

Advocate and Messenger

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136th Year OCTOBER 1997 No. 10

Advocate and Messenger

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

Zion's Advocate Established 1854	Messenger of Truth Established 1897	Gospel Messenger Established 1878
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TO GOD BE TRUE

Be kind to all thy fellow men
For God is kind to you,
And leave all vengeance in *His* hand
No matter what they do.

Be good to all who cross thy path
For God is good to you.
Remember where you used to be,
And where He brought you, too.

Bear long with those who're close to thee
For God bears long with you.
No matter where your path may lead
To Him be ever true.

10-11-94 R.E.H.

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Advocate and Messenger

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GOD'S WAY IS ALWAYS BEST

One of my duties as a newspaper office manager is to read the obituaries in a couple of daily papers each morning to check for local survivors. It is not uncommon to find obituaries of infants and small children. Recently I found an obituary for a three-year-old boy who had lost his two-year-old battle with neuroblastoma cancer. I was reminded of questions I have sometimes heard raised with regard to cases such as this: "Why did God allow this to happen to an innocent child?" "Why does an infant have to die?" and "Why do precious little children have to suffer?"

Such things are not easy for we mortals to understand, but one thing we do know is that God is not to be questioned for He is just and right in all His dealings with men whether they understand those

dealings or not. We all inherited a corrupt and rebellious nature from our fallen father, Adam, and consequently must ultimately die, whether it be at age *one* or *one hundred*. "In Adam all die" (I Cor. 15:22) and "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

It should be remembered that even if God were not a holy and merciful Being, we would still be faced with the fact that He is sovereign and omnipotent and that He "hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Psa. 115:3), and all the contending with Him we might engage in could never avail us a single thing except trouble. It could not benefit us in any way. It is therefore much to our advantage in all things to throw ourselves upon His mercy and acknowledge that His judgments "are true and righteous altogether" (Psa. 19:9), whether we understand them or not.

The old doctor who delivered me told my mother as soon as he saw me that I would have asthma, and she said it showed up within six months. I suffered horribly with it as far back as I can remember, and even on up into my forties until medicines were finally developed that gave me relief.

Had I done anything to cause my asthma? Had I lived in such way as to cause me to wake up in the night as a three-year-old child just barely getting enough breath to live? Of course not! Why, then, did I have to suffer so? And why did I as a child have to suffer the scoldings of some of the adult members of the family when I was not moving as swiftly while working on the farm as they wanted me to, even though they knew I had serious breathing problems? Why did I have to suffer accusations of laziness from them even into adulthood when just my getting up in the morning and combing my hair would bring on a serious asthma attack that would often leave me so exhausted and washed out that I was almost past going for hours?

I cannot answer these questions, but I never blamed God. I admit I would sometimes feel sorry for myself for brief periods, but I didn't blame God. I am thankful that I was kept from doing that, just as Job was kept from cursing God as his wife urged him to do (Job 2:9).

I cannot fathom the mysterious purposes of God in my life, but I do know that He was fully aware of all that lay ahead of me and what it would take to prepare me for those things. As I look back I believe I can clearly see the hand of God in many things along my pathway, resulting in *where* I am and *what* I am today. Some of my most valuable lessons have been learned through some of my most bitter experiences, and I feel to have the closest fellowship with God today, in my fifty-ninth year, that I have ever had. Would I have that if I had been led another way, or if things had been different with me during those years of suffering? Would I be the same person I presently am if I had not suffered so many things as a child? Only God knows for sure, but I don't think I would be the same. And this I know beyond a shadow of a doubt, I would not trade places with any man, woman or child on the face of the earth.

With regard to the little three-year-old who battled cancer for two years before dying, I can only say I believe God had a purpose in the little fellow's life and apparently from the way the obituary read God had reconciled the family to his passing, for they said, "We will miss our little angel, but he is free of pain, so God is taking care of him." What a great blessing this is within itself!

We can face anything life has in store for us if we can see the hand of the Lord in it and be reconciled to His blessed will. We may not always understand why things are the way they are, but we *can* know that God's way is always best and that "He hath done all things well" (Luke 7:37). If the little boy had lived longer who knows what he may have had to suffer? But now his sufferings are over for all eternity, and joy beyond our comprehension is his forevermore. I weep for his family, but I rejoice for him. —*Editor*.

