What's a good church for my kids?" I wonder if there might be an even better question: "What is a faithful church for my family?"

That slight change shifts the focus from finding a church that meets our preferences to finding a church where God is worshipped according to His Word.

The purpose of the church is first and foremost the glory of God. We gather to worship Him, hear His Word preached, pray together, sing His praises, and encourage one another in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Everything else flows from that.

Throughout Scripture, the ordinary pattern is families worshipping together. Parents, especially fathers, are charged with the responsibility of teaching their children the things of God (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Ephesians 6:4). The church comes alongside that responsibility through the preaching of the gospel, prayer, mutual encouragement, and the fellowship of believers. The New Testament presents the congregation as one body, made up of old and young, men and women, married and single, growing together in Christ. In fact, the very letters written to the churches assume that the congregation gathered together to hear God's Word.

The New Testament itself reflects this pattern. The epistles were written to local churches and were intended to be read aloud when the congregation assembled (Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27). As those letters were read, everyone present heard the same message—men and women, older and younger, parents and children. Observing Ephesians 5:19–6:4, Paul moves seamlessly from instructions to the whole church ("Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns...") directly into husbands, wives, children, fathers, servants, and masters—with no indication that these groups were in separate meetings. Paul even addresses children directly in Ephesians 6:1, saying, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." That simple statement tells us something important. Children were expected to be present among the gathered saints to hear the Word of God read and preached. Rather than separating families into different assemblies, the New Testament presents the church gathered together under the preaching of Christ, with parents continuing the instruction and conversation in the home.

Children learn much more than we sometimes realize. They learn by watching their parents sing. They learn by seeing Mom and Dad bow their heads in prayer. They learn by observing reverence for God's Word. They learn that there is One greater than themselves worthy of worship.

When families worship together, conversations naturally continue on the drive home, around the dinner table, and throughout the week. Parents have the opportunity to answer questions, explain what was preached, and help their children grow in understanding. Those moments are difficult to replace.

Another blessing is the relationship between generations. In a church family, children are not isolated from older believers. They learn to love, honor, and interact with grandparents in the faith, while older saints have the joy of encouraging younger generations. I've watched these relationships develop over the years, and they are beautiful expressions of the body of Christ.

This isn't to criticize churches that organize ministry differently. Many sincere Christians are doing what they believe is best, and I appreciate their desire to serve families. My purpose isn't to condemn anyone but simply to encourage us to think biblically about what a church is.

When looking for a church, I believe the most important questions are not: *Does it have the best children's program? *Does it have activities for every age? *Will everyone always be entertained?

Instead, perhaps we should ask: *Is the Bible faithfully preached? *Is Christ exalted? *Is God worshipped reverently? *Does this church strengthen families in their God-given responsibilities? *Will these people love us, pray for us, walk beside us, and care for us in times of joy and sorrow? *Will we be encouraged to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ? Those are the qualities that make a church a true church family.

Children certainly matter. In fact, they matter so much that they should see genuine worship, hear the same gospel as their parents, and grow up knowing that the Lord's Day is about meeting with God alongside His people.

So perhaps the question is not, "Where is the best church for my children?" Perhaps it is, "Where can our whole family worship God together, grow together in Christ, and become part of a faithful church family?" I believe that is a question worth asking.

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“There is nothing we will ever be chastised for that has not already been condemned in the Scriptures. And what we fail to learn from the Scriptures we most likely will learn from bitter experience.” (Elder Ralph Harris)

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THE NEW YEAR
By Elder Larry Wise
(January 2021)

The New Year has come once more,
We know not what might be in store.
We trust God knows and will provide,
Even in the midst of a great divide.

We must have His grace day by day,
To live and walk in a righteous way.
The throne is open to those in need,
Bow your heads to find grace indeed.

