

Advocate and Messenger

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137th Year JANUARY 1998 No. 1

Advocate and Messenger

"SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE" — Eph. 4:15

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| Zion's Advocate Established 1854 | Messenger of Truth Established 1897 | Gospel Messenger Established 1878 |
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ASK YOURSELF

When ill of others you might speak
Take a while to think it through;
Consider this one question first,
Would you want it said of you?

Ere you do a thing to others
Pause a while and think it through;
Would you wish to be thus treated?
Would you want it done to you?

In such matters make these queries,
Is it right? and, Is it true?
Then to self propose this question,
Would you want it done to you?

11-15-94 R.E.H.

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ALMA - Alma, Va. - 4 miles west of Stanley, Va. on Hwy. 340, Meeting house is on Wampler Drive; Meets 1st Sunday 10:30 a.m., Saturday night before at 7:30 p.m.; Elder Ernest M. Long, Pastor, 3671 Farmview Road, Stanley, Va. 22851. Tel. (540) 778-2763. Sister Debbie Snellings, Clerk, P.O. Box 426, Stanley, Va. 22851. April '98

BENTONVILLE - Bentonville, Va. 1st Sunday 10:30 a.m., Elder J. Tolliver Utz, Pastor, S.R. 5, Box 540, Madison Va. 22727. Tel. (540) 948-4803. Charlotte W. Rudacille, Clerk, 1845 Thompson Hollow Road, Bentonville, Va. 22610. Tel. (540) 635-4609. April '98

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Advocate and Messenger

Devoted to the cause of Truth and Righteousness as believed and practiced by the Old School or Primitive Baptists in all ages.

137th Year

JANUARY 1998

No. 1

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BEGINNING OF VOLUME 137

As we begin the one hundred thirty-seventh volume of the *Advocate and Messenger* we do so with the sincere hope and desire that the Lord will continue to provide every needed blessing. Since we have never done very well with new year's resolutions we prefer to simply resolve with each new day to do as well as we are able and leave the sequel to God. We *begin* each day begging the Lord to be with us and give us grace to deal honorably with whatever challenges it may present, and *end* each day thanking the Lord for bringing us through it and blessing us in it. We have found this to be the best course for ourselves and would only resolve to continue in that way.

There are some who seem to have great ambitions of making a name for themselves, but we want no part of such pursuits. We are vividly conscious of the fact that when we have done all those things which we are commanded to do we are still to acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants and have nothing of which to boast but have only done that which was our duty to do (See Luke 17:10). We should all remember that we are *servants*. We are not lords over God's heritage and it is our place to further their joy, not lay burdens upon them which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. And, even more importantly, we should remember that in and of ourselves we are *unprofitable* servants, and any success we enjoy in our labors is owing entirely to the blessing of the Lord. No matter how much we may labor, it is God, and He alone, that *gives the increase* (See I Cor. 3:7), and we will do well to keep this ever in mind and acknowledge it in all we do. God forbid that we should ever claim for ourselves any particle of the glory that belongs to Him.

We ask that our readers continue to pray for us and for all the staff as we labor to bring them good, spiritual, edifying, instructive and God-honoring reading material. We need much grace. We need much unction from on high; and a good measure of health and strength.

We trust that the Lord will bless each of our readers, as well as all others of His children, with a good year ahead, filled with His choice favors and blessings. Above all may He bless us all to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may be better people and better servants. To this end may we all fervently pray.—*The Editor*.

Let men or angels dig the mines
 Where nature's golden treasure shines;
 Brought near the doctrine of the cross
 All nature's gold appears but dross.
 —Watts

IF I COULD

If I could be all that I desire to be I would *do always those things that please God* (See John 8:29). I cannot measure up to that standard, but I *desire* to do so. Christ not only *could* do it, but *did* do it, and He did it "always". However, He was perfect, and I am far from it. He was altogether pure and holy and innocent, and I need not tell you, I am not.

If I could I would always do everything exactly as it should be done. I would never speak an idle word or have an idle or sinful thought. I would *always* do unto others exactly as I would have them do unto me and I would *never* have any feelings of anger or injury toward anyone who abused me or ill-used me, but would rather feel honored to suffer for well doing and would have a prayerful and forgiving attitude toward anyone who mistreated me.

If I could I would always be found meditating on the goodness and mercy of God toward me and would never entertain any feelings of rebellion against Him and His providences. Feelings of love and devotion to Him would always be present with me and I would never fail to give Him thanks for any of the voluminous blessings I receive from His bountiful hand each day of my life. Love for Him and His people would underlie and influence my every thought and deed.

If I could I would always be of an humble, contrite and compassionate spirit, ever mindful that I do not deserve any good thing at God's hands and feeling that though He should slay me, yet would I trust Him (See Job 13:15). I would never speak an ill word about another person unless there were some godly end, or ends, to be accomplished by so doing. I would always live at the feet of my brethren, esteeming them better than myself (See Philippians 2:3).

If I could I would always do all these things and more, but in these things I think I can find some kinship with the beloved apostle Paul, who said, "I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me" (Rom. 7:21), and I have the same warfare that he spoke of in Gal. 5:17 which prevents me from doing perfectly the things that I would. I try very hard but my failings cause me much

pain. I look forward sweetly and hopefully to that wonderful day when I will have a glorified body and will be sinless. Then I will praise my God in perfection, and will never fail. —*Editor*.

