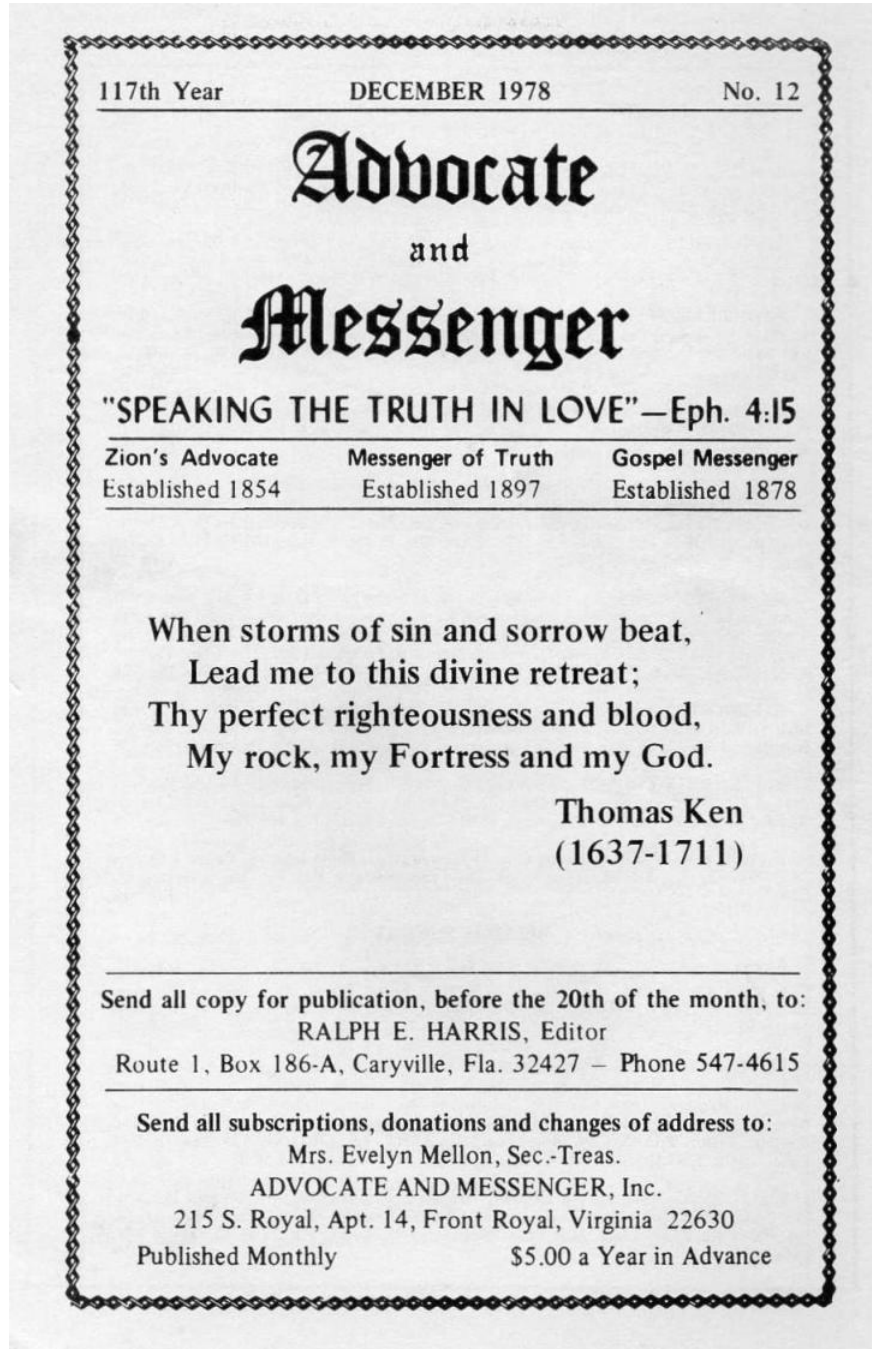


Advocate and Messenger



“Some Material by Elder Ralph Harris may be included in two published volumes: Day by Day. 365 Daily Readings & Walking with God, A Collection of Poems. Both books are available for purchase through Sovereign Grace Publications at sovgrace.net

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CHURCH DIRECTORY - FIRST SUNDAY

ALMA—Alma, Va about 4 miles west of Stanley. Va on Hwy. 340. 1st Sun. 11:00 a.m. and Sat. before at 7:30 p.m. Elder Elmer Skeen, Pastor, Rt. 2, Box 65, Palmyra, Va 22963, Tel. (804) 589-8551. Clerk, John D. Wayland, P.O. Box 66, Stanley, Va 22851 April '79

BENTONVILLE—Bentonville, Va 1st Sun. 11:00 a.m., Sat. before at 2:00 p.m. Elder J. Tolliver Utz, Pastor, Box 8, Madison, Va 22727, Tel. (703) 948-4803. Mrs. Evelyn Mellon, Clerk, 215 S. Royal Ave., Apt. 14, Front Royal, Va 22630, Tel. 635-3548. April '79

BETHEL—7 miles west of Falls Church, Va Leesburg Hwy., Greyhound bus line. 1st Sun. 11:00 a.m., Sat. before at 7:30 p.m. Elder C. W. Alderton, Pastor, Brightwood, Va, Tel. Whitehall 948-4744. Madison Co. Cletus H. Brumback, Clerk, 606 Hillcrest Dr., S.W., Vienna, Va 22180, Tel. (703) 938-8169 Dec. '78

GOOSE CREEK—Near Markham, Va on Hwy. 55. 1st Sun. 11:00 a.m. Elder J. E. Alderton, Pastor, 3824 Wendy Lane, Silver Spring, Md 20906. Clerk, W. C. Maddox, 615 Fauquier Rd., Warrenton, Va 22186, Tel. (703) 347-4889 June '79

GREENWOOD—Minnieville, Prince William Co. From Manassas, Rt. 234, travel 14 miles turn left on (Spriggs Rd.) State Route 643, follow that to (Minnieville Rd.) State Road 640 to Church. 1st Sun. 11:00 a.m. Elder Hollie Redmon, Pastor, 112 Buckingham Dr., Colonial Heights, Va 23834, Tel. (804) 526-3532. Clerk, Mrs. Beulah Dotson, 102 Gleatons Trailer Park, I-B, Woodbridge, Va 22192 April '79

MT. PISGAH—Morrow Co. Ohio 4 miles east of Marengo on State Rt. 229, then north (only blacktopped road between Marengo and Rt. 314) 2 miles; then west ½ mile, then north 1 mile. Meets 1st and 3rd Sun. at 10:30 a.m. and Sat. before 3rd Sun. at 2:00 p.m. Elder Daily Hite, Pastor. Elder Clarence Davis holds service 1st Sun. a.m. Clerk, Mrs. Glenn Phillips, 45 Miami Ave., Rt. 4, Fredericktown, Ohio 43019, Tel. (614) 694-6488 Dec. '78

NEEDMORE—Needmore, Pa The Primitive Baptist and their friends in this section meet each 1st Sun. at 11:00 a.m. for divine service. Elder Raymond Pressley, Pastor, P.O. Box 54, Brightwood, Va 22715. The meeting house is located on U.S. Rt. 522 in Needmore. July '79

NEW LIBERTY CHURCH—Champaign, Ill, 1714 W. Springfield, each 1st and 3rd Sundays at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday before the 1st Sun. at 7:30 p.m. Elder Lloyd Clapp, Pastor. Richard Corn, Clerk, Box 17, St. Joseph, Ill 61873, Tel. 352-2287 or 469-7634 Oct. '78

WATERLICK—Waterlick, Va 1st Sun. 11:00 a.m. Elder Philip Johnson, Pastor, P.O. Box 283, Strasburg, Va, Tel. 465-3118. Clerk, Sister Lena Johnson, P.O. Box 283, Strasburg, Va 22657 Feb. '79

SECOND SUNDAY

BATTLE RUN—Rappahannock Co. Va Meets 2nd Sun. 11:00 a.m. and Sat. before at 2:00 p.m., also 5th Sun. at 11:00 a.m. Elder E. S. Skeen, Pastor, Rt. 2, Box 65, Palmyra, Va 22963, Tel. (804) 589-8551. Bro. John Powers, Clerk, Flint Hill, Va 22627, Tel. (703) 364-1352 Dec. '78

LITTLE FLOCK—Nine miles southeast of Amelia, Va Take Rt 38 out of Amelia to Rt. 614; left on Rt. 608; right on Rt. 677 at church sign: church on left. 1st Sun. 10:30 a.m. 2nd Sun. 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Sat. before. Annual meeting 5th Sun. in October or November and 1:30 p.m. Sat. before. Communion 2nd Sunday in June. Elder Raymond Pressley, Pastor, P.O. Box 54, Brightwood, Va 22715, Tel. (703) 948-4337. Sister Ruth Dallas, Clerk, 3237 Snead Court, Richmond, Va 23224, Tel. (804) 231-5480 July '78

MILL CREEK—Hamburg, Va on Hwy. 211 about 2 miles west of Luray, Va 2nd Sun. 11:00 a.m. Elder Hollie Redmon, Pastor, 112 Buckingham Dr., Colonial Heights, Va 23834, Tel. (804) 526-3532. Clerk, Mrs. David Shirley, Rt. 3, Luray, Va 22835, Tel. (703) 743-6516 April '79

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VOLUME ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN COMPLETED

We suppose it might be asked, "After one hundred seventeen years of publication, what can be said with regard to the continuation of the *Advocate and Messenger* that has not already been said?" But there is also another way to look at the matter. When we sit down to another meal we do not say, "Well, since everything has been said that can be said with regard to thankfulness for our daily bread, we just won't offer thanks this time." And so it is as we come to the close of an-

other year, though it has been done many times before, we feel compelled by the goodness and mercy of our covenant God to give Him thanks that the paper has survived to see the close of another volume.