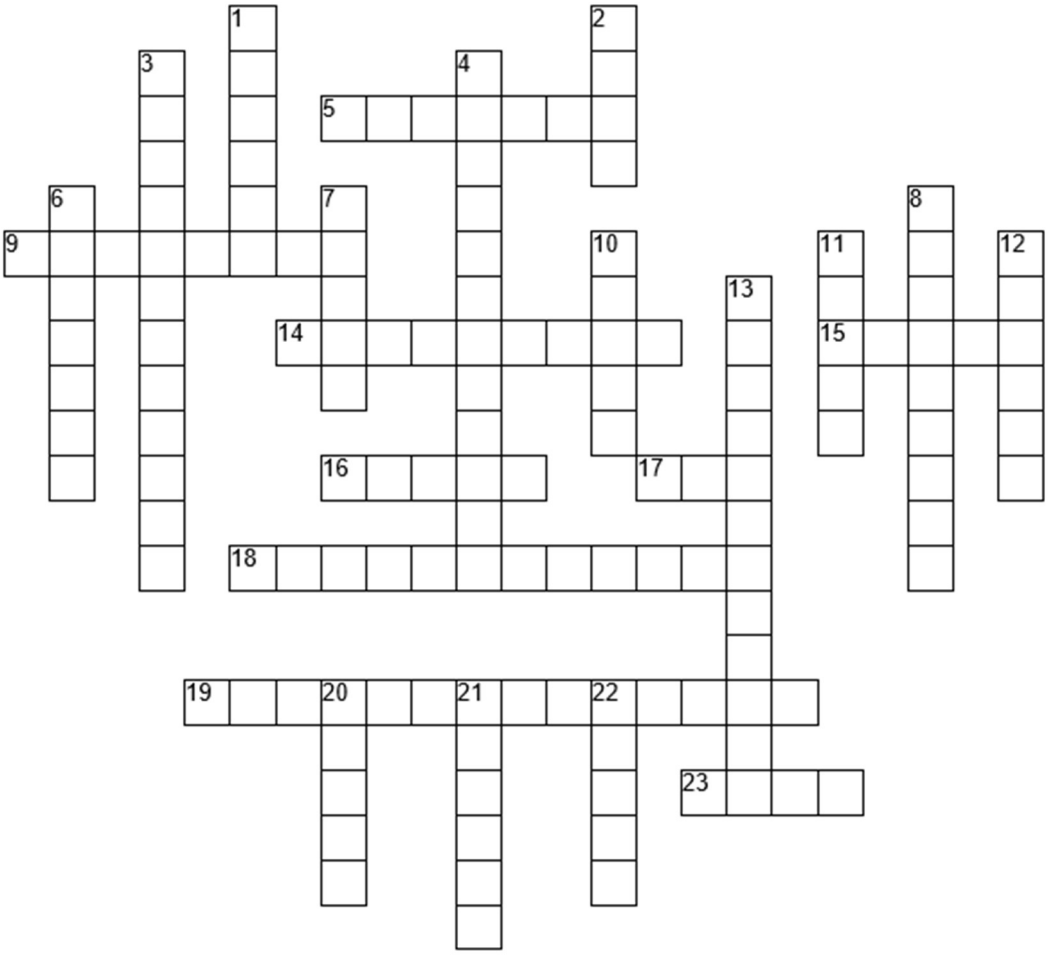
The year may be filled with many a fear,
But God has promised to always be near.
So give your all as the year moves ahead,
Trust the Savior who suffered and bled.

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

SISTER CHRISTINE'S CROSSWORD CORNER

(Produced by Sister Christine Monroe from Vicksburg, MS)



Across

5. Mary and Martha's brother
9. Solomon's other name
14. How long was the feast of Unleavened Bread?
15. What did God cause to grow over Jonah?
16. Which of her sons did Rebekah love?
17. How many plagues were put on Egypt?
18. Animal killed and served by prodigal son's father
19. In whose foreign country was the ark of the Lord kept?
23. Shortest of the four gospels

(Answers on page 14)

Down

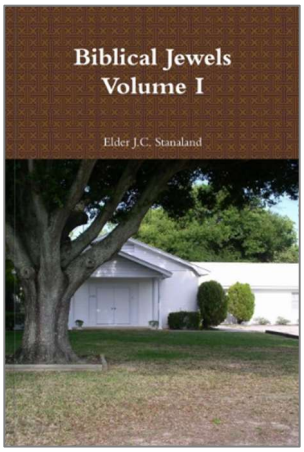
1. What woman was removed from being queen because she refused to obey her husband?
2. Jesus told Peter to let down his nets to catch what?
3. Who said, "He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him"?
4. Sons of Zebedee
6. City in which Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived
7. For how many days was Paul blinded?
8. The only Old Testament book that is named after a tribe of Israel
10. Pharaoh made Joseph governor over which country?
11. Besides manna, what other food did the Lord give the Israelites in the wilderness?
12. How old was Jesus when he went to Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph?
13. Who heard of Solomon's fame and came to prove him with hard questions?
20. Who preached on the day of Pentecost?
21. What was the name of the demon Jesus removed from the man and put into the pigs?
22. How many friends of Job came to talk to him?