PREDESTINATION—A WONDERFUL DOCTRINE

God's people were predestinated. This is a simple statement, yet it expresses a profound truth that very few know anything about. It is God's people *only* who are predestinated. Beyond this the Scriptures do not go, and neither should we. If those of the elect who are presently confused on this subject could truly understand what it means to them they would rejoice greatly in it. Those whom God foreknew in a covenant sense He also did predestinate (See Romans 8:29). And what were they predestinated unto? *To be conformed to the image of Christ*. What an unspeakably wonderful destiny!

The only way the predestination of God's people can be denied is by simply denying the Scriptures. A lady brought her religion to my door some time ago and we had not talked long until she said, "You believe in predestination, don't you?" I said, "Yes, Ma'am, I surely do, don't you?" She answered with a very emphatic, "No!" I said, "Why don't you? It is taught in the Scriptures." She replied, "Because, that portion of the Bible was mistranslated." I told her if I knew any part of God's word had been mistranslated I could have no confidence in *any* of it.

How sad it is that this grand old doctrine is so little understood and that so many of God's people miss out on the joy it brings to those who are blest to see its beauty and embrace it? Every true lover of the Lord is embraced in it and will one day behold His face in righteousness, and will be satisfied when they awake with His likeness (See Psa. 17:15).—*Editor*.

No man will long prosper who scorns the sons and daughters of God, the objects of His undying love.

REJOICE YE BLESSED SAINTS!

The narrow way that leads to life
 Is fraught with fiery trials
 And few the faithful trav'lers there
 Who brave the tempter's wiles.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! ye blessed saints
 Who walk this hallowed way
 Thy Saviour says thy strength shall be
 Sufficient for thy day.

Strait is the gate to paths of faith,
 Its joys are scarce e'er found,
 But to the happy trav'lers there
 Sweet peace and love abounds.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! ye weary souls
 Though burdened down with sin,
 Thy Saviour has declared thy faith
 The victory shall win.

Strive humbly onward in the way
 Thy Saviour bids thee go,
 In time thy harvest shall be great
 As mercies to thee flow.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! ye pilgrim friends
 Hold fast the word of grace,
 Thy Saviour has ascended and
 Prepared for thee a place.

1-16-77

R.E.H.

Where obedience to God is concerned your "I do" is much more important
 than your I.Q.

Hatred does a great deal more damage to the vessel in which it is stored
 than to the object on which it is poured.

THE ESSENCE OF SERVICE

The temples of men are the reflection of what they like, what they believe, what is attractive to them. So in ancient times men made idols which were their portrayal of the beings they worshipped. Those false gods were born, they ate and slept, they worked and fought, they married and had children, and eventually they died, just like the men who created them. God, of course, is not like that at all.

When men build churches, they generally begin with buildings. They add teachers, and forms and rituals which quickly become traditions, they put in forms of entertainment such as music, they add schools and clubs. All of it costs money, so they must also resort to money raising schemes. Somehow in all of this the story of the gospel gets pretty well covered up.

When God builds a church He begins with people, an enlightened people. There just can't be a church without people. To them He gives the pure gospel. You cannot have a church without the gospel. At the same time He adds the spirit of worship, spiritual minds at work in praising God. To this end He gives them a God-called ministry, to teach and pastor them. Then He passes them all through the fire, to weld them together in a spiritual fellowship. This is the church as it was known at Pentecost. Simple in form, but spiritually the healthiest the church will ever be on earth, God's own perfect church, before men had an opportunity to add to it. It is always what is added to that form that makes a church expensive. God was very mindful that His people were poor.

The essence of Christianity is remarkable in that it costs virtually nothing, and yet it costs everything. It cannot be bought with money, yet it requires a devotion and dedication that made those first disciples sell their possessions and lay their money at the apostles' feet, so they might share in it. Oh, far more! It led them to lay down their lives for it. Here is the treasure hid in a field, the pearl of great price, that requires a man to sell all he has to buy it! Isn't it strange! People join the churches of men without a thought, for to most it is only a social duty. But the poor child of grace frets and worries and

prays, and can hardly dare breathe when he finally asks for a home with the Lord's people! Here is something very sacred, a vow that is for life. Oh, yes, the church is expensive! But no person was ever too poor to afford it.

A man, or set of men, always govern the churches of the world. God governs His own church. He owns it, it exists by the miracle of His grace and watchcare, His laws rule it, and His word is the church's delight. He meets with the saints there, and gives to them spiritual peace and rest. Isn't it strange! After a good day in service you go home feeling that you have been in the Lord's presence, and that He has been talking with you! And that, my friends, is the difference.

ELDER RAYMOND WEBB

WINGS LIKE A DOVE

It is a wonderful fact of Bible doctrine that God's people are not citizens of this world, but are strangers and pilgrims here. Paul said that "our *conversation* is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). The word "conversation" here could rightly be rendered "citizenship," as is shown by how the same word in the original is used in two other places—the chief captain's statement to Paul in Acts 22, "With a great sum obtained I this *freedom*," that is, being a Roman; and Paul's assessment of the Ephesians past state in Ephesians Chapter 2, "Being aliens from the *commonwealth* of Israel."

Man's normal desire is to be at home. That is a place that has been especially arranged and fitted to our condition and tastes. It suits us, and because it particularly suits *us*, it is *our* home. Those who have been born again, who have faith, have been elemented in spirit for something other than this sin-cursed earth. Like Abraham and Isaac of old, we confess that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, that we look for a city which has foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. We look for something beyond this earthly situation. The fact that those who possess faith look for

something else as their home gives evidence to the fact that there is such a place. God has promised that it is true, and those who have the ability to accept the evidence of "things not seen" rejoice in His promise. We hunger and thirst after righteousness, and greatly desire to be in a place where righteousness reigns, in contrast to our present state, where there is sin and wickedness on every hand. As David expressed it in Psalm 55, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest."