There is much in our day and in each preceeding age that opposes itself to the perpetuation of such an enterprise as is the publication of truth, so that we must acknowledge as more than a little remarkable the fact that truth has not already been long since stamped out by those who despise it and wish for its demise. From all *outward* appearances there would be little reason to expect it to survive for very long in a place such as is this worldly environment. Error is rampant throughout the land and the vast majority of the people are far more eager to embrace and accept any form of false doctrine than they are to embrace the truth. Not only this, but it seems that most of those who are enslaved by such "doctrines of devils" are far more dedicated to the spread and promotion of these deceptive teachings than are many of those who know the truth to the advancement and upbuilding of that blessed cause which they profess.

All around us we observe an obsession on the part of the main bulk of the people with the vain and selfish pleasures of the world. Each time we take to the highways, particularly on Sundays, we find ourselves facing a wall of expensive cars, vans, mobile homes (campers), boats, and a catalog of other costly apparatus, designed primarily for the gratification of the carnal appetites of men. Even in the light of a threatened fuel shortage and rapidly rising automotive costs traffic continues to escalate at a tremendous rate, all which testifies very vividly to the desparate evil of the carnal heart its readiness to stop at nothing in order to gratify its selfish sensual lusts, with little regard for the consequences.

Probably there has never been a day when there were as many people with as many expensive trinkets and "adult" toys, nor when more of them were doing less work and demanding higher wages, with more and more strikes helping

to feed an already uncontrolled inflation rate and consequently defeating their own purpose. Greed and selfishness has bred a society of swindlers and cheats on all levels of the social ladder and in which a man's word, generally speaking, is no longer his bond. In the marriage union and in courts of law men and women make solemn oaths and then proceed to do just the opposite of that which they have sworn before God and men they would or would not do.

Injustices abound on every hand because of the insensitivity of cruel and ungodly men to the feelings and rights of others, totally disregarding, if they have any notions at all of a supreme power, the fact that they must one day stand before His judgment seat, to receive that recompense which their wickedness so richly deserves.

Yet, even in the face of such apparently overpowering odds, the little, Spirit-taught child of grace can rejoice in the full assurance of an eventual victory over sin, Satan, death and hell, for "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Jesus has already defeated Satan and that defeat remains only to be manifest by the casting of that fiendish foe and all his angels into the lake of fire. No matter how he and his cohorts may plague and distress us here in this present state there is coming a blessed day when a separation will be made which will put us beyond their reach and they will molest us no more. It is this precious hope which helps to sustain us in our present warfare and gives us fresh strength and courage to labor on a little while longer. Satan may enjoy his little temporary victories over us now in our individual conflicts and skirmishes with the world and worldliness, but this happy thought cheers us onward to battle; *We shall win the war!* So far as the final outcome is concerned we are, already, more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

As Woodrow Wilson once said, "I had rather fail in a cause I know will ultimately triumph than succeed in a cause

I know will ultimately fail." False teachers may be suffered to succeed here in deceiving the masses of God's people, but eventually, though with most of them it will be in the happy hereafter, God will undeceive them, and all the evil agents of the devil shall find that the victories they obtained here in time only makes their final failure and defeat all the more miserable and the glory of God all the more manifest in their condemnation.

I find that my little efforts to edit the Advocate and Messenger fall far short of what I would wish them to be. I cannot always express myself as powerfully and effectively as I would prefer and this sometimes leads to misunderstandings, and perhaps even a questioning of my motives, and this in turn weighs me down with a sense of my inadequacy and insufficiency and causes me to go mourning, and for a time I am made to say with David, "My heart is pained within me." But it is in our weakness and a felt sense thereof that God's strength is made perfect (II Cor. 12:9). The more we grow weak in ourselves the more precious His strength appears, and, as Paul says, "When I am weak, then am I strong." Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Once more we wish to thank our kind readers for their good support by way of encouragements, prayers and finances. We realize that with many of our supporters it is difficult to keep up with spiraling inflation, yet with your generosity we have managed to survive another year. However, our little reserve has dwindled somewhat in the last few months and therefore, in a gentle and loving spirit we urge each of you, if possible, to be careful to keep your subscription paid up. And last, but by no means least, please pray for me that God would enable me to serve you in a manner which is honoring to Him and upbuilding to His precious cause. Love to each of you and best wishes for the holidays.

YOUR LITTLE EDITOR

COMMENTS ON PSALM NINETEEN

Will the reader please read this instructive and inspiring Psalm and give attention to the first six verses, which seem to the writer to be addressed to all people. Who can gaze on the starry heavens and not be lost in awe and amazement? What governs their precise movements and how did they get there? How far does the sky extend and what is beyond? How small is the earth compared to the expanse of the universe! And how small is man compared to the earth! Indeed, how great are the treasures of darkness!

While the night shows knowledge the day utters speech. Behold the sun, the greatest wonder of creation, man excepted. How mysterious is its never-diminishing light and power! It is the source of all energy. By it seedtime and harvest are provided with the never-ceasing change of seasons. By it, winds blow and bring moisture from the seas to water the land and thus gives man bread to eat and water to drink. All the characteristics of each growing plant such as its shape, form and eventual size as well as the shape and color of its bloom are all embodied in its seed, whether large or small. This is a mystery locked in the secrets of nature, mutely testifying the existence of nature's God. The grandeur of the verdant hills, the ripening harvest fields and orchards, the exquisite beauty of countless flowering plants are all pleasant and wondrous to the eye. The scent of new-mown hay, the sweet smelling spices and the fragrance of flowers are all as mysterious as they are pleasant to our sense of smell. All the wonders of nature are the voice of God speaking kindly to man. Oh, for eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart to understand God's message to us poor, selfish, sinners! But we, human mortals, without God's enlightening grace will not see, hear or feel these ever-present testimonies in nature, surrounding all creatures, that there is a Creative God who still reigns supreme over all living and inanimate things.

We now come to verses seven to eleven. The law of the

Lord (doctrine, teaching) converts the soul as a potter moulds a lump of clay and makes it a vessel of honor—a living vessel in reality, and the testimony he has seen in nature and now in grace, of God's existence makes a simple person (one of man's fallen state) wise, —wise unto salvation. How he now rejoices as he realizes the statutes of God in Christ Jesus have, through mercy reached his heart, freeing him from his bondage under sin! God's commandments are pure, being purified seven times. The believer sees a new world; his sorrow has given way to joy and he wears the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness. His fear of the Lord is sanctified to his soul, being merged with a love to God that will endure forever.

The law of works condemns him to death, while judgments in Christ rescue him from hell. For mercy (in Jesus) and truth (in the law) are met together; righteousness (of which a condemned sinner may well despair) and peace (with God) have kissed each other. All glory to God, they are met in his soul, bringing pardon and heavenly joy to his heart. Now, to him, all earthly wealth and fine gold is but dross and trash compared to that heavenly inheritance which is now his by faith and hope. To all who have been given faith in God, the Father and Jesus Christ, the Son, live in harmony with their teaching by the Holy Spirit in their experiences of grace, each would enjoy the answer of a good conscience toward God and peace with Jesus within, according to His word of promise.

In the last four verses of this Psalm David dwells on the warfare that rages between the flesh and Spirit in every believer's bosom. He has now received his marching orders, not written on paper, parchment or stone, but written on the fleshly table of his heart and imprinted on his mind. He has been cleansed from his sins, killed to the world and in a sense to himself, bidden to go forward that his works of faith may be seen by all men and his life be a convincing testimony to all that have eyes to see that there is a living God who rules

over all the earth and reigns in Heaven. He is to use his shield of faith to protect him from the fiery darts of the enemy whose citadel is still within his flesh. His deliverance from Satan's yoke is the ground of his hope and will be his stay in battle, for it is through much tribulation the victory will be won, not by his might or power but by Jesus' Spirit.