CHURCH NEWS

New Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, New Albany, MS. January 31, 2027. New Prospect Primitive Baptist Church, New Albany, MS will host the 5th Sunday night fellowship meeting in January 2027 (Jan. 31). Worship at 5:30pm, followed by supper afterwards. This meeting rotates between New Prospect, Laodicea, Bethany, and Hopewell Primitive Baptist churches.

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FEATURED BOOK



Biblical Jewels, Volume 1
By Elder J.C. Stanaland

The notes of encouragement are the result of daily notes transmitted via the internet to a good many folks around the country under the title, “Notes From The Pastor’s Trumpet”. The purpose of these notes is to encourage us to lift our eyes above our daily trials and disappointments “unto the hills, from whence cometh my help” (Psalm 121:1); that is, to the sure promises of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On the night before He was crucified, the Lord candidly told His Apostles, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33). As we seek to “take up the cross, and follow” the Lord (Mark 10:21), we should not be surprised when we “have tribulation”, we should be of “good cheer;” for the Lord has “overcome the world”, the source of our “tribulation”. It is good for us to be reminded daily that we have an Almighty “friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24), who will “never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5).

You may purchase this book at the link below:
https://www.lulu.com/shop/jc-stanaland/biblical-jewels-volume-i/paperback/product-18920382.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/

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ANNUAL BIBLE READING PLAN AND BIBLE TIMELINE

As we begin to make New Year’s Resolutions for the upcoming year in 2027, arguably no resolution is more important than a renewed commitment to the daily reading and study of God’s word. One annual Bible reading plan you might consider using is this 5 day a week, 3 section plan designed to help you read the Bible in one year.

Also, to aid you in reading God’s word, you might consider downloading the Bible Timeline of the Old and New Testament to place each passage of scripture in the appropriate historical context.

A PDF version for your download of the Annual Bible Reading Plan and the Bible Timeline of the Old and New Testament can be found at this link:
https://clearspringspbc.com/bible-reading/

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OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES

In reading Bible stories, Zachary (my 3-year-old son) really likes and requests to read the ones with fire - the burning bush, the chariot of fire taking Elijah to heaven, and the fiery furnace. In reading the fiery furnace, Zachary always says “Get a fire truck. Get water.” We’ve tried to tell him that they didn’t need a fire truck because Jesus was right there in the fire with them protecting them, not even smelling of smoke and unburned. It’s probably still a few more years before he understands that part, but praise God who protects his people in the midst of our fiery trials, even without a fire truck to put out the fire. (DW)

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Three pastors got together for coffee one day and found all their churches had bat-infestation problems. "I got so mad," said one, "I took a shotgun and fired at them. It made holes in the ceiling, but did nothing to the bats." "I tried trapping them alive," said the second. "Then I drove 50 miles before releasing them, but they beat me back to the church." "I haven't had any more problems," said the third. "What did you do?" asked the others, amazed. "I simply baptized and confirmed them," he replied. "I haven't seen them since."
(Reader's Digest, July, 1994, p. 64)

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Why I Am a Primitive Baptist

By Elder Michael L. Gowens
Calabash, North Carolina
(Written in 2005)

Today after more than three decades of trying to preach the gospel, I want everyone to know that I feel highly blessed and privileged to be a Primitive Baptist. I am sad to admit that I haven't always been of that mindset. There was a time in my early ministry when I allowed a critical spirit toward the Old Baptists to make inroads into my mind. I criticized them for what appeared to be a lack of zeal, a general lack of interest in "church-growth", and an attitude of exclusivity. For reasons that I will not here analyze, my attitude toward the people with whom I had been identified from childhood was dangerously negative. I didn't realize how close I was to losing the best blessing I've ever had in life.

I learned that some of my peers in the ministry were also struggling with the same kind of identity crisis. Like the mindset that exaggerates the vices of one's own spouse while inflating the virtues of the neighbor's, we flirted with the notion of greener pastures. I subsequently watched as some followed this path to its logical conclusion and actually left the church. When a few brethren attempted to introduce various practical innovations, and some suggested that we replace the name with a more ecumenical label, and began to question and challenge long-accepted doctrines, I was shocked into reality. In my youth and immaturity, it never dawned on me that some would actually try to change the doctrine and the practice of the church. The departure of a few close friends in the ministry in the late 80's and early 90's, therefore, was a "wake-up call" to me. As a result of this epiphany, I decided that it was a real possibility that the fault lay with me, not the Old Baptists, and that perhaps personal ambition and a proud preoccupation with what outsiders thought of me had colored my perspective.