The fact is that for the time being we cannot fly away and we will not be at rest, at least not entirely. However much our hearts may yearn for a place of repose we must for a time stay here and serve God in this land of sorrow and sweat, of thorns and thistles. In the wonderful prayer of John 17, Christ did not pray that the Father would take the disciples out of the world, but that He would keep them from the evil. Why God does not take each one of His elect home as soon as that person is born again we cannot say, but in many cases His children remain here for a period of time, some longer, some shorter. In this sense we do not have the wings of a dove that David desired. We cannot fly away at our will and escape the troubles of the world. *If* he had had such wings, David said, he would have flown away—but he did not, and so he stayed.

There is a sense, however, in which we do have wings. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." The place where we cannot now be and which we cannot now see is revealed through the eyes of faith. Though the Scriptures do not go into tremendous detail concerning our everlasting habitation, still enough about it is revealed that we can know assuredly that it is a wonderful place, a "mansion" whose splendor is so great that it has not "entered into the hearts of men." Moses was allowed to look into the land of Canaan, even though he was not allowed to enter it. In like manner we can look ahead with sweet expectation (hope) to our eternal home where we shall most assuredly be able to go through God's grace.

David's very desire to fly away was a promise to him that he someday would. We are told that we have the "earnest of our inheritance" in this life. The blessed Spirit fills us with the pleasing

anticipation of our promised rest. That rest is indeed promised. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." *Then*—after a while—we shall indeed fly away to our eternal rest.

ELDER MARK GREEN

THE WHITE ROBED MULTITUDE

In Revelation 7:9-10 we read; "And after this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Ever since I have been blessed to understand some of the teachings of the Primitive Baptists I have understood them to teach that God has a people in every nation on earth, and much of the time use the above scripture to teach that lesson. I have used this and other scriptures in my efforts to preach, in order to teach the lesson that no man can count, or even estimate, the number that will sing eternal praises to our Lord. The Primitive Baptists have always rejected the modern man-made missionary organizations that have become so prevalent in the world. We believe the Holy Spirit will reach every one of the objects of His love wherever they may be this world over. The heathen dictators of this world may forbid even the owning of a Bible in their country, but I can assure you that this will not in any way hinder the God of heaven and earth from reaching His people with His Holy Spirit at the appointed time.

What about the people who are worshiping in ignorance? Will that keep them from going to heaven when they die? No, of course not! Paul prayed for his Israelite brethren that they might be saved; stating that they had a zeal of God but not according to knowledge (See Romans 10:1-4). They had a zeal "of God", which shows that the zeal came from God. I have come in contact with many people who by their very conversation illustrated to me that they were spiritually minded people, but as far as the true teachings of the Scriptures they were greatly in the dark.

What happens when someone has zeal without knowledge? They will dishonor God every time in their manner of worship. I realize that people can be taught anything, including certain religious beliefs, without ever having had an experience of grace, as when Jesus told certain religious zealots, "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8:44). I am fully aware that this situation existed during the ministry of Jesus here on earth, and probably exists today. I am not dealing with that class of people in this article. I am referring to the ones whose hearts have very obviously been touched and tendered by the Holy Spirit but who have never had the opportunity to hear the true gospel, or to enjoy real church fellowship. How we ought to be praying for those in this category! Paul, in the 10th chapter of Romans, was not praying for his Israelite brethren to be saved eternally. Paul, by inspiration, taught some of the greatest lessons on the doctrine of grace that we have recorded in the Scriptures. To pray that his Israelite brethren be saved eternally would have been a total contradiction of his teachings on salvation by grace.

When I was a teenager growing up on the farm we had church services at my old home church two Sundays each month. On the Sundays that we did not have church I would go with my friends to a little country church of another faith which was just about one mile from our home. The Sunday school teacher was a World War II veteran of the Seabees, and would tell us stories of the natives on the South Pacific Islands where he was stationed. He told of tribes of those natives who were so unlearned they did not even know their name or how old they were, and yet, they had a beautiful altar where

they went and worshipped a higher power. I did not understand then how that could be, but since I have been endeavoring to study the Scriptures and preach the gospel I have often wished I could turn back the wheels of time and sit in that Sunday school class again. I could tell that teacher and the others that God had given those natives a heart to know Him (See Jer. 24:7).

I will conclude by simply saying that when we write an article or preach a sermon we need to be very careful to make it clear, especially for the benefit of those who are not Primitive Baptists, that we believe the Primitive Baptists are just a very small remnant of the elect family of God. It is very easy, if we are not very careful, to give someone of another faith the impression that we believe we are the only ones who will be saved eternally. That could not be further from the truth!

ELDER JIM TURNER, JR.



SUPREMACY OF GOD

“Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God” (Isa. 44:6). God reveals himself omnipotent, having unlimited authority and potency in this text. “There is no searching of his understanding” (Isa. 40:28). God reveals Himself omniscient or knowing all things and omnipresent or everywhere at the same time. “But he is in one mind, and who can turn him: and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth” (Job 23:13). No power of Satan or man can thwart the will of the Almighty. “He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” (Daniel 4:35).

The psalmist David said, “For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places” (Psa. 135:5-6). Here again we see the sovereignty of God executing His

will wherever He pleases.

When David blessed the Lord before the congregation he said, "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all."