David confesses his weakness (common in every believer) by saying, "Who can understand his errors?" He knows he has many faults (and who hasn't) which he cannot see. They are secret to us. Since we are not aware of their existence we do not realize how offensive they are. They are known to God and seen by our friends and our foes. We also, like David, should pray to God to cleanse us from these faults. It is those little deviations that our conscience does not feel quite right about when we yield to temptation and "go along with the crowd" that lead to commandments by men which is idolatry.

Presumptuous sins are usually secret faults but David mentions them as the great transgression, probably because they are so offensive to others and damaging to ourselves. He offers a special prayer that he might not become a slave to it. Humility is the opposite conduct from presumption and is a fruit of grace while presumption is a vice of the ego in our fallen nature, and should be shunned and avoided while humility should be coveted and earnestly prayed for.

In the closing verse of this Psalm, David expresses the desire of every renewed soul. He would that he be wholly in the Master's service by the words of his mouth, —confession, praise, prayer, adoration, testimony. He also desires the meditations of his heart be right for by these all creatures are judged. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

ELDER GALE F. HANOVER

Hatred and malice harbored in the heart is one of the greatest killers of men.

THE DILEMMA OF FREEWILLISM

Many religious systems of this era, as well as in times past, advocate the doctrine of freewillism. The "freewillers" no doubt have not taken an in-depth look at their position, but the freewill theory puts them in a dilemma when tested by the scriptures. We may by utilizing the entirety of the Bible surface this dilemma beyond a reasonable doubt to the rational minded child of God. Nevertheless, the review of a few texts should suffice.

Individuals who believe in eternal salvation by acts of the creature; that is, the creature must act before the creator can help them, usually set forth the idea that the whole human family are children of God (in what respect they mean I do not understand), yet, some will end up in everlasting torment because they do not accept Christ and obey the gospel. This position is inconsistent with the written word of God, because we read in Romans 9:8, "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." We see by this that just being natural creatures (children of the flesh) does not make us children of God. Rather, according to nature we are enemies of God. For by nature we are a friend of the world simply because we are of the earth, earthy, and being an earthly creature we ally ourselves as a friend to our worldly environment. Therefore, we are enemies to God. James 4:4, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? *Whosoever* therefore *will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*" We will remain a friend to the world until God gives us that new Spirit, takes away the stony heart and gives an heart of flesh (Eze. 11:19). Just because we are offspring of Adam and are of the human family does not necessarily mean that we are children of God. So the old adage, "we are all God's Children", used by many, is not substantiated by God's written word.

Again, we learn that the theories of many religious institutions are at variance with the word of God. Some say all are sinners, except the infant and mentally incapacitated, and Christ died for the adult capacitated sinners but if they do not accept Him they will die, doomed to eternal punishment. These views are certainly not projected in the writings of the Apostles and prophets. Instead, they reiterate time after time the total depravity of the Adamic family and the surety of salvation to all those God gave His Son, Jesus. Paul said, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:32)." Also, we find David using this expression in Psalm 58: 3 "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born speaking lies." It does not appear that David held the notion that infants were pure.

Christ taught us that we cannot come to him according to our own freewill ability. Listen to his words, recorded in John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Here we find our freewill ability is so limited and that our coming to Christ is not based upon our works but upon the drawing power of our heavenly Father.

The Apostle John also penned down many other declarations made by our Savior which is for the edification of his children. "All the Father giveth to me *shall come to me*: and him that cometh to me *I will in no wise cast out*. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:37-39). It is further stipulated in the same book, "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent (John 17:2, 3). Jude comes along later and corroborates the record of John by saying in verse one, "To them that are sanctified by God the Father and pre-

served in Jesus Christ, and called: mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied.”

Referenced quotations should amply prove the depravity of mankind and the surety of eternal salvation to the Lord's children. Notice the phrase made by Jude, “preserved in Jesus Christ”. The word *preserved* is defined as follows: to keep from harm, damage, danger, evil, etc.; protect save, also to keep from spoiling or rotting. Now the Lord's children being preserved in Jesus Christ (a Perfect Vessel) are in a safe condition and are not subject to sliding off into eternal punishment because they may not conform to some “man-made” theory. Scripture can be stacked upon scripture which will support the choice of God's family according to his own sovereign will and that he also keeps them by his power but it is not expedient to do so here.

When Jesus was in the world, in body, he sometimes responded to a question with another question. For the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority does thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing which if you tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John whence was it? from heaven or of men? and they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we say of men; we fear the people: for all hold John as a prophet” (Mat. 21:23-26).

The chief priests and elders, on this occasion, found themselves in a strait, faced with some difficult alternatives and their reply was, “We cannot tell.” So the individuals who believe their eternal salvation to be based on their own works will find themselves in a similar situation. For when we follow this theory to its ultimate conclusion we find it ends in complete chaos.

We today, by responding to the freewill theory with a question, can reduce it to shambles; thus manifesting the

great dilemma contained therein.

The lesson of Cornelius is one that will not fit the scope of freewillism no matter how you turn it. Therefore, by asking the freewill advocate the question, "Was there any Gentiles saved eternally before Peter preached to Cornelius?" you put them in a very awkward position. If the above question is answered "yes" from the freewill point of view they are admitting that God saved Gentile people for heaven without using men and the gospel as instruments to do so. Conversely, if the question is answered, "No," this position refutes their own theory that God gives everyone an equal chance to be saved. The reason being that the gospel, as preached by Peter, had not been delivered to the Gentile people prior to that time. So, if Cornelius was a child of God (which he was) before Peter preached to him it was by the grace of God and not by observance of gospel law because he had not yet received it. And, if he was not a child of God and it was necessary for him to hear and obey the gospel, God was certainly unjust to all the Gentiles that lived before Cornelius since He (God) did not give them an opportunity to hear the gospel and obey it. A negative answer here incriminates the freewill-er on the same point that they have so long and loudly accused the Primitive Baptists of—believing in an unjust God. People often accuse the Primitive Baptists of believing in an unjust God because they believe in one that makes choice of his people, elects them and predestinates the same according to the good pleasure of his will.

However, when we review the principles taught in the book of God's holy writ, we find the doctrine of God's choice (not Man's) standing as a tower supported by each inspired writer. May we, as blessed characters of God, rejoice in the wonderful doctrine of Salvation by His grace.

ELDER DENNIS H. JONES

What you see depends largely on what you look for.

WHY BAPTISM?

A very sincere gentleman only recently asked me, "Why do Primitive Baptists insist on baptizing people over again before accepting them as church members?" This question has been asked for centuries, and it is unlikely that we will be able to satisfy most of those who ask. Neither Protestant nor Catholic people ever did understand why the church would not accept their official acts, for they claim to be Christians as well as we, and so they labeled the church "Anabaptists", or re-baptizers. We do have good reasons for what we do. The desire to be Christian is not limited to the Primitive Baptists. There are many very sincere people in the world who have followed the very best course they knew; and it has been my experience to find some of them who believed considerable Bible doctrine, and joined a church believing that that church believed like they did. Some have also been immersed, similar to our practice, and they cannot see the difference between what they have had and what we have. It is not our desire to "unchristianize" anyone, but we do have a *very different definition* from others as to what christianity is.

Christianity consists in three things: *first*, in believing the gospel doctrines; *second*, in trusting the gospel promises; and *third*, in obeying gospel commandments. It is very probable that the majority of the Lord's people will never measure up to all three, which is necessary if anyone is to truly be a practicing Christian.

One may, like Nicodemus or Joseph, be a secret disciple by having the first two of these qualifications; indeed, many churches have those as dear friends and supporters of the church, who, we may say, love the church so much they will do about anything for it, except join it. There are certain blessings to be won, certain commandments to obey, which cannot be accomplished outside a spiritual, gospel church. If a person is getting what he wants from his own church, I confess I cannot see why he wants ours; or if he is not satisfied (I

can understand that) there, why he should object to doing what the Lord has commanded to find these blessings.

Jesus said to John when requesting baptism at his hands, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." If being a follower of Jesus requires us to walk in this way, we ought not to object to it. I do not understand Old Baptists to believe in *re-baptism* of any; but we certainly do believe in baptism. Not all people have the ordinance of gospel baptism entrusted to them, even though they may claim it, and this is proven by the fact that their baptisms do not produce the results that should be. Water baptism consists of two things: it is a burial into the death of Christ, that is, in full trust in the accomplishment of Christ through His death, burial and resurrection; and it is a rising again to walk in newness of life. Without this, which includes living a good clean life, and enjoying the companionship of good Christian people daily, this public profession of faith would be without most of its meaning.