The only greatness a true servant of Christ will desire is the greatness of servitude, not the greatness of worldly esteem. The Lord delights in the former and abhors the latter.

"Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it" (Prov. 6:28, 29).

COVETOUSNESS

The sin of covetousness has caused many a child of God to miss a lot of blessings they otherwise would have received, and I am confident it has resulted in the ultimate demise of many churches. The apostle Paul said covetousness is idolatry and he exhorted the Ephesian brethren not to let it be once named among them (Eph. 5:3 and Col. 3:5). Christ spoke of covetousness as an "evil thing" and He listed it along with evil thoughts, adultery, fornication, murder, theft, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride and foolishness (Mark 7:20-23).

Involved in this sin is not only the love of money but a distrust in the mercy and providence of God. The man who clings to his money with a tight fist, even when he "seeth his brother have need," is a man who has no confidence that God will provide for him in the future, and no real gratitude for what God has done for him in the past. He *sows* sparingly, as pertaining to giving with a view to the glory of God, and he *reaps* sparingly as pertaining to the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

The poor widow who is mentioned in Mark 12:42-44 and Luke 21:2-4 was no doubt a trusting soul. Of those who cast into the treasury she gave more than they all because she cast in "all that she had". She obviously loved God and believed that He would in some way take care of her and give her more. How much more blest was she than those wealthy contributors who gave "of their abundance" but who still went away trusting in "uncertain riches" rather than in the living God. We are not told what became of her, but there can be no doubt but that she is now rich beyond human expression as she basks in the sunlight of God's eternal presence.

One of the strongest arguments against covetousness that we will find in the Scriptures is in Heb. 13:5, and that is that God has promised never to leave us nor forsake us. If God's word can be relied upon, and it can, why should we hoard up those temporal goods we ought to give, thinking that they may some day be our deliverer from hunger and want. It is vain to think covetousness can ever profit us in any way.

The wealthy man who decided to build new and larger barns in which to store his goods, and who thought he would then “take his ease, eat, drink and be merry,” did not live through another night (See Luke 12:16-21). This is a striking illustration of how God feels about covetousness. Oh, may He help us to avoid this deadly evil!—*Editor*.

TRUTH BRANDED AS HERESY

As the apostle Paul faced his accusers before Felix he asserted that they could not prove the things they had him charged with, and then he added, “But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.”

What a beautiful summary is this of the faith of all true Primitive Baptists! We gladly confess that we hold to a body of doctrine that organized religion calls heresy; we believe that both the Old and New Testaments are the inspired word of God and are our only rule of faith and practice; we have a hope in a general resurrection both of the just and the unjust, and we strive to behave ourselves in an inoffensive way toward God and men. It gives us great pleasure to identify with the great apostle Paul and all other humble followers of Christ in these things.

The truth as it is in Christ has always been the way which the religious world calls *heresy*. Even in the apostles’ day it was “every where spoken against” (Acts 28:22), and people’s attitude toward the truth is no different now than it was then. It takes the same almighty operation of the Holy Spirit to convince men of their awful wretchedness by nature that it took in all previous ages, and without this no man will ever be willing to fall prostrate at the feet of Jesus

and acknowledge that salvation from eternal damnation is all of grace from start to finish, without any admixture of man's free will and ability.

No man should ever make a public profession of faith unless he is fully prepared to be branded as a heretic by the adherents of popular religion. The Jews, who were the upper crust of religious society in the apostle Paul's day, were vehemently opposed to the things he preached, just as he had been prior to his conversion (See for instance Acts 13:45). Organized religion has little use for Bible doctrine and practice, and if a person does not identify with them they will condemn him. But the attitude of the true followers of Christ has always been reflected in the words of the apostles when they were being persecuted, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). —*Editor.*

YES, THERE IS HOPE

Oh, is there hope for such a wretch,
 For such a wretch as I?
 Shall I see Jesus face to face
 When I am called to die?

Yes, there is hope, a blessed hope,
 For sinners such as we
 In Jesus' blood and righteousness!
 Oh, did He die for me?"

If *sinners* were by Him redeemed
 Then, yes, there's hope for me,
 And I desire His soon return!
 Oh, will he come for me?

I love my Saviour's precious name
 And long with Him to be,
 And if I'm not His trembling child
 Why is it thus with me?