That is indeed a different message from what we hear today in most Christian groups. The God that men have imagined is great only if they will do service helping him accomplish his will or his victory will be dependent on their religious works.

John in the book of Revelation, chapter 19, hears a great voice of much people in heaven saying, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." May we as the redeemed ascribe greatness to our majestic Lord.

There are many other scriptures that tell us the same thing about God's sovereignty. What a comfort to believers that God is above all and he is in control over the world, but especially active in our daily life. I'm thankful the truth to Zion is, "Thy God reigneth!"

ELDER DAN PARKER
Danville, Virginia

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question: Does not the blessed Jesus, His apostles and the spirit and tenor of the whole Bible teach that we should forgive, bear with, and labor with one another, and that, if we forgive not, neither shall we be forgiven?

Answer: It certainly does; but these directions and admonitions relate to the everyday life and conduct of the people of God and church members in their relation to each other; for we all, being weak, fallible and sinful in our very nature, are prone to do wrong, and we do wrong more or less daily, and if we do not bear with and forgive one another we never can live together in peace, love and harmony. But such directions should never be so construed or

interpreted as to shield and retain members, whether they be private members or ministers; for to do so is a misapplication and hurtful perversion of the Scriptures relating to private offenses or trespasses against one another, to the sustaining of corruption and disorder.

I am sorry to have to confess that we in many places and instances today are as guilty of perverting God's law of discipline as any other people are in reference to the doctrine of grace. Did the Lord direct the first church to labor and bear with Ananias for lying, which was a gross public offense? No; for He killed him at once for it (See Acts 5:1-5). Did Paul direct the church to labor with and forgive the fornicator (See I Cor. 5:1-5). No, but he directed them to put that wicked person from among them.

But you may ask, Did not Peter lie, and was not that a gross public offense? Yes, Peter, under the excitement of fearful events and of natural terror, lied in saying that he did not know Christ and was not His disciple; and under the excitement of unexpected personal danger any of us are apt to do just what Peter did. But oh! notice; just as soon as Peter came to himself and realized what he had done, how sincerely, deeply, and bitterly he repented and wept! It is not such a liar as that that is so abominable and offensive; it is the cool, calculating, premeditated liar that you cannot put up with, but must exclude.

Suppose a man steals or commits unjustifiable murder, and then repents, confesses and asks the church's forgiveness. Can she forgive him and retain him in her body? Show me one instance in the New Testament where a gross public offender, guilty of wilful, deliberate public offense was labored with, borne with, and retained in the church, or where the church is directed to do such a thing. There are sins unto death, and for which we are not directed to pray (I John 5:16). —**Elder G. W. Stewart**, *The Gospel Messenger*, 1916.

(Editor's note: The above was true when Christ and the apostles taught it; it was true when Elder Stewart wrote it in 1916; and it is still true today. It is sad to see so many in our day violating it.)



SUFFICIENT GRACE

“My grace is sufficient for thee”—II Cor. 12:9.

Oh, how much is embraced in these few little, simple words. If I had nothing else to use in defense of the precious cause of Christ, so sacredly held to by our dear people, I would feel no uneasiness on that line. Grace is the foundation of our salvation; the foundation of our hope; the foundation of our good works; the only remedy for sin; the only thing that can bring salvation to a poor sinner. But the main thing I want to call especial attention to is the *sufficiency* of this grace.

The word *sufficient*, as it is used here, means as much to us as the word *grace*. If grace were not sufficient within itself to save us, it would not mean much. If we have to add something to grace to make it effective in salvation, then it might not mean anything to us. If grace is sufficient for us then we do not need anything added to it for the accomplishment of our salvation. Really it would be a reflection upon Christ and His blessed words to try to add anything to it.

To say that our deliverance from sin is hinged on the very least thing that we could do would deny the idea that grace is sufficient. If our belief in Christ, repentance, confession, baptism, or any other act of obedience to the gospel is essential in the change from nature to grace, or the preparation for the glory world then grace is not sufficient.

There is no conditional plan of redemption in all the world that can be harmonized with these blessed words of Jesus—“My grace is sufficient.” If grace was sufficient for Paul, then it is sufficient for us. Primitive Baptists have never contended for the grand system of grace in stronger terms than these sacred words of our Saviour. It is the universal sentiment of our people that His grace is sufficient; or, as some express it, “grace and grace alone.”

Who else in all the world contends for it just that way? If grace is sufficient in salvation then I can see how little infants can be safely housed in heaven, even though they die before they are old enough to know anything about the gospel; otherwise I could see no

hope for them.

If grace is not sufficient within itself then how could salvation embrace the heathen? If it is not sufficient for us in this world of sorrow and sin then where can we look for comfort and hope? If it is not sufficient for us, then how could we hope to finally be raised from the tomb to bear the image of our risen Lord?

Oh, how sweet to think of the sufficiency of God's grace, not only in redemption, regeneration and the final resurrection of our bodies, but in preservation through the trials, afflictions and sorrows of this life. —**Elder T. L. Webb, Sr.** From "Little Things".

DRUNKENNESS

Against drunkenness there are many scriptures, and these the professing Christian should heed, and prayerfully consider. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine... At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:29-32).

The above is only one of the many warnings against drunkenness. Whenever we insist upon a proper notice of these scriptures we are met with the declaration that the temperate use of wine is commended by the word of God. We freely admit this, but, we insist that it is *only the temperate* use of it that is permitted, and we with sorrow reflect that many bring reproach upon the cause, have *woe, sorrow, contentions, babblings, and wounds without cause*, from giving countenance to the *abuse* of strong drink.