Most Bible students know that the term "baptism" was a word lifted out of the Greek language. It means to submerge, to dip, to plunge, to sink as a ship sinks into the sea, to immerse. In the Bible it is used in four different ways, and therefore it behooves any Bible reader to consider which is implied as he reads. First, it is used in reference to the overwhelming flood of terrorism and persecution which did first accompany the public profession of faith in Christ. Jesus asked His disciples, "Are you able to drink of the cup that I drink of, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" Secondly, it is used in reference to conversion, meaning that a person is totally overwhelmed with such a sea of truth, of uncontrovertible facts, that he must acknowledge the truth; so, in I Cor. 10:1-2, it is said that the fathers passed under the cloud and through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses under the cloud and in the sea. Third, it is used in reference to the spirit-birth, or regeneration, or washing by the Spirit of God; John the Baptist called this the "baptism by the Holy Ghost

and with fire," and we read in I Cor. 12:13 these words: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." This baptism must precede water baptism, for it is the source of all spiritual service and living, and furthermore without it water baptism is meaningless. There isn't enough water in the Atlantic Ocean to wash the vain nature of a sinner free from sin. And fourth, of course, the Bible speaks of water baptism, identifying it with the visible church as an ordinance. Since whole denominations have arisen for no other reason than that men have failed to understand and distinguish between these four simple uses of the word, it is very necessary for us to be careful in our reading.

Baptism in water is a public confession of faith, not only a faith in Christ and His word, but also an affiliation with that precious faith and fellowship once delivered unto the saints, as we see in the church immediately following Pentecost, when the saints continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

Water Baptism admits a person into the union of a visible church, and we can no more suppose that it gives us access to all churches than we would suppose being married to one woman would give a man a union to all women, which thing would be disgraceful.

If baptism is essential to becoming a public professor of Christianity, we owe it to believers to encourage and instruct them to this end. Without difficulty we could give ten reasons why people should be baptized. *First*, our Lord commanded it, as did the apostles, and if we are thinking right this alone should be sufficient for us. *Secondly*, our Lord gave us the example Himself, and if we would be His follower, we ought not to question His authority. *Third*, gospel preaching always points believers toward baptism, appealing to their conscience

and holding out the promise of needed grace. *Fourth*, the conscience of a believer will not rest until it is accomplished right. *Fifth*, we are commanded to eat of the Lord's supper, but no place in the Bible do we find that this is ever done outside of church membership, so we cannot keep this memorial unless we are baptized. *Sixth*, without gospel baptism the church would lose her identity in the world; it is the mark of the true church. *Seventh*, the church would not have a future without it. *Eighth*, baptism is the only way for a person to enter into the full fellowship and confidence of the dearest people on the face of the earth. *Ninth*, we need the constant warnings, instructions, and the encouragement of our brethren and sisters to enable us to live godly lives in this dark world; unworthy though we be, the church is the safest place for a child of God. And *Tenth*, our Lord has done so very much for us that we ought to want to show our willingness to live with His people and serve them.

Our Lord, when He became thirty years of age, left His home and family, walked 40 to 80 miles across the wilderness to the place where John was baptizing. He did not come too early, nor too late. Had he been there a year before, John would not yet have been baptizing; had he come a year later, John would have been dead. He came because He desired to begin His appointed work, and He came knowing full well that He was beginning in a path which would lead him straight to the cross. His was a deliberate choice, an expression of His will to serve God. I point this out because so many have felt they ought to resist their inner urge as long as they can, thus living in disobedience. Jesus gave up home and family, occupation and safety. When I see Him hanging naked between two thieves, His body covered with His own blood from head to foot, men ridiculing Him in His sufferings, and then I hear men complain that baptism is embarrassing, not convenient, or too costly! I cringe inwardly for men, for I know they are not thinking of Christ as they should.

Baptism is a trial of faith, an act of pure faith. In the case of our Master, who was led from the waters of Jordan directly into 40 days and nights of temptations, we see that it is somewhat like a Christian stepping to the firing line in war, to be challenged by Satan himself. It is this temptation that has been the church's salvation; those who cannot endure it through weakness of faith and love, have not been willing to pay the price. So baptism, like Noah's ark, has saved the people that God has both called and chosen.

It may be that I would seem a little peculiar to some, but I have never felt the urge to be baptizing people that some seem to feel. Oh, I rejoice to see folks coming home, all right; but I am content to be patient about it. It seems that if we have any disagreements over doctrine and practice, I want to iron them out before baptism so that the troubles will not come into the church. I want to know whether a person is going to feel at home among the people, whether he will enjoy listening to the pastor preach, first. I can afford to wait. When people like the gentleman I mentioned in the beginning, question me, I am very apt to let them know they are very welcome among us, to listen and watch and learn, to see if it is what they want.

I try to avoid arguments, but I also try to preach just as plainly and kindly as possible. If the Lord is in the matter, they will come to love it, and then they will be perfectly willing to do anything necessary to be a part of it.

I have even pointed out to a few that they ought to do some comparing between churches; "See such-and-such scriptures," I tell them. "Look at your old church, and look carefully at ours. See which comes the closest to this Bible pattern." When it comes right down to the matter of who feeds the Lord's sheep with pure gospel food, I am not at all afraid to test the Primitive Baptists that I know against any other people on earth. The gospel itself will distinguish for us between those who truly belong to a church and those who do

not; those who do will return time after time. It is our business, like the servants of Boaz, to "let some handfulls fall of a purpose for them."

ELDER RAYMOND WEBB
Carthage, Illinois

REIGNING GRACE

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:21)."

Now let us reason upon this expression. "Sin hath reigned *unto* death;" not *near by* or *close to* death, but *unto* death. The entire chapter teaches this as well as other places in the Bible. So we are all agreed on this point, that it was by man that sin entered into the world. Now there is something that follows in the verse in the same manner: "Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." As was that, so is this, by One, Christ Jesus. You certainly would not take the position that grace might reign a part of the way, and some be lost or saved today and lost tomorrow. Note that as sin reigned unto death, *even so* or in like manner grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. The grace does not come short of eternal life because it is "by Jesus Christ our Lord." To take any other position on the text will contradict the plain statement that grace might "reign through righteousness by Jesus Christ." Keep this in mind how this reigns *by Christ*; not Him *and others*.

As grace reigns through the righteousness of Christ *unto eternal life*, I see no fault or failure, but rather eternal life *will* be the result of Christ reigning in this manner. Christ said, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." Now is it going to stop somewhere or fail before it is given? No! in no wise will it fail, for Christ is not a failure. Some

will say that the sinner must do his part, or else grace will not reign unto eternal life. Well, the Bible declares that it does not come by works of righteousness which we do. Besides, this text tells us this grace reigns through righteousness of Christ unto eternal life.

Some claim that this reasoning contradicts other statements in the Bible, like this one: "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." But people fail to *study* such expressions. The Bible teaches that God works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, so our working follows, or should follow, the working of God in us. This would be too late to work in order to have the will. No one could take the water of life freely except those who have a taste or a hunger for it. All such characters are already blessed. See Matt. 5 on the point.

ELDER A. D. WOOD
Glen Rose, Texas

DIVORCE — REMARRIAGE

I have been requested to write on the following topics: Acknowledging my limitations, I suggest the following books for further reference to the inquiring reader: *Hassell's History*; Dr. John Gill's "*Body of Divinity*"; "*Editorials*" by C. H. Cayce; Matthew Henry's "*Commentaries*" and Buck's "*Theological Dictionary*".

Scriptural Marriage

How wonderful is the wisdom of God as He institutes marriage and tenderly nourishes the homes of all classes of people. See the divine arrangement as God places marriage under His protection and establishes it on His own moral law. Under the moral law of God the Christian minister cites the same marriage vow equally to the unregenerate as to the regenerate.

The marriage vows established on the moral law of God are binding upon all classes of people, upon both the unregenerate and the regenerate, hence, equally binding upon church members and non-church members. All classes of people should respect the moral law of God. Both church members and non-church members should respect their companions in marriage. To each God has spoken, "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

Scriptural Divorce

Hear Jesus say, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." See Matthew 5:32. *The Old Baptists, as a body*, have always appreciated this scriptural rule of Jesus and they have held it in sacred truth, and steadfastness. As a denomination our people have always said, "To have a scriptural marriage one must have scriptural grounds for the marriage." The great body of Baptists have always held a marriage contract to be unscriptural when either of the parties to it have an unscriptural divorce, saying, "An unscriptural divorce and an unscriptural marriage will perpetuate adultery. To have a scriptural divorce one must have scriptural grounds for the divorce."

Scriptural Remarriage

How sad it is when either party in a scriptural marriage dies. The apostle Paul in Rom. 7:2, plainly says that one is bound to his companion as long as the companion lives. Consequently in a scriptural remarriage, one's companion must either have died, as the apostle says, or else be guilty of fornication, for which cause Jesus says, a scriptural divorce may be obtained.