Shakespeare's quote, "Striving to better, oft we mar what's well," gave me pause to consider that my attitude had been both sinful and unrealistic. I concluded that it would be foolish to leave the family estate for a flight of fancy, to exchange a solid and substantive Biblical fare for the superficiality of dramatic productions and programs, to trade the pearl of great price for what amounted to costume jewelry. I don't intend to fault people who prefer the "big business" model of church-life, but I am confident that it is not for me. It would not satisfy the deep needs of my soul. So today, I do not hesitate to say that I am happy to be an Old Baptist. Let me enumerate a few reasons.

First, I share the Primitive Baptist's strong commitment to Biblical ***simplicity***. Unlike most professing Christians, the Old Baptists believe that simplicity is preferable to complexity. We want to minimize distractions whether in terms of physical decoration and adornment or in terms of liturgical formality and extracurricular programs from the central theme of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I prefer the simple worship structure of congregational singing, public prayer, and Biblical preaching observed by the typical Old Baptist church. I don't want to have to sort through a complex maze of religious activity in order to find one morsel of bread for my hungry soul. I like the solid theology and rich experience expressed in the old hymns and sung *acapella* by an entire congregation in four-part-harmony better than the low-cal, feel-good, musical performances, bands, and praise-choruses that are becoming increasingly more commonplace in many Christian circles today. I had rather hear a Spirit-filled, extemporaneous sermon that explains the Bible, proclaims the good news with enthusiasm and passion, stirs my mind on the most sublime and noble themes, and confronts and challenges me to greater godliness, even though the preacher tends to end his sentences with a preposition or leave a participle dangling, instead of a refined and polished twenty-minute, four-point, pre-packaged lesson that is mechanical and Spiritless. I get that kind of simplicity among the Old Baptists, and confess that it suits my case.

Second, I am a Primitive Baptist because I agree with ***the way they interpret Scripture***. No one makes sense of the whole Bible like the Primitive Baptists. No other group interprets Scripture with greater consistency than these people who understand the discipline of "rightly dividing the word of truth." The habit of distinguishing between sonship and discipleship—between unconditional and gospel salvation—between relationship and fellowship—between union with Christ and communion with Him—between regeneration and conversion—between eternity and time—between judicial and parental judgment—between reality and the perception of that reality—is the hallmark that separates Primitive Baptists from virtually every other school of Biblical interpretation. The doctrine embraced by sound Primitive Baptists makes room for both the "shalls" of Isaiah 1:18 and the "if's" of Isaiah 1:19, affirming that eternal life is certain and guaranteed by God, and insisting that the life of Christian discipleship is conditioned largely on our obedience and faithfulness. Old Baptists are virtually alone in their ability to reconcile apparently contradictory texts like Ephesians 2:8 (a text that teaches that salvation is not of ourselves) and Acts 2:40 (a text that exhorts us to save ourselves from this untoward generation), because they understand that the first verse has eternal ramifications and the second does not. Others who do not understand this important principle can only explain the apparent inconsistency in terms of "a mystery that finite minds can never comprehend". I've

never heard any preacher make sense of the Bible better than the average Primitive Baptist who understands the need to rightly divide the word of truth. I've never heard anyone but an Old Baptist explain how it could be that Christ died for "many" (Rom. 8:29; Heb. 9:28) who will ultimately live with Him in heaven, but that only "few" are traveling the narrow path of Christian discipleship (Mt. 7:13-14). I am convinced that the Primitives are correct to make this distinction between eternal and temporal salvation and this is one of the main reasons that I am happy to be a Primitive Baptist today. Take away this hallmark of Old Baptist doctrine, and the Primitives are no different theologically than any other group.