There is a longing in my heart—
 Did Jesus put it there?
 If so, then one day I will rise
 The joys of heav'n to share!

Yes, there is hope—I live in hope
 Of endless life above,
 Not for the works that I have done
 But based on God's great love.

May hope burn brighter day by day
 And never, never cease,
 Till its fruition brings us to
 An everlasting peace.

8-22-97

R.E.H.

JEREMIAH 31:21

It seems to me that most of us spend most of life searching for happiness and contentment, a place of our own where we can control our own destiny. But happiness does not come easily in this world. You can't have everything! If you want to be a doctor, you must give up being a lawyer or teacher, if you want to be an adult, you have to surrender being a child at home. But, we do want to be the ones to make the choices. Few indeed are the people who are willing to leave the choice-making to God. Strange, for it is the only way for us to find true contentment.

God made this world as a paradise, an Eden, but it quickly became a shadow world, a world of sin and sickness and death. It has become a world where good seems evil, and evil seems good, where God is rejected and Self is put upon a throne. What appears to be a blessing may become a temptation and a trial, and things that require a lifetime of labor, time, and expense, in the end prove to be of no interest. All you have to do is turn on your radio or TV to find the

very air we breathe is full of corruption, yet those who do it would claim it as their right to speak what they please. It is indeed a shadow world. If God did not set waymarks for us, how lost we would be!

But God brought light into the world when His son was born. God has always appeared as light. And, if He has not seen fit to send us a Shekinah, or an angel to lead us by the hand, He has given to us waymarks by which we can find our way. Speaking of angels, I must say that I believe in them for the Bible says they exist, though I have not seen them yet. I do know that they are seen with the heart more than with the eyes, and if you are in love with this world and its ways, angels will appear as your opponents. If you love God, and long to be like Him, or be with Him, angels will be the most beautiful friends you will ever find. Whether they appear as a child, or as a friend, or as a pastor, if our hearts are right they are beautiful.

It is not for me to sit in judgment on the decisions of men, but I have become somewhat hesitant to believe every person who says he is impressed to do a certain thing. Too many times those impressions are merely the expression of what the man wants to do, and besides Satan gives impressions also. A man may claim to be impressed in a certain business, knowing that good men will not likely challenge him lest they be found fighting against God, they will simply let him go on his way and watch to see. But I think it is safer to use all the landmarks God has set.

Here is one. God always honors His own institutions. Honorable marriage is one of those, and any individual seeking to please Him will also honor marriage regardless of how many other impressions he may have. God intended for children to be born into godly homes, and the child who honors his father and mother will find it a great blessing. God has established the gospel church at great price. What the church believes and practices, her judgments and her services, are wonderful guides. Those who live within church fellowship will have walls around them to shield them from many temptations.

The Bible is God's book, and it is without flaw. Tell me what sinners church members are, and I will likely agree with you. If it

were not so they would not need a pastor. Tell me what a weak man the pastor is, and I will also agree. If the man were not weak, he would not need the people. But does a church proclaim their own righteousness? No, they preach the Bible, the only unchanging infallible standard. You go to church to hear the Bible, the story of Christ. It is our guide.

Of the many waymarks remaining to be mentioned, let me speak of one, of Christian experience. What we hear with the ear is often quickly forgotten, but what we learn from fiery trials will never leave us. Experience is not only the best teacher, it is the only teacher. True, you have a choice, you can learn by observing the experiences of others, which is far easier, or you can pass through the lessons yourself. When the old saints tell me they don't know why they still live, I wonder at them! Here they have been over many roads, and the young need to hear what they have to say so badly! I do wish more of them would talk more about the way the Lord has led them, their mistakes as well as the blessed helps they have received. I fear we have much neglected the gift of exhortation in recent years, and the church has never needed it more. The person who does not hear or heed what those who love him most have to say, is headed for deep trouble. One thing I do know, it is far safer for me to depend upon the counsel of my people than to lean upon my own. Common sense, and a good conscience, are fine but they are so rare.