The apostle Paul in I Cor. 7:15, has said if the unbeliever depart let him depart. He does *not* say depart and get married, neither does he say this departure is an excuse for remarriage.

The harmony of the scriptures must be maintained.

There are neither distortion nor contradictions in the scriptures. (It is well said we never differ in our *understanding* of the scripture, differences of opinion occur in the *misunderstanding* of scripture). We should make every effort to maintain clarity.

The laws of the most of the United States allow various worldly reasons for remarriage. The Church should never mistake these worldly reasons for scriptural reasons. The Church is not to look to the world, rather to Jesus for instruction. The Church should insist those seeking remarriage should seek it on scriptural grounds. May the Church always remember, without scriptural grounds for a scriptural remarriage there can be no scriptural remarriage.

Ordained Elders And Bishops

The above stated principles are especially important and worthy of consideration when a presbytery and church is considering a man for the office of Elder or Deacon. Neither a church or presbytery has any right to ignore the Bible requirements of marriage and divorce in any proposed candidates to the office of Elder or Deacon.

Sometimes our dear churches in proposing a man for the office of Bishop or Deacon attempt to explain the language of Jesus cited above, see Matt. 5:32. The proponents sometimes say Jesus did not include the unregenerated man in this, they forget that marriage is under the moral law of God. They should remember that the moral law of God applies to both the regenerate and the unregenerate. Both churches and presbyteries should remember no unscripturally divorced man should be ordained an Elder or Deacon in the Old Baptist Church. Neither should one unscripturally remarried be raised to such office.

Mistakes Made

To offset the above cited rule of Jesus two cases from the scriptures are frequently cited—David and the apostle Paul.

The plain scriptural answer is, David did not become an Old Baptist Elder. He was a Jew. Consequently the apostle Paul's instruction to the Christian minister did not apply to David. When considering the apostle Paul and his persecuting the Church, we must realize and keep in mind that before he was Paul the Christian apostle, he was the Jew, Saul of Tarshish.

As a Jew, Saul of Tarshish carried out the persecutions against the Christians whom he verily believed to be blasphemers 1st Tim. 1:13, Paul said, "I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." We see Saul the Jew faithful to his religion; however, as he says, "In ignorance and unbelief." *Note* (many people faithfully practice false religion who later are converted and become sound believers in "Salvation by Grace"). Even as a Jew, Saul of Tarshish set a strong example in faithfulness.

When excusing false religion or persecution in Saul of Tarshish, read again his language, "I found mercy because I did it ignorantly." The apostle had practiced persecution as part of his religion—can anyone say he practices adultery as part of his religion? *To use the apostle Paul as an example as he carries out his Jewish religion and then cite his persecution of the church to excuse adultery is plainly a misuse of scripture and a misunderstanding of the life of the apostle.*

Recommendations for the Future

The ministry should warn and recommend so both churches and presbyteries will remember, "A bishop is to be the husband of one wife." (One he is scripturally entitled to have; his *own* wife and not another's). *How else can we have a good report from those who are without?* How else can he be an ensample to the flock in this particular?

How much we need the mercy of God. May God help each of us to honor His Church. May we always remember, Jesus is the law giver and that the Church is never a legislative body. May the great body of the Old Baptists always be in the future, as they have been in the past, faithful to Jesus,

ever looking to Him Who is the author and finisher of their faith. In love and humility.

BY THE LATE ELDER JAMES BIBLER

Published January 1954 in *The Primitive Monitor* in cooperation with Elder Earl Daily and Brother W. T. Daily.

Submitted by ELDER A. J. HYLTON
Willis, Virginia

BELIEVE YE THAT I AM ABLE?

“And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord” (Matt. 9:28).

This lesson, along with so many others our dear Lord taught, is indeed most inspiring to me. Sometimes they cause me to look more closely at myself, beholding what little faith I have in the many sweet and glorious promises that are ours. And further, this gives me a keen desire to strive harder not to ever doubt these precious promises. The lesson above begins with verse 27 and ends with verse 31, and before this, two lessons contained in vv. 18-26.

The first is when the ruler came to Jesus telling Him that his daughter was now dead, and asking Him to come and lay His hand upon his dead daughter, believing if He did so she would live. And in the meantime here comes the dear woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years and had spent all she possessed on physicians and was none the better. She believed if she could but touch the border of His garment she would be healed. And with the great throng of people surrounding Him she managed to touch the border of His garment and she was immediately healed. Jesus told her that her faith had made her whole. These two believed that Jesus was able to supply their needs. Do you and I believe He is able to supply *our* needs?

Now when this lesson I mentioned in the outset begins with verse 27, we see two blind men followed Him, crying and saying, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on us." And when Jesus was come into the house He asked them, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Their reply was, "Yea Lord." They surely did believe, and how well He *knew* they believed! And then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it unto you." When you ask Him for that which you feel so greatly in need of do you believe He is able? That is so good for us to remember each day when we beg Him to direct us in all our thoughts, our words and our actions! How well we know He *is* able to do this, and in so believing we will find much *real joy and happiness*.

We need to keep this ever upon our minds and utmost before us, that He has been with us all our days upon this earth, even though we have so often completely forgotten Him and walked forbidden paths.

Now while these two men were blind naturally, how often have I been blind to the truth in so many things, even the truths as taught in the Holy Writ, many times hearing someone give what they felt was the truth and all the while they were just preaching what they had heard from another, when in fact neither had ever been blessed with inspiration from above on the matter, but they only believed it because it sounded logical. That is never a good reason to believe what we hear. Each of us should look, read, listen, pray and beg God to give us such understanding as we know we stand in need of. When we can see that we do not know; that we are blind in the matter so to speak, and will go to God confessing we are blind, believing that He is able to give us understanding, He will often be pleased to give us such sight and cause us to rejoice in great measure.

If you will pardon a personal reference, I was recently blind in my left eye with a cataract. Since the doctor had never had a patient that was an albino he feared he could not help me and did all he knew to discourage the surgery. But I

explained to him that I was already blind in that eye and I knew very well unless God was pleased to bless his labors that it would all be in vain. I said further, the same holds true with any surgery you perform—and he does many each week.

So he decided he should put in the *Intraocular Lens Implant* and assured me that at best I could never see any better than I once saw. I agreed it would be great to do even that much. I was not at all sure that I would ever see again out of this eye. But I knew also it was entirely up to me to make the decision, *believing that God was able* to enable the doctor to be successful in whatever he did. And to the doctor's surprise I can see better than ever.

He does not know how to make me any glasses other than the ones I already was wearing. But he will try again. However if I can get no more assistance, I have been enriched beyond measure to be able to see better than ever naturally. But even then it is not to be compared with what God has blessed me to see in a few of the *precious* truths in His Holy Writ. This is to be the greatest possession I will ever have in this life. It gives me joy unspeakable and filled with glory to God.

Let us consider for a moment those who had great faith in God and knew so well that He was able, but did not know that He would. Think of Daniel of old. He certainly did not know that God would deliver him from the great lions when he chose to be thrown in the den with them rather than deny his dear Lord. The same holds true with the three Hebrew children. They acknowledged that they did not know what their God was going to do about delivering them from that awful furnace of fire, but one thing they were sure of, they did not intend to deny their God who had already delivered them from so many dangers.

Now I surely must never turn my back upon such a Great Redeemer. Oh! how He has delivered me from so many dangers all my life, and now, this very day, He is giving me some

of the greatest things any poor mortal could ever receive; *sweet peace, joy and contentment.*

He richly blessed me last Sunday to go to church where I first united over 45 years ago and where I had not been in a long time. I had a difficult time getting someone to take me, but desiring to go so badly, I made much effort to go and was so blessed to see this dear old Sister come home after I spoke on the sweet subject of *faith*. This is indeed a sweet subject. It is truly endless.

It is so easy to stay away from church after making several efforts to get a way to go and then allowing Satan to tell you that this is proof that you should make no more effort to go this time. But if we believe God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, we will never give up as long as we have strength to keep on, trying to fill the deep desire to please Him; to be in His services each weekend and every time possible on week days; to call anyone on the phone we feel we need to, trying to comfort them or to stir up their pure minds; to visit the sick when opportunity affords; to write letters when we feel the need to do so, and so on and on, whatever the Lord may give us a desire to do, do it, believing *He is able to* bless our efforts and we will receive many-fold blessings in what we really do in the sweet name of Jesus. We should ever remember that he is able to bring it to pass.

ELDER DAVID P. BRIDGMAN
Montgomery, Alabama

CORRESPONDENCE AND NEWS NOTES

Wonderful News From Sister Iola Cox, Stafford, Virginia:

Dear Brother Harris: On September 13th I was diagnosed as having Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia. Up until the day before I had been working full time at my job at the hospital, not noticing any great change in my feelings. However the

dreaded disease had progressed so far that the doctor expressed doubts of me living more than a few weeks (or days). This letter to you, Brother Harris, is to try in my weak way to express the marvelous and wonderful works of God which I hope is in my heart.