If Baptists permit themselves to become tipplers, indulge in jokes about drunkenness, seek, or even tolerate the company of drinking men, they may expect to be wounded by having their sons coming home drunk, and by having them guilty of crimes coming out from drunkenness.

There are brethren who from disease, or for want of moral strength have formed the habit of using too much alcohol; I would

not unchristianize such; I would not even wound them by reproaches. I would affectionately place my arm around them and say, "Dear brother, if the felt need of stimulant is so great as to compel your taking enough to be noticed, and to bring reproach upon the cause of Christ, strive, beg for strength, and at least manifest a sorrow for your weakness, but do not try to defend or excuse it." —Elder **Charles H. Waters**, *Zion's Advocate*, 1898.

A PEACEFUL AND TRIUMPHANT DEATH

Edward Payson, who was born July 25, 1773 at Rindge, New Hampshire, and died October 22, 1827 in his 45th year at Portland, Maine, was for the last 20 years of his life a Congregationalist minister, and was a most humble, reverent, prayerful, tender and devoted servant of Christ, according to the light given him. The Presbyterian and Congregational Confessions were originally the same as the London and Philadelphia and Charleston Confessions of Faith in regard to predestination and election.

Mr. Payson was a great sufferer from bodily disease and pain, but he was most wonderfully supported in all his sufferings by the grace of God.

When near his end he dictated these words in a letter to his sister:

"Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyon, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me; its breezes fan me; its odors are wafted to me; its sounds strike upon my ears; and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as He approaches, and now He fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in His beams; exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this

excessive brightness, and wondering, with unutterable wonder, why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm."

He was asked: "Do you feel reconciled?"

"O, that is too cold," he replied. "I triumph! And this happiness will endure as long as God Himself, for it consists in admiring and adoring Him. I can find no words to express happiness. I seem to be swimming in a river of pleasure which is carrying me on to the great fountain. It seems as if all the fountains of heaven were opened, and all its fullness and happiness, and, I trust, no small portion of its benevolence, have come down into my heart. God has been depriving me of one blessing after another, but, as each one has been removed, He has come in and filled up its place. He is now my all in all. While He is present with me nothing can in the least diminish my happiness; and were the whole world at my feet, trying to minister to my comfort, they could not add one drop to my cup. Peace! Peace! Victory!" And with this his chastened and purified spirit ascended to the paradise of God. —Elder Sylvester Hassell, *The Gospel Messenger*, 1903, under the head of 'Remarkable Providences'.

*(Editor's note: How far superior is the kind of death described above to the hopeless, comfortless and despairing death, yea, even in some cases the **horrifying** death, of the Christless reprobate. In this we feel to adopt the language of Balaam: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" —Num. 23:10)*

He who has, by grace, the heart of a true servant of Christ, would not, if he could, exchange places with the monarch on his throne or the millionaire with all his luxuries.—Arthur W. Pink.

A person must be saved by grace *before* he can do the things popular religion says he must do *in order to* be saved by grace. —R.E.H.

HE SHALL NOT FAIL

I saw in a paper today where a noted preacher delivered a discourse in Baltimore on last Sunday morning on a strange subject for a professed minister of Jesus Christ to preach on: "Christ's failure." He said it was due in part to money being misappropriated, or turned in wrong channels. He said that the work of conquering cities for Christ was getting harder every generation. How does this kind of teaching agree with God's word? "He shall not fail" (Isa. 42:4). Shall that God that delivered His people out of Egyptian bondage fail? That God who was light to His people and darkness to their enemies (Exo. 14:20)? that built a solid wall out of water when it was necessary, and turned the solid rock into a fountain, and was a wall of defence till they finally reached the promised land? Will that God fail in gathering in His redeemed people, even His Spiritual Israel? He says He will not, His prophets and apostles say He will not.

Dear children, do you think He sends a man out now to teach us that he has failed thus far, and that His success depends on money and human efforts? Never, never! Hear the word of the Lord: "Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money" (Isa. 52:3, 55:1). One of the apostles has said that the Children of God know that they were not redeemed with anything corruptible, as silver and gold (I Peter 1:18). Peter put no value whatever on silver and gold or anything corruptible as a redeemer, but he extolled the merits of Jesus Christ, the precious blood of Christ.

These sentiments of Christ and His apostles will be taught in the Advocate and from our pulpits, I hope, while time shall last. Everything they opposed we will oppose, God being our helper.—
Elder T. N. Alderton, *Zion's Advocate*, 1898.

The closer we get to the Lord, the less are we swayed by the adverse criticisms of the world.

DIVORCE AND RE-MARRIAGE

I have been asked if I thought it was right to bar one from church membership whose husband had deserted her, to which I say, Yes, if she marries again; for according to the Bible, nothing will dissolve the marriage bond but death and adultery.

I know there are many sad cases of this kind—a good, chaste, virtuous woman marries a man not worthy of her, who mistreats her, and finally deserts her; but for all this, this does not dissolve the marriage bond; she is still his wife and he is her husband in the eye of God's law.

When people marry they should love one another so long as they live. However, there is no law to compel them to live together; neither will their mutually agreeing to live apart bar them from the church; but they must not marry again.

Now I feel sure this is the teaching of God's word. I am fearful, in this evil day, many marry with this thought in their mind: "I will try married life, and if it doesn't suit I will quit." When I get to the legislature I am going to have a bill passed that when people who are married separate and marry again for anything but a Scriptural cause that it will be a penitentiary offense, and see if it will not stop so much of this divorce business.—**Elder S. N. Redford**, *The Primitive Baptist*, 1939.