Third, I believe that the Old Baptist's ***interest in cultivating true, apostolic, New Testament churches*** is legitimate. Many in the current Christian climate of ecumenism reject the idea of church identity. But throughout history, there have always been those who sought to pursue a pure church, free from institutionalism. Historians term people with these convictions "the Free Church Movement", a category that includes such relatively obscure groups as the Donatists, Novatians, Waldenses, Lollards, and more. Though each of these groups had their flaws and blemishes, they shared one thing in common—a commitment to apostolic purity in the face of ecclesiastical authoritarianism. They are often dismissed as heretics because only the works of those who wrote against them have survived. But each of these groups sought to tailor church worship, polity, faith and life to the Biblical and apostolic pattern, and to keep the church free of magisterial entanglements. They believed that God would continue to bless His true church and they sought to be identified as such a church by conforming themselves to the Biblical pattern. The Primitive Baptists share this commitment to purity of doctrine and practice with a view to pleasing the Lord. In a day when many (if not most) denominations are "measuring themselves" by each other, competing with each other for popularity, and governing church life by popular preferences, the Old Baptist concern to please God, to have authentic and true churches, and to be thoroughly Biblical is refreshing to me. That's an important reason that I am a Primitive Baptist today.

Further reasons could be cited, but I trust these will suffice. I know the Old Baptists are not perfect; but then, neither am I. The faults of those of us known as Primitive Baptists notwithstanding, I am more committed today than ever before to be nothing more than a simple, old-time, Bible-believing, salvation by grace preaching Primitive Baptist even if others think I'm weird or ignorant or out-of-touch with the modern world. I concur with Primitive Baptist convictions regarding believer's baptism, close communion, age-integrated worship, and the need to maintain church discipline. I am satisfied with the arguments against musical instruments in the worship service, Sunday Schools, mission boards, secret societies, and parachurch auxiliaries. I agree with their views of congregational church government and individual church autonomy. I am convinced that the Old Baptists are correct regarding the utility (or purpose) of the gospel and the conviction that God does not employ human means or instrumentality in regeneration. I now know that this is where I fit. No longer am I troubled by a crisis of identity. These are my people. They sing my song; they understand my story; they speak my language. I cannot speak for anyone else, but these are some of the reasons I am a Primitive Baptist.

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The Blessing of Understanding True Evangelism

Elder Tyler Sposite
Palm Desert, California

There are a number of blessings that come to the child of God through understanding the truth. One such blessing comes from understanding the truth about eternal salvation. Many of God's children are laboring under the burden of their sin, thinking they have to meet certain conditions and perform to a certain degree in order to ever have a chance of seeing heaven. This view creates immense bondage and places a heavy yoke upon the conscience, resulting in lack of assurance, hope and comfort. Understanding that eternal salvation is by God's grace, and that Jesus Christ has saved his people from their sins, knowing that all of God's elect are heaven-bound, not for any good that was in them, or for any pretended righteousness of their own, but solely on the basis of Christ's finished work, lifts that burden off of the child of God and brings them into a state of rest, being at peace knowing that Christ has secured their eternal destiny, and that they stand before God as fully accepted in his sight (Romans 5:1).

On the flip side, this fact also points to another truth that is seldom understood, and not very popular among the broader Christian world. It directly relates to the nature and role of the gospel, and the role of the gospel preacher. Salvation by grace, when properly understood, means that no gospel preacher has ever gotten a single soul into heaven. Such a proposition is outrageous to the ears of most Christians. It flies in the face of what passes for evangelism in our day and age. The vast majority of so-called "evangelism" today is done under the assumption that Christians have to reach as many as possible with the message of the gospel, or they will never see heaven. Even more serious is the implication that if you fail to reach someone, that person goes to hell and it is entirely your fault. Every person that you pass by at the movie theater, or in the mall, or any social gathering is potentially on their way to hell, and you have the

responsibility of preaching to them lest they perish eternally under the wrath of God. This isn't even considering the numerous parts of the world today where the gospel is not being preached.

To my mind, this doesn't sound like very good news. If I believed this, I confess it would bring constant stress and worry to my mind. Moreover, such a message is completely at odds with the scheme of salvation articulated in the first part of this message. If one is preaching salvation by grace, this means they are preaching a finished work. Jesus came to save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21), and he did exactly that when he died on the cross, declaring emphatically that IT IS FINISHED (John 19:30). He promises that they will all be drawn to him and raised up in the last day, as many as the Father gave him (John 6:37-44). He will impart eternal life to every single one of them (John 17:1-2), by his life-giving voice, not the voice of the preacher (John 5:25). God's elect were destined to glory before the world began and nothing can separate them from His love that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:29-39).