First of all, the dread of the monster death was wiped right away. I rejoiced as never before that my Saviour cared for me—unworthy, sinful me. How could it be that He could look down on me, such a worm in the dust? Not only was my spirit fed from on high, but everything was done for me for my creature comforts. My family came from various parts of the U.S., and worked out a tight schedule wherein I was never left alone a single minute night or day. I was put to bed in the section of the hospital where I'd worked for four years, and all personnel gave me devoted attention. My doctor is a praying, God-fearing man, and very skilled in his work.

Then the cards, letters and flowers came flowing in. Oh! those dear notes from my kindred in Christ telling me of their prayers for me! How precious each one is! I was on strict isolation but they allowed dear Brother Hollie Redmon and Brother Emory Alderton to come in to visit me in gowns and masks. And even dear Brother Skeen came all the way from Charlottesville to visit me. I can't describe how my poor heart rejoiced when those dear angels of God would talk to me of Heaven and my hope was renewed—my precious, precious hope, and grace for each day was given me.

As time went on my white blood count started to rise, then the miracle of going into remission. Now I am home, very weak, but still tenderly cared for by a loving family. Of course there is no way in the world to determine how long this condition will last. That is all in the hands of an all-wise God, and I *want* it there. I don't know why He has seen fit to spare me now. I know I have had this desire in my heart almost constantly to shout praises to my God for all His dear children to hear. Like Brother Charles Alderton, I have no proof that I am one of His, my hope is sufficient for now. I

am hoping to feel strong enough to go to church before long.

Brother Harris, I haven't written all of this for publication, I know it is too long and disjointed, not all the way I *wanted* to write. My main message I would like to give is one of Thanksgiving and praise to the Mighty God of all His people; the great Triune; the Blessed Elder Brother, Who conquered death and the grave, taking away the dread and the sting. "Oh what must it be like to be there!"

If there is a little space in the A & M available I would like to express my appreciation to all the dear people of our local Old Baptist churches for their communications of love and encouragement, and most of all for their prayers in my behalf, and to all the people who have been so kind and faithful to me. Praise God for His goodness and mercy. A little Sister in hope.

(Editor's note: I know our readers will rejoice with Sister Cox in the glorious blessings she has received and join with me in praying that the Lord will continue His miraculous works in her life).

Brother Kenneth and Sister Jean Ratcliff, Burlington, Kentucky:

Dear Ones: Want to thank everyone for all cards and letters this summer. This was a bad summer on our family. I was in hospital for eleven weeks. As people who know us, we have a big family with our foster children who are a real part of our family. Karen, our second oldest daughter, quit her job to stay home and help out so as not to have to upset them by moving. In that time our worker was trying to prepare our five and six year olds to go for adoption. They are now moved into their new home with their new parents. It has left a great vacancy in our home but feel God has given us a gift to care for little ones and help them get a new start in life.

I am looking forward to when God sees fit to give me my health back and I'll be able to care for some more of his little ones. I have not been able to go to church but once since June so have enjoyed the A & M. Sending you money for another year.

Kenneth and I were not able to go to any Associations this summer but our daughters were. They came home from the meetings enjoying and sharing their weekends with their Dad and I. The Lord blessed us with two very wonderful daughters. We can't say enough for the way they carried on for their Dad and I. Sometimes we don't give our young people enough praise and encouragement. Remember our family in prayer.

From Elder Daily Hite, Marion, Ohio:

Dear Elder Harris and A & M readers: I am sorry I do not have an article for publication in the Advocate and Messenger this time. I so much of the time feel my efforts are unprofitable and non-beneficial to the cause of Christ, but I must leave that in the Lord's hands. I have been on the sick list again and entered the Marion General Hospital on October 18. They were quite some time tracing it down to gall-bladder trouble, so on the 27th I had gall-bladder surgery. I am now at home and improving a little each day, but do not seem to feel equal to trying to write an article at this time.

Several years back I knew I was going in the hospital a little ahead of time, so I had written an article in advance and had my wife mail it, but I didn't have any previous knowledge of this and have not tried to prepare anything ahead. I feel so unworthy of the Lord's mercies and grace, I am indebted to Him for strength, light, life, truth and peace in all ways. May the Lord of all mercies bless you one and all and keep you in His care. "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Yours sincerely.

From Elder and Sister Phillip Johnson, Strasburg, Virginia:

To our fellow members and many friends: We are not sending out Christmas cards this year due to the high postage rates. We do wish for each of you a *blessed holiday season*, and we do invite each of you to visit us in our home. May God be with you in the New Year and grant you health and happiness is our prayer. Sincerely.

ORDINATION

In response to the invitation of Providence Church, the following Elders and deacons met with Providence Church at 10:00 a.m., November 4, 1978, for the purpose of ordaining Brother Robert L. Webb to the full work of the ministry:

From the Kansas City Church, Elder Charles Surbaugh; from Grayville, Indiana, Elder Mervin Drake; from the New Liberty Church in Champaign, Ill., Elders Lloyd Clapp and Ben Graves, with deacon Dan Aders; from New Hope Church, Hinesboro, Ill., Elder B. T. Stevens; from Pleasant View Church, Palmyra, Ill., Elder James Harris and deacon Donald Ashby; from Smyrna Church, Bentley, Ill., Elders Orvel Prior and Vernon Hopkins, and deacons Robert Curtis, Junior Dittmer, and Richard Prior; from Providence Church, Plymouth, Ill., Elder Raymond Webb and deacons Charles Husted and Walter Pile; from Des Moines River Church, Eldon, Iowa, deacon Robert Thompson; from Zion Church, Kenosha, Wisc., deacon Ortha Rhodes; from Mt. Pleasant Church, Grinnell, Iowa, deacon Burton Koger; from the New Hope Church, Greenbush, Ill., deacon Woodrow Connors; from Mt. Tabor Church, deacon Earl Spencer; from New Hope Church, McLeansboro, Ill., deacon Thomas Groves; from Sharon Church, St. Louis, Mo., deacon Wayne Bledsoe; and from Mt. Zion Church, Astoria, Ill., deacon Clair Webb.

Following a sweet song service, Elder James Harris introduced the session with prayer, and the above named elders and deacons were invited to organize themselves into a presbytery, which they did by electing Elder Raymond Webb moderator and Elder Orvel Prior clerk. The presbytery chose Elder Charles Surbaugh to deliver the ordination prayer, and Elder Raymond Webb to deliver the charge to the candidate and to the church, but agreed to dispense with questioning the candidate because all present knew Brother Bob's views and his gift. On behalf of the church, Brother Jimmie Webb led Brother Robert, and his wife Sister Linda, forward and delivered him into the hands of the presbytery. Following a sweet prayer by Elder Surbaugh, and the laying on of hands by the presbytery, Elder Raymond Webb then delivered the charge to the candidate and to the church. By motion and second, the presbytery agreed to return Brother Robert to the church as a fully ordained minister of the gospel. Providence Church voted unanimously to accept the work of the presbytery, and to receive him as an ordained minister. It was agreed by the presbytery to send an account of this ordination to the Comforter and to the Advocate and Messenger for publication.

Following the adjournment of the presbytery, those present extended their heartfelt good wishes and prayers for Brother Bob and Sister Linda, in many ways expressing their love through their handshaking, and their words of encouragement. Those present in the congregation represented twenty different church congregations, and it was our mutual feeling that the Lord has richly blessed us in giving us this gift. The many visitors and the warmth of the meeting made the service very much like an association, and all of the members of Providence Church would like to express their appreciation for the encouragement they received from those who came. It is our prayer that God will richly bless Elder Bobby and Sister Linda for many, many years to come.

CIRCULAR LETTER - EBENEZER ASSOCIATION - 1978

The Ebenezer Association of Old School Baptists or Primitive Baptists assembled in their 150th session with Mill Creek Church on August 11, 12, and 13, 1978. To the churches composing her body, greetings:

Precious Brethren in Christ: We have met together once more by the grace and mercy of the Lord and have been permitted to share in the truth, love and fellowship that binds together the hearts of the children of light. We trust that we all have been drawn to this session by cords of love and that our desire is for the fellowship of the brethren and unity of this association as she stands in the truth and above all else to worship, praise and honor Christ our Lord. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalm 133:1).

Brethren, we are grieved as we are made aware once again of the absence of the precious gifts, who in times past have made our hearts glad. Yet we grieve not as those that have no hope, for we know of the word where it says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psalm 116:15). Those that labor in this vineyard need not be reminded when the load grows heavy, but they do need the comfort that comes from the word of the Lord as it speaks of His compassion, His strength, and of those things that shall not be moved but shall stand sure. The thought comes to mind that the Lord spoke unto His disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into his harvest." Let us not despair, for it is still the Lord's harvest and He is still the one that sends forth His laborers. Let us be faithful unto His will and pray to this end.