TRY FEEDING THEM

I remember once I went to a church and the pastor said, "Brother Sam, I don't know what to do with this church. They seem perfectly lifeless; some lay out of their meetings, and those who do come seem uninterested. I have whipped them until I am ashamed of it." I said to him, "Have you ever tried feeding them?" So, I think, the church is not so much to blame for disinterest when they meet to get something to eat and get nothing but chunks and rocks.—**Elder S. N. Redford**, 1920.

ELDER T. S. DALTON ON I JOHN 5:16

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."

My opinion in brief about the text is this: Some sins that a brother may commit will bring everlasting shame and reproach upon a church, and will ever be a stumbling block in the way of the progress and upbuilding of a church, therefore such should not be prayed for, but the brother committing such a sin should be cut off from the church at once. It is sometimes the case that some member of the human body becomes so diseased as to make it necessary to amputate it for the life of the body. It is just so with a church. Men sometimes commit sins that are of such a nature that to bear with them is death to the church, and in such cases it is better to cut them off, "for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Matt. 5:29).

But there are other sins that brethren may, and do, commit that are not so grievous and hurtful to the body and cause of christianity. These we should pray for and save them from them, as we are instructed to make a difference with some men, "pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23). — *Zion's Advocate*, 1896.

THE MEMBER WHO DOES NOT ATTEND HIS CHURCH MEETINGS


If you were to ask him if he was trying to break up the church he would probably look up in astonishment and answer, "No, certainly not!" But, brother, if all followed your example it would break up the church, so what influence you have you are exerting in the direction of breaking the church down. A person's words have little influence if contradicted by his acts; and while your words say you are for the church, your acts say that you are against it, because if all the members did as you are doing there would be no church.— *Elder J. G. Wiltshire*, *Zion's Advocate*, 1913.

A DIFFERENCE

During the apostolic age the churches undoubtedly raised large sums of money through the generosity and self-denial of the saints. What was done with this money? Some of it was given to those who were preaching the gospel, but much the larger portion was distributed among the poor. In our time, also, much money is collected among the churches of various denominations, but the poor and those who preach the *genuine* gospel receive very little of it. The greater part is used in building showy meeting-houses and hiring orators to entertain the people. Sanctified common sense, of which we hear so much nowadays, ought to suggest a more judicious expenditure of the Lord's means.

It is a significant fact that the early Christians built no houses especially designed for worship, only as every house in which they dwelt was a house of praise. Their business was character-building, not temple-construction. They invested in the souls of men, not in the wood and brick and "hammered stone." They proclaimed and lived the truth; consequently their success in any locality did not depend on their assembling in a fine chapel with good music and a gifted preacher. They left such things to others, and for themselves preferred an outward poverty and simplicity, being fully satisfied to rejoice in spiritual riches.

We do not object to suitable houses for worship, nor to religious instruction for the churches, but let the former be plain and the latter scriptural. Let the Apostasy have pagan architecture and pagan doctrines, and let Christians be done with all imitations of such ways. The admonition of Peter to Christian wives is equally applicable to the churches: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Peter 3:3-4). —**The Octograph.**



SYMPATHY WITH FELLOW MEMBERS

“Who is offended, and I burn not?” (II Cor. 11: latter clause of 29th verse).

I think the apostle Paul means here that wherever, whenever and by whomsoever offense came to the great cause of truth it was also an offense to him. Being a citizen of that holy city, if any dared to trespass upon her holy precincts, he burned, was moved, concerned, until “he that hath done this deed be taken from among you” (I Cor. 5:2). The apostle could not be indifferent when false apostles, deceitful workers, gave offense in doctrine and in practice or order.

In the first clause of this same verse he says, “Who is weak and I am not weak?” Being vitally united to the body, he *felt* the weakness of the weak, and the offenses of the offended. Where is better evidence that I am a member, and a living member, of the body of Christ than for me to “remember them that are in bonds as bound with them; and them that suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body?” (Heb. 13:3). Again, What is better proof that I am not in the body or, if so, I am a dead member, than when offenses come I am not offended? “If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out.”

It is astonishing how many can remain quite while from many quarters such gross insults are given this “holy nation,” this “chosen generation,” and far worse than being quiet, many, very many, complain at the faithful when disturbances occur. They are ready to say, If you had been quite, then all would have been peace. Crying peace, peace, when there is no peace (See Jer. 6:14).

“Who is offended and I burn not?” It is not a personal offense; if so, we have a rule plainly laid down in the 18th chapter of Matthew; but, when the great fundamental principles of the doctrine and order of the household of faith are being deceitfully handled, who can hold his peace? Let us hear Jeremiah 10th chapter, beginning with the 7th verse:

“I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But

his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Read the remaining verses of this chapter. We should never take offense from any Church or brother upon mere difference in customs or notions, etc., for in these things charity thinketh no evil, beareth all things. We should give none offense, neither to the Jew nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God, but should please all men in all things, not seeking our own profit but the profit of many. We should be "slow to wrath," "not soon angry." We should strive to know what things we should *not* bear, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel may continue with us, and also to know what we *should* bear without taking offense.

"Who is offended and I burn not?" —Elder J. T. Satterwhite, *The Gospel Messenger*, 1916.

A PRAYER

Our most Holy Father in heaven, I thank Thee for all Thy blessings, bountiful in quantity, priceless in quality, amazing in their timeliness, wonderful in their suitability, perfect in their source, profitable in their purpose, glorious in their result, and infinite in their supply.