If this is true, then the gospel is not an offer to spiritually dead sinners to make a decision to get eternal life. It is the proclamation of a finished and successful work of salvation. The gospel is directed to those who are poor in spirit, brokenhearted and bruised by the guilt of their sin (Luke 4:18), to those burdened and heavy laden, that they might find rest for their weary souls (Matthew 11:28-30). It is directed towards those who have been given the fear of God (Acts 13:26) which the unregenerate do not possess (Romans 3:18). It is directed towards those who have the ears to hear, who are willing and thirsting for the mercy of God (Revelation 22:17).

Stated plainly, the gospel is a proclamation directed towards those who are already born of God. To those who have already been given spiritual life which enables them to do that which is spiritual, which includes embracing Jesus Christ by faith (faith itself is a fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22 and is born of God - 1 John 5:4). The gospel has never imparted life to any sinner, rather the gospel brings eternal life to light for those who are already born of him (2 Timothy 1:8-10). The gospel announces the eternal inheritance purchased for God's people and laid in store for them in heaven. We don't gain it through hearing the gospel, we hear about it through the proclamation of the gospel (Colossians 1:3-6). The gospel is the good news of/about our salvation (Ephesians 1:13). The gospel publishes (makes known) peace and salvation (Isaiah 52:7).

As a gospel preacher, and as a Christian, this brings great joy to my soul. False doctrine and grievous sin will not keep any of God's elect for whom Christ died out of heaven. Ignorance or confusion about how they are getting to heaven will not keep them from going there. It will burden their conscience and rob them of the assurance and blessing that comes from knowing Jesus Christ has done all the work to get them there (Galatians 5:1-3), but it will in no way cancel out that work.

When I preach to people, I am not doing so under the pretense that I am helping the Lord get his children home to glory. I cannot bring one single soul from death to life, nor can I get one single soul into heaven. That is the Lord's work. My calling is to teach God's people (Matthew 28:19) and to edify and build up the saints in discipleship (Ephesians 4:11-12). Salvation by grace does not stifle evangelism. True biblical evangelism is proclaiming the GOOD NEWS that the work of redemption is FINISHED on behalf of all for whom Christ died. It drives me to seek out Christ's sheep and give them rest and comfort in knowing the good news of their salvation.

To summarize, the gospel not only brings peace to the mind of the one who comes to believe it, but also to the one who preaches it. I am so thankful and joyful that it does not depend upon my efforts and that the Lord doesn't need me or any other man to get his people home. It is truly finished! Praise the LORD!

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

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THREE KINDS OF JUSTIFICATION

By Elder Buddy Abernathy
Reform, Alabama

I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? (Job 9:2)

The Apostle Paul instructed Timothy, *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15 KJV).* In his first letter to the church at Corinth, he emphasized the necessity of the Holy Ghost in *comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1Cor. 2:13).* In the book of Nehemiah, Ezra, the Levites, and others, *"…read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (Neh. 8:8 KJV)*. The prophet Isaiah wrote, *Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little (Isa 28:9-10 KJV)*. All these verses identify the reason why the Bible may appear to have contradictions unless it is rightly divided, i.e., "cut straight" or "handled aright" *(2 Cor. 2:17, 4:1-2).* It is unlike any other book in the world. As a seamstress must cut cloth so that the

pieces fit together, such is the case with the infallible word of God *(Psa. 12:6 & 2 Tim 3:16).*

Justification is a subject which exemplifies the importance of rightly dividing the word of truth. Justify means, "to render, declare, or exhibit one to be righteous". The Bible teaches that God's people are justified by Christ. *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2Co 5:21 KJV)*. We were made the righteousness of God in Christ; therefore, we are justified (declared righteous) before God in Christ. God has accepted his people in Christ *(Eph. 1:6).* We are acceptable to God based on what Christ has done for us.