"Finally brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might" (Eph. 6:10). In this strength let us stand, ever looking to the foundation that standeth sure. Let us stand firm in the doctrine of Christ and the apostles and having put on the whole armour of God and (this as it is written) "having done all to stand," let us be found faithful in doctrine and practice and may every task be a labor of love. —Elder J. Toliver Utz.

—Approved by: Elders W. T. Daily, E. S. Skeen and Dwayne Fletcher

NOTICES OF ORDINATION

In our October business meeting, Van Buren Primitive Baptist Church voted to set aside *Licentiate Tom Pitney*, grandson of the late Elder Admiral D. Pitney, to the full work of the gospel ministry. The time will be December 16, 1978, 10:00 a.m., Saturday morning. We invite all of our same faith and order to come and be with us. Pray for us.

Elder Durward Edwards, Moderator
Sister Martha Edwards, Clerk

In her November 18th conference, Hawksbill Primitive Baptist Church, Stanley, Virginia, voted to call for the ordained help of her sister churches for the purpose of ordaining *Brother Ernest M. Long* to the work of the gospel ministry.

The church has also called Brother Long to serve them as Pastor. The ordination service has been set for Sunday, December 17, 1978 at 2:00 p.m. after morning services and lunch. Hawskbill Church extends a special invitation to the ministry and welcomes any and all brethren and sisters who may have a mind to attend. For further information you may contact Brother George Rothgeb, Phone (703) 778-3301.

A WORD OF APPRECIATION FOR SISTER MELLON

Since August 1965 Sister Evelyn R. Mellon has served as the Secretary-Treasurer of Advocate and Messenger, Inc. I, as editor, would like to publicly express my deep appreciation for her very able handling of the duties of this position and I feel that I speak for each member of the Associate Editors and the Board of Trustees, as well as all our readers. I don't know how much encouragement Sister Mellon may have received personally and through the mail, but I would think she is due a great deal of credit for the devoted effort she has made in behalf of all of us. Her responsibilities are no small task but she has always done an excellent job. So, to you Sister Mellon, we express a special *thanks* for your most helpful efforts. May the Lord continue to richly bless you in this labor of love.

THE EDITOR

Obituary

SISTER AMY CLYDE CROUSE

Sister Amy Clyde Crouse of 150 East Main Street, Elkton, Maryland, was called from this life of trouble and affliction to her long-sought home of which she spoke so very much.

She was born April 1, 1895 at Sparta, North Carolina, and moved to Maryland around 1933. She was married to the late Lonnie M. Crouse, who preceded her in death on June 1, 1955.

She was a faithful member of London Tract Primitive Baptist Church since August 1957, and served as clerk for several years.

She is survived by six sons, Oscar K., Martin A., Wayne C., Ray A., Hoke R., and Thomas B., all of Elkton; three daughters, Ruth A. Caudill of Unionville, Pennsylvania, Edith C. Trimble of Wilmington, Delaware, and Reba E. Moore of Elkton; 33 grandchildren, 34 great-grandchildren and a host of relatives and friends.

A funeral service was conducted for her from Hicks Home for Funerals, Elkton, Maryland at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, October 21, 1978, by Elder J. L. Compton, Elder Troy Edwards and Rev. Howard O. VanSice.

She was laid to rest in Cherry Hill Cemetery, Cherry Hill, Maryland to await the coming of our Lord and Master.

Written in much love for a very dear grandmother.

Sister Sue Alderton
(Widow of the late Elder Charles Alderton)

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Clara Melvina Dorsey was born in Douglas County, Washington, March 27, 1900, and was called home September 3, 1978. She was united in marriage in Mansfield, Washington, February 22, 1916, to Sibert Eaton, son of the late Elder W. T. Eaton and wife, formerly of Luray, Virginia, and later of Prosser, Washington. Mr. Eaton preceded her in death in 1957.

To this union eight children were born: Alex Eaton, Stilwell, Kansas; Archie Eaton, deceased; Sam Eaton, Stanwood, Washington; Ben Eaton, Portland, Maine; Mrs. Hubert (Reda) Albright, Bellingham, Washington; Mrs. J. W. (Ruby) Jolly, Everett, Washington; Mrs. C. D. (Virginia) Holm, Spokane, Washington; and Mrs. Lawrence (Nellie) Enquist, Mount Vernon, Washington. Besides her children Sister Eaton is survived by two brothers, twenty-seven grandchildren, and twenty-nine great-grandchildren.

Sister Eaton united with the Primitive Baptist Church located at Prosser, Washington, known as Yakima River in 1937 and was a dedicated, faithful member. Although in recent years she lived about two hundred and fifty miles from the church she rarely missed a meeting, traveling the long distance with her daughter and son-in-law, Elder and Sister J. W. Jolly. Truly a Mother in Israel has been taken from us.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Yakima River Church extend to her family our heartfelt sympathy and pray that God in His infinite wisdom comfort all who mourn, heal the broken heart-strings and direct all to follow her example in devotion to her God and her church.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we keep a copy of this resolution for our church records, give a copy to her family, and send a copy to the Advocate and Messenger.

Done while in regular business meeting the second Sunday in October, 1978.

Elder J. W. Jolly, Moderator
Eugene O'Neal, Church Clerk

DONATIONS TO THE ADVOCATE AND MESSENGER

Mrs. Shelby L. Rupard, Kentucky, \$2.00; Kenneth Kelley, North Carolina, \$5.00; Lewis M. Rudacille, Virginia, \$5.00; Grant and Della Key, Oregon, \$5.00; Mrs. Ruth Feller, Virginia, \$5.00; Mrs. Mabel Butterfield, Pennsylvania, \$5.00; Mrs. Isabelle Smith, Texas, \$2.00; Mrs. Groveen P. Ewers, Virginia, \$5.00; Elder Harry Bridges, Alabama, \$2.00; Mrs. Irene Bebout, Virginia, \$5.00; S. S. Payne, Virginia, \$3.00; Mrs. Albert H. Darby, Maryland, \$5.00; Mr. and Mrs. Eric Naschold, Virginia, \$5.00; Nick Herald, Ohio, \$3.00; Mrs. Lizzie Joyce, North Carolina, \$1.00; Mr. Ray Carlton, Florida, \$5.00; Mrs. Nora Bandy, Indiana, \$3.00.

MARTINSBURG—Martinsburg, W. Va Corner Wilson St. and N.Y. Ave. Meets 2nd Sun. 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Elder Dwayne Fletcher, Pastor, 21 - 2 Florence Tollgate, Florence, N.J. 08518, Tel. (609) 499-2491. Clerk, Olga Arnold, 236 Warm Springs Ave., Martinsburg, W. Va 25401, Tel. 267-7356. Mar. '79

NORTH FORK—Six miles south of Purcellville, Va 2nd Sun. 11:00 a.m. Elder Russell Sutphin, Pastor, Bloomery Route 74, Winchester, Va 22601, Tel. (703) 662-1476. Mrs. Elsie S. Payne, Clerk, Rt. 1, Box 2D, Purcellville, Va 22132 May '80

OLD CARROLL, Md—Take Rt. 27 out of Damascus, Md by-passing Mt. Airy to Watersville Rd. Turn right about 1¼ miles to church. Meets each 2nd Sunday 10:30 a.m. Elder Wes Johnson, Pastor, P.O. Box 267, Enola, Pa 17025. For information contact Sister Frances Ellicott, 8758 Cather Ave., Manassas, Va 22110, Tel. (703) 368-2592 April '79

ROBINSON RIVER—Brightwood, Va on U.S. Rt. 29. Meets 2nd Sun. 11:00 a.m. and Sat. before at 2 p.m. and 4th Sun. 11:00 a.m. Also services each 5th Sun. Elder Chas. W. Alderton, Pastor, Brightwood, Va, Tel. (703) 948-4744, Madison County. Aubrey E. Utz, Clerk, Madison, Va Dec. '78

TAPSCOTT PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Ohio—Located on Ohio No. 123 half-way between Carlisle and Franklin, Ohio. Meets each 2nd Sun. at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. prevailing time. Elder James Baker, Pastor, 53 Smith St., West Alexandria, Ohio 45381. Sister Louise Sims, Clerk, 3503 Central Ave., Middletown, Ohio 45042 Jan. '79

UNION—Summerduck, Va Take 651 from Remington to Summerduck (about 10 miles) meets each 2nd Sunday at 11:00 a.m. Elder J. E. Alderton, Pastor, 3824 Wendy Lane, Silver Spring, Md 20906. Tel. (301) 946-9526. Mrs. Pauline Steadman, Clerk, Rt. 1, Warrenton, Va 22186. Tel. (703) 347-3469. Dec. '79