Thy mercies demand all the praise we mortal recipients are capable of rendering to Thee, the All-wise Giver.

May we always beseech Thy favors submissively, humbly and unselfishly, with no other end in view than Thy glory and honor, for no other posture becomes the lowly worms we are in and of ourselves.

All glory to Thee! All glory to Thee, O Holy One! Amen. —
R.E.H.

The loveliness of a true Christian is brought out by affliction, just as the perfume of some flowers is brought out by crushing them.

OBITUARY

SISTER ALTA PARTLOW STEELE, age 70, of Front Royal, Va. died Sunday, August 24, 1997 in her home.

Sis. Steele was born March 30, 1927 at Browntown, Va., daughter of the late Melvin E. and Mamie A. Compton Partlow.

Surviving are her husband, Eugene D. Steele; one son, MStg. Timothy E. Steele of the USAF; two brothers, Paster Hollis A. Partlow of Oregon, Ill. and Lloyd M. Partlow of Browntown; two sisters, Phyllis Manuel of Browntown and Leona Taylor of Manassas; two grandchildren.

She was a textile employee with the American Viscose Corp. in Front Royal, retiring after 42 years of service.

Sis. Steele was baptized into the fellowship of South River Primitive Baptist Church at Browntown on May 10, 1953 by the late Elder Clarence Frazier. She remained a faithful and devout member until the end. She was soft spoken with a kind and gentle disposition and was dearly loved by all who knew her including family, church members, and a host of friends.

A funeral service was conducted by Elder Gary Utz and Elder Dwayne Fletcher on August 27th at the Maddox Funeral Home in Front Royal. She was laid to rest in Panorama Memorial Gardens at Waterlick, Va. to await the glorious resurrection.

We know our loss is her gain. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." PHIL. 1:21.

We thank God for her life and bow in humble submission to His holy and righteous will. Our prayer is the Dear Lord will bless and comfort her family and many friends in their time of sorrow. —**Bro. Sam Baggarly.**

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LITTLE FLOCK - 9 miles southeast of Amelia, Va., take Rt. 38 out of Amelia to Rt. 614, left on Rt. 608, right on 677 at church sign, church on left; 1st. Sun. 10:30 a.m., 2nd Sun. 10:30 a.m. and Sat. before at 10:30 a.m.; Communion 2nd Sunday in June; Elder Raymond Pressley, Pastor, P.O. Box 54, Brightwood, Va. 22715, Tel. (540) 948-4337; Kim Watley, Clerk, 13671 Lodore Road, Amelia, Va. 23002, Tel. (804) 561-2133.
July 2000

MARTINSBURG - Martinsburg, W. Va., Corner Wilson St. and New York Ave.; meets 2nd Sun. 10:30 a.m.; Elder Phillip Johnson, Pastor, P. O. Box 283, Strasburg, Va. 22657, Tel. (540) 465-3118; Clerk, L. E. Farley, 9526 Downsville Pike, Williamsport, Md. 21795, Tel. (301) 223-6195.
Mar. 2000

MILL CREEK - Approx. 2 miles west of Luray, Va. - off of Rt. 211 on Rt. 766 on the Hamburg Road - Meeting house is on the east side of the road; Meets 2nd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Ernest M. Long, Pastor, 3671 Farmview Road, Stanley, Va. 22851, Tel. (540) 778-2763; Bro. Gary Bauserman, Clerk, 148 N. Egypt Bend Rd., Luray, Va. 22835, Tel. (540) 743-5014. April '98

NORTH FORK - Held in Upperville Primitive Baptist Church, Upperville, Va. 2nd Sunday 10:30 a.m. Elder J. Frank Coppedge, Pastor, SR4, Box 176A, Brightwood, Va. 22715, Tel. (540) 948-4357; Sister Elsie S. Payne, Clerk, 571 Curry Springs Place, Hamilton, Va. 20158-9526, Tel. (540) 338-5531.
May '98

ROBINSON RIVER - Brightwood, Va. on U.S. Rt. 29; Meets 2nd Sun. at 10:30 a.m. and Sat. before at 2:00 p.m.; 4th and 5th Sun. at 10:30 a.m.; Elder J. Tolliver Utz, Pastor, S.R. 5, Box 540, Madison, Va. 22727, Tel. (540) 948-4803; Aubrey E. Utz, Clerk, Madison, Va. 22727, Tel. (540) 948-4360.
Dec. '98

THIRD SUNDAY

HAWKSBILL - Approx. 2 miles north of Stanley, Va., turn east off of Rt. 340 on Hawksbill Ave. (church sign on the right), go to the intersection of Farmview Road and turn right, church is on the left; Meets 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday night before at 7:30 p.m.; Elder Ernest M. Long, Pastor, 3671 Farmview Rd., Stanley, Va. 22851, Tel. (540) 778-2763; Sister Helen L. Huffman, Clerk, Rt. 1 Box 309, Shenandoah, Va. 22849, Tel. (540) 652-8625.
April '98

MT. BETHEL - Three Churches, W. Va.; Services 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Douglas Heare, Pastor, H. C. 63 Box 2320, Romney, W. Va. 26757. Tel. (304) 822-3228; Wilson Saville, Clerk, R. R. 2, Box 78, Oldtown, Md. 21555, Tel. (301) 478-5253.
Aug. '98