Consider the following verses which attribute our justification to Christ.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (Rom 5:9 KJV)

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: (Rom 3:24 KJV)

Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. (Rom 4:25 KJV)

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (1Co 6:11 KJV)

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Tit 3:4-7 KJV)

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (Rom 8:29-30 KJV)

Thousands of years ago, Job said, *"I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God? (Job 9:2).* Job is asking the same question that many of God's children ask today. How can a sinner so vile as I be made righteous before God? The gospel answers this question*, …by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.…but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb 9:12, 26 KJV). For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Heb 10:14 KJV)*

In Paul's epistle to the church at Rome, he describes the conflict experienced by children of God who are ignorant of their justification in Christ*, for they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. (Rom 10:3 KJV).* We are not justified (declared righteous) *by the law of Moses (Acts 13:39, Rom. 3:20, Gal. 2:16).* If we evaluate ourselves according to the law, we see ourselves condemned in the sight of God. Unless a child of God understands he was justified by Christ, he will continue trying to find a way to justify himself. He needs to hear the gospel of his salvation and place his confidence of salvation in the redemptive work of Christ *(Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14).* Then he can answer Job's question, *"How should man be just with God?" He now understands he's righteous before God because he has been made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21).* Now he's justified by faith*, Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (Rom 5:1 KJV).* When a child of God understands he has been justified by Christ, he has assurance of salvation. *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (Eph 1:13 KJV). The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (Rom 8:16 KJV).* With these thoughts in mind, consider the following verses. The expressions, *"justified by faith" and "justified by the faith of Christ",* are simply describing the mindset of a child of God who believes he has been made the righteousness of God in Christ *(2 Cor. 5:21).*

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. (Rom 3:28 KJV)

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal 2:16 KJV)

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. ... Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Gal 3:11, 24 KJV)

One of the best illustrations of justification by faith is the parable concerning the pharisee and the publican, *Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. (Luk. 18:10-14 KJV)*

Justification by faith is experienced when we hear and embrace the wonderful news declared by the

prophet Isaiah, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins. (Isa 40:1-2 KJV)*

What does it mean to be justified by works? Works do not justify us before God: *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law…for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal 2:16 KJV).* Our works justify us in the estimation of others. Jesus taught that a tree is identified by the fruit it bears *(Mat. 7:15-20, 12:33, Luke 6:43-44).* This principle of justification by works was clearly illustrated in the life of the Gentiles that Paul referenced in his epistle to the church at Rome. *(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) (Rom 2:13-15 KJV).* The outward behavior of these Gentiles manifested to others the spiritual nature they possessed.

Both Abraham and Rahab were justified by works. Their actions testified to others that they were God's children. *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? (Jas 2:21-25 KJV)*

All of God's children are justified before God in Christ because they have been made the righteousness of God in Christ *(2 Cor. 5:21).* Some of them are also justified by faith because they have come to understand they have been made the righteousness of God in Christ *(Rom. 10:4, Gal. 3:24).* Some of them are also justified by works because they live a life of obedience to God. In other words, their manner of life *"becometh the gospel of Christ" (Phl 1:27).* Interestingly, some of God's children are justified by works even though they are not justified by faith *(Rom. 2:13-15).* The Apostle Paul referred to Gentiles who *"have not the law". They have not been exposed to the written word of God; nonetheless, they have a sense of right and wrong. That's because they have "the law written in their hearts" (Heb. 8:10)* when they are given spiritual life. This law in their hearts serves as a moral compass, even though they may never hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. This explains why there are people all over the world, in different cultures and religions, who have a desire to live righteously. They are doing *"by nature the things contained in the law"* In this context, *"nature"* refers to the divine nature that a child of God receives when he's born of the Spirit *(2 Pet. 1:4, 2 Cor. 5:17)*

Primitive Baptists believe that God's people are chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinated unto the adoption of children, called by the Spirit, justified by Jesus Christ and preserved unto glory in Jesus Christ *(Eph. 1:3-6, Rom. 8:29-30, Jude 1:1, Isa. 49:14-16, John 10:29, Eph. 1:3-6, Heb. 9:11-12, 10:14).* They believe when God's children are born of the Spirit they possess a new spiritual nature in conflict with their old fleshly nature *(2 Cor. 5:17, 1 Pet. 1:23, Gal. 5:17, Rom. 7:21-25).* They believe the child of God can allow his fleshly nature to ruin his life in this present world *(Isa 1:19-20, Gal. 6:7-8, Rom. 6:12-13, 1 Cor. 6:18-20, 7:23, 1 Th 4:3-7, Heb 6:4-9).* They believe nothing can separate them from the love of God *(Psa. 89:30-34, Isa. 54:7-10, 2 Sam. 23:5, Mark 10:17-22, Mat. 13:18-23, Gen. 19:30-36, 2 Pet. 2:7-8, 2 Tim. 2:16-19, Rom. 8:38-39).* They believe many of them will never hear or obey the gospel *(Mat. 23:37-39, Rom. 10:1-3, 11:7-32).* They believe hell is a place of everlasting punishment for the unredeemed and it will be populated by the unregenerate wicked *(Mat. 7:21-23, Mat. 25:41-46, John 5:28, Acts 24:15).*