THIRD SUNDAY

CEDAR CREEK—Frederick Co. near Marlboro, Va and just a few miles northwest of Middleton, Va 3rd Sun. a.m. and Sat. before at 2:30 p.m. Elder W. G. Fletcher, Pastor. Russell Sutphin, Clerk, Bloomery Route, Box 74, Winchester, Va 22601 May '79

CHICAGO PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH—Oak Park YMCA, 255 S. Marion St., Oak Park, Ill 60302. Services each 1st Sun. at 10:30 a.m. with Elder Vernon Hopkins, Co-pastor; each 3rd Sun. at 10:30 a.m. with Elder Raymond Webb, Pastor. Visitors may contact Mrs. Estelle Kendrigan, Clerk, 4127 N. Tripp Ave., Chicago, Ill, Tel. 725-1372 Mar. '79

GRACE—Pershing Dr. and Fillmore St., N. Arlington, Va Meets each 3rd Sun. 10:30 a.m. Elder James Emory Alderton, Pastor, 3824 Wendy Lane, Silver Spring, Md 20906, Tel. (301) 946-9526. Clerk, Mrs. Helen H. Hall, 423 N. Fillmore St., Arlington, Va 22201, Tel. (703) 524-2590 April '79

HAWKSBILL—Near Stanley, Va 3rd Sun. 11:00 a.m. and Sat. night before 7:30 p.m.; also 1st Sun. 7:30 p.m. Elder Charles W. Alderton, Pastor, Brightwood, Va 22715, Tel. (703) 948-4744. Johnnie W. Huffman, Clerk, Shenandoah, Va, Tel. 652-8625 April '80

HOPEWELL—Hopewell, Va Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church meets each 3rd Sun. at 12:30. Located on Rt. 36 at corner of Ft. Lee, Va. Elder Hollie Redmon, Pastor, 112 Buckingham Dr., Colonial Heights, Va 23834, Tel. (804) 526-3532. Sister Lynda Garner, Clerk, 110 Boykins Ave., Colonial Heights, Va 23834 Dec. '78

MT. BETHEL—Three Churches W. Va Services 1st and 3rd Suns. at 10:30. Elder Douglas Heare, Pastor, Rt. 1, Box 87-1, Romney, W. Va 26757, Tel. (304) 822-3228. Mrs. Vergie Mc Bride, Asst. Clerk, Three Churches, W. Va 26765, Tel. (304) 822-3675 Aug. '79

SIDELING HILL—Fulton Co. Pa 6½ miles north of Needmore, Pa Turn west off of 522 at Needmore cross roads. Follow County Route 29015 black top road, bearing right all the way to church. Sign on right. Meeting days 3rd Sun. 10:30 a.m. Annual Meeting 3rd Sun. and Sat. in May. Elder Raymond Pressley, Pastor, P.O. Box 54, Brightwood, Va 22715 July '79

SOUTH RIVER—Browntown, Va 3rd Sunday 11:00 a.m. Elder Philip Johnson, Pastor, P.O. Box 283, Strasburg, Va 22657, Tel. (703) 465-3118. Mrs. Ralph Partlowe, Clerk, Rt. 1, Box 163-A, Bentonville, Va 22610, Tel. (703) 635-4718 June '79

THORNTON GAP PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH—Near Sperryville, Va Sat. before 3rd Sun. 2:00 p.m. Sun. 10:30 a.m. Elder E. S. Skeen, Pastor, Rt. 2, Box 65, Palmyra, Va 22963, Tel. (804) 589-8551. Janet Yates, Clerk, Sperryville, Va 22740, Tel. 987-8220 Jan. '79

THUMB RUN—Near Marshall, Va Take Rt. 647 off of Rt. 55 (Flint Hill Road about 5 miles, turn left off 733 - about 2 miles to the church. Coming off Rt. 211 on 688 (Orlean Road) and turn right on Rt. 732 in Orlean, then approx. 4 miles to Thumb Run Church. 3rd Sun. and Sat. before 11:00 a.m. Elder A. J. Hylton, Pastor, Rt. 3, Box 207, Willis, Va 24380, Tel. (703) 789-7515. Mrs. Aline Abell, Clerk, Rt. 2, Box 35, The Plains, Va 22171 April '80

FOURTH SUNDAY

BARROWS RUN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH—5 miles south of Warrenton, Va on U.S. Route 29 and 15. Meeting 4th Sun. at 11:00 a.m. Elder Raymond Pressley, Pastor, P.O. Box 54, Brightwood, Va 22715, Tel. (703) 948-4337. Mrs Virgie Fishback, Clerk. Mar. '79

ENON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH—Great Cacapon, W. Va, Rt. 9 west 12 miles. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays 10:30 a.m. Elder J. Tolliver Utz, Pastor, Box 8, Madison, Va 22727, Tel. (703) 948-4803. Mrs. Oleta A. Shanholtz, Clerk, 310 Independence St., Berkeley Springs, W. Va 25411, Tel. (304) 258-3370 Aug. '78

HAPPY CREEK—Front Royal, Va Corner Stonewall Dr. and Church St. Meets every 4th Sun. at 10:30 a.m. and Sat. night before at 7:30 p.m. Also 2nd Sun. at 10:30 a.m. Elder Dwayne Fletcher, Pastor, 10110 Campus Way South #102, Upper Marlboro, Md 20870, Tel. (301) 336-6182. Emory Clifton, Clerk, 672 Stonewall Dr., Front Royal, Va 22630, Tel. (703) 635-3434 June '79

MIAMI—West Charleston, Ohio, State Rt. 202, 3½ miles north of Interstate 70. Services 2nd and 4th Sundays 10:30 a.m. and Sat. night before the 4th Sun. 7:30 p.m. Elder Eddie Fewel, Franklin, In (4th) Elder William Shockley, Kokomo, In (2nd). Clerk, Alma Rogers, 412 Ohio Ave., Troy, Ohio 45373; Tel. (513) 339-7715. May '79

MT. CARMEL—South Broad St., Luray, Va 4th Sun. 11:00 a.m. and Sat. before 7:30 p.m. 5th Sun. 11:00 a.m. Elder A. J. Hylton, Rt. 3, Box 207, Willis, Va 24380, Tel. (703) 789-7515. Clarence Moyer, Clerk, Rt. 2, Box 215, Luray, Va 22835, Tel. (703) 743-6385 Dec. '78

SALEM—Richmond, Va 36th and Maury Sts. Turn west off I-95 at Exit 9. Meets each 4th Sun. at 10:30 a.m. and Sat. before at 2:00 p.m. Elder Hollie Redmon, Pastor, 112 Buckingham Dr., Colonial Heights, Va 23834, Tel. (804) 526-3532. Raymond Hubbard, Treas. 4315 Reedy Ave., Richmond, Va 23225, Tel. (804) 233-4895 Dec. '78

UPPERVILLE, Va—4th Sun. 11:00 a.m. Elder E. S. Skeen, Pastor, Rt. 2, Box 65, Palmyra, Va 22963, Tel. (804) 589-8551. Mary E. Lowe, Clerk, Box 157, Purcellville, Va, Tel. (703) 338-7529 Dec. '78

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Washington Church, 6804 Braddock Rd. at Dodson Dr., Annandale, Va 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays, 10:30 a.m. Elder Philip Johnson, Pastor, P.O. Box 283, Strasburg, Va 22657, Tel. (703) 465-3118. Karl F. Bobzien, Clerk, 5911 Camberly Ave., Springfield, Va 22150, Tel. (703) 451-6874 Dec. '80

WHITE OAK—On the White Oak Road, about 6 miles east of Fredericksburg, Va 4th Sun. 11:00 a.m. and 2nd Sun. 2:30 P.M. Elder J. E. Alderton, Pastor, 3824 Wendy Lane, Silver Spring, Md. Mrs. Minnette P. Butler, Clerk, Rt. 11, Box 364-P, Fredericksburg, Va 22401 or call Mr. M. F. Galyen, (703) 373-5134 Mar. '79

OTHER SUNDAYS

BEL AIR—Bel Air Primitive Baptist Church, Bel Air, Md Services each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. Elder F. E. Thompson, Pastor, 1208 N. Fountain Green Rd., Bel Air, Md 21014 Jan. '79

WILMINGTON, Del—2911 Van Buren St., Wilmington, Del 19802. Every Sun. 10:45 a.m. Elder William E. Blair, Pastor, Rt. 1, Box 202A, Woodstown, N.J. 08098, Tel. (1-609) 769-1167. Mrs. Leon (Elnora) Stein, Church Clerk, 509 W. 35th St., Wilmington, Del 19802, Tel. (1-302) 764-4896 Dec. '78