NEW HOME - Covington Co., Ala., From Gantt, Ala. go west 5 mi. on 82 to 23 and take the right; Coming from Red Level, go east on 82 to 23 and take the left, go 4/10 mi. and take the right on 7, go 3 mi. on pavement and 1 1/2 mi. after pavement ends, turn at church sign at top of Clay Hill, Church 1/4 mi.; Meets 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Ralph Harris, Pastor, 3687 King Rd., Caryville, Fla. 32427, Tel (904) 547-4615; Bridgman K. Harris, Clerk, 1405 Eastwood Dr., Dothan, Ala. 36301, Tel. (334) 792-5614.
Mar. '99

SIDLING HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH - near Needmore, Pa., take 522 north to Needmore through town, second left on state road 655, three miles to Y in the road, take left to stop sign, take left 1/4 mile, sign on left to the church, 5 miles from Needmore, Pa.; Services each 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m. except for the month of March; Needmore Primitive Baptist Church meets 3rd Sunday in March at 10:30 a.m.; Elder William H. Payne, Pastor, 630 Warm Springs Road, Winchester, Va. 22603, Tel. (540) 722-4419; Sis. Alice Mellott, Clerk, RD 1, Box 1050, Needmore, Pa. 17238, Tel (717) 573-2885.
Oct. '97

SOUTH RIVER - Browntown, Va.; Meets 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Dwayne Fletcher, Pastor, 2456 Hunting Ridge Road, Winchester, Va., 22603, Tel. (540) 667-4756; Sister Marie Partlowe, Clerk, 2209 Gooney Manor Loop, Bentonville, Va. 22610, Tel. (540) 635-4718.

July '98

THORNTON GAP PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH - Near Sperryville, Va.; Meets 1st and 3rd Sundays at 10:30 a.m.; Elder David A. Roberts, Pastor, P.O. Box 572, Culpeper, Va. 22701, Tel. (540) 825-8394; Wayne Baldwin, Clerk, P.O. Box 572, Culpeper, Va. 22701, Tel. (540) 825-8394.

July '99

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), turn right on Rt. 732 in Orlean, Approx. 4 miles to Church, Meets 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m., Elder Raymond Pressley, Pastor, P. O. Box 54, Brightwood, Va. 22715, Tel. (540) 948-4337; Mrs. Clydie Klopp, Clerk, 5867 Free State Road, Marshall, Va. 22115.

April 2000

FOURTH SUNDAY

BARROWS RUN PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH - 5 miles south of Warrenton, Va. on U.S. Route 29 and 15; 4th Sun. at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Raymond Pressley, Pastor, P.O. Box 54, Brightwood, Va. 22715, Tel. (540) 948-4337; Mary Lee Olinger, Clerk, 67 Frazier Rd., Warrenton, Va. 22186, Tel. (540) 347-3538.

Mar. '98

CEDAR CREEK - Frederick County near Marlboro, Va. on Rt. 722 and Cedar Creek Grade; Meets 4th Sunday at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Ernest M. Long, Pastor, 3671 Farmview Rd., Stanley, Va. 22851, Tel. (540) 778-2763; Sister Carol B. Swanson, Clerk, 249 Dower Lane, Strasburg, Va. 22657, Tel. (540) 465-8484.

May '98

HAPPY CREEK - 202 Church St., Front Royal, Va., corner of Stonewall Dr. and Church St.; Meets 2nd, 4th and 5th Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. and 1st and 3rd Sunday evenings at 6:00 p.m., and Saturday before the 4th Sunday at 6:00 p.m.; Elder Gary Utz, Pastor, 429 West Duck St., Front Royal, Va. 22630, Tel. (540) 636-9434; Sister Hazel Priest, Clerk, 321 Blue Ridge Ave., Front Royal, Va. 22630, Tel. (540) 635-4764.

June '98

MT. CARMEL - South Broad St., Luray, Va.; Meets 4th and 5th Sundays at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Forest N. Atwood, Jr., Pastor, Rt. 1, Box 271-B, Shenandoah, Va. 22849, Tel. (540) 652-6482; Reda J. Johnson, Clerk, 1064 Redman Store Road, Luray, Va. 22835, Tel. (540) 743-9488.

Dec. '98

SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH - 9100 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Richmond, Va. 23225; Meets 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays at 10:30 a.m.; Elder James R. Kosch, Pastor, 168 Longstreet Ave., Fredericksburg, Va. 22401; Sis. Lynda Garner, Clerk, 112 Buckingham Dr., Colonial Heights, Va. 23834, Tel. (804) 526-2464.

Dec. '97

UPPERVILLE, Va. - 4th Sun. 10:30 a.m.; Elder Dwayne Fletcher, Pastor, 2456 Hunting Ridge Road, Winchester, Va. 22603, Tel. (540) 667-4756; Sister Bessanna Trussell, Clerk, 138 Steepwood Lane, Winchester, Va. 22603, Tel. (540) 662-1605.

Dec. '97

WASHINGTON CHURCH - (Meets at Bethel Church) 9101 Leesburg Pike (Rt. 7), Vienna, Va.; Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Bill Dillon, Pastor, 8459 Ararat Court, Annandale, Va. 22003, Tel. (703) 573-0854; Sis. Patty Dillon, Clerk, 8459 Ararat Court, Annandale, Va. 22003, Tel. (703) 573-0854.

Dec. '97

WHITE OAK - On the White Oak Road, about 6 miles east of Fredericksburg, Va.; Meets every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.; Elder Rodger Frazier, Pastor, 12045 N. Avey Rd., Remington, Va. 22734, Tel. (540) 439-3606; Betty Jo Lael, Clerk, 9701 Peppertree Rd., Spotsylvania, Va. 22553.

March '99