The doctrines of grace as taught by Primitive Baptists are the only doctrines which give me hope and comfort. I rejoice in the same truth David rejoiced in about 3,000 years ago, *Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. (2Sa 23:5 KJV).*

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BIBLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

(Puzzle on Page 8 – Answers are Backwards)

Across

5. surazal
9. haidedej
14. syadneves
15. eniva
16. bocaj
17. net
18. flacdenettaf
19. senitsilihpeht
23. kram

Down

1. ithsav
2. hsif
3. selpicsideht
4. nhojdnasemaj
6. ynahteb
7. eerht
8. sucitivel
10. tpyge
11. liauq
12. evlewt
13. abehsfoneeuq
20. retep
21. noigel
22. eerht

THE OTHER SALVATION

By Elder Rickey Taylor
Booneville, Mississippi

2 Timothy 2:10: “Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

I firmly believe that there are two salvations that are taught in the word of God. One is the eternal salvation, and the other is what I refer to as time or temporal salvation. The eternal salvation is that which is concerning our salvation or deliverance from eternal hell that was accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. The time salvation is what we can have here in this temporal side of heaven. A deliverance that we need and will make our spiritual lives grow more in praise to God.

Not every subject in the Bible has two such elements contained within them. For example there is only one Savior and he is Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” No one else is our Savior, not any other man or works can be substituted for Christ who saved us on the cross. All glory and praise should be given to him.

Another example is there is not another gospel beside Jesus Christ and him crucified. Galatians 1:6-7: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” However if there is more than one element of a subject, the scripture will point them out if we are truly listening to the word and not what man is saying.

Our above text is stating and making a distinction between the two salvations that are mentioned in the text. Observe the latter part of our verse: "that they may **also** obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus **with** eternal glory.“

Notice the words **with** and **also** how they are positioned in the verse. These two words are used to make the distinction between the salvations of God’s elect. Paul says that he endures all kinds of persecution for the sake of preaching the gospel to the elect of God. Since they are already in the elect then we see that Paul is not concerned about their eternal salvation because God chose them before the foundation of the world, thus making them his elect. He promised a home in heaven for his elect when he chose them. Ephesians 1:4,5. Yet he is doing it for some reason and the answer is that they “may also” obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. If they needed to obtain something, then they aren't currently in possession of it at that time. Since they already have eternal salvation then they don't need to “obtain” it. What they needed to obtain is the salvation that can come also with eternal glory. It is a salvation or deliverance that we obtained through belief and obedience to God’s commandments for our spiritual life while here on earth. We need deliverance here today from Satan’s devices and the wicked world. When one believes that salvation is by grace it delivers him from trying to establish his own righteousness. Romans 10: 1-3.

Belief and obedience are both “works“ we can do after we are born of the Spirit. Grace is not of works lest any man should boast, Ephesians 2:9. Grace is for our eternal salvation. For our temporal or time salvation we must engage in works to obtain it. In doing so, we will enjoy a precious wonderful life in service to our Savior. One should learn about these two salvations and separate them when reading the word of God. In doing so, he will read with confidence and assurance of God’s love for him and his elect.

May God bless you. (February 2017)

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“Many, O LORD my God, Are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, And thy thoughts which are to us-ward: They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: If I would declare and speak of them, They are more than can be numbered.” Psalm 40:5

A song we sing from time to time encourages us to "Count Your Many Blessings". This is a good exhortation. Surely none of us are as grateful as we ought to be and are in need of regular reminders of how God has blessed us.

The Psalmist states something else we need to be reminded of as we begin to count our blessings. He proclaims that it isn't possible to declare all of the wonderful works God has wrought. But more personally, the Psalmist exclaims it is not possible to count God's thoughts "which are to us-ward".

We would all agree, simply by looking at creation, that the wonderful works of God are innumerable. But what about his "thoughts" to you individually? The word literally means thought, intent, and work. And those thoughts are to 'you-ward'!

So, as the songwriter recommends, count your many blessings one by one. Let me know when you're done! (Elder Matt Jordan)

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"Instead of a river God often gives us a brook, which may be running today and dried up tomorrow. Why? To teach us not to rest in our blessings, but in the Blesser Himself.” A. W. Pink

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