It takes a lot of hard experience to train us in the proper use of the gifts and talents God gives. One of the greatest truths we can ever learn is that we are nothing at all without Him, but that we can do what He commands if He will give us grace. The church is not on earth to give us a place to exercise our own will, but it is a place where we may serve God and His people. The problem with the church is not learning to be big enough, or wise enough, or rich enough to deserve it; the difficulty lies in learning to be humble and obedient, to be contented with serving, so we can fill our proper place. The biggest enemy you have to face will be yourself, with all you natural pride and spirit. You yourself will prove to be a giant

bigger than David's Goliath, you own worst enemy. And you must conquer this enemy before you can lead others. Now this may seem like an insignificant truth to you, but please remember it is the difference between the Old Baptist church and all the humanly devised systems known to man.

I am glad God does lead. There have been so many times He led where I didn't want to go, in paths I feared to tread. So many times He stopped me from going in ways of my own, or speaking words I ought not. Had I trusted my own impulses, I would have become a walking disaster. Now I know that if He wishes me to do something, He will open a door for me, and give me grace, and a people to walk with, and waymarks along my path. What more could I ask?

ELDER RAYMOND WEBB

HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER

No principle that our blessed Lord laid out for us should be ignored. All His acts and precepts should have our most careful attention. Jesus of Nazareth had no earthly father, but He did have a human mother. Evidently she became a widow at some point during Christ's life, for we find that even while He hung in agony on the cross He gave instructions to John for her care. His love for her found expression in a close regard even for her natural well-being when He would be bodily gone from the earth. He honored her by caring for her.

Declining cultures are marked by declining standards. One of the most easily discernible signs of the moral decay of America is seen in the lack of respect given for the elderly, and especially for fathers and mothers. God instituted the family, and lack of regard for His institutions is a lack of reverence for Him. A long life, well lived, is a blessing from God, both to those who have been granted the life and those others who have benefitted from it. Much of the stability and nobility of any people is bound up in their care for and respect for their forbears.

"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness" (Prov. 16:31). Why the elderly should be ashamed of gray hairs is a mystery, since God has stated that they are His own sign of honor upon those whose lives have been to His honor and glory. Were a king to enter the room, his crown would immediately grasp our attention and demand our respect. Should not the white heads of our fathers and mothers in Israel do as much, or more? Deacons who serve well purchase to themselves "a good degree," and the same could be said in behalf of all who have served long and well. Their words should carry great weight with the brethren.

"Honor thy father and mother." May I at this time pay public respect to the love and godly lives of my own dear parents? Their example and words of counsel have been worth more to me than all the money I might ever earn. This commandment to honor has a promise attached to it—"that it may be well with thee." Whatever good has come my way in this life has been (humanly speaking) to a large part through their influence. Whatever mischief I have gotten into came when I strayed from the way they followed and pointed out to me.

What people are deserving of our honor more than our parents? It is our privilege to give it, it is a specific and unmistakable command of God, and it will yield the peaceable fruits of long life and well-being. Very few acts we could perform have more to recommend them.

ELDER MARK GREEN

Any system of religion that does not meet the needs of the helpless sinner is wrong. The man who lay at the gate of the temple needed more than a mere invitation to get into the pool.

It should be greatly to our comfort, especially in all our afflictions, that God cannot do an unloving thing to one of His children.

“THE RAPTURE”

We hear the term *rapture* used just about every time we tune in a so-called religious radio or television station. However, as far as I have ever been able to determine the word is not found in the Bible. I have searched in my Strong's Exhaustive, as well as other concordances, and have yet to find the word used anywhere in the King James Bible.

I thought I had heard just about everything in the name of religion, but a short time ago I was returning home in my pickup truck from a job site when I turned on my radio. There was one of the religious talk shows in progress and they were discussing the “rapture”. It is my understanding that these people think that Jesus is going to call the believers away and then He is going to come back and set up His kingdom here on earth, and give the unbelievers a thousand years to repent and accept Him.

The part of this discussion that caught my attention was that they had produced a ninety minute video tape to leave behind after the “rapture” as a witness to the unbelievers so that they might not be in the dark as to what had happened. They seemed very enthusiastic about this video tape being an instrument by which many during the thousand year reign could accept Christ and be saved.

The idea of the so-called rapture and the thousand year reign is nothing new to me. I have heard this heresy advocated many times, but I was totally taken by surprise with this idea of leaving a video for the purpose of witnessing to the unsaved. I wondered at the time if they think Jesus is not capable of providing Himself with witnesses during this period of time they talk so much about. Then the thought occurred to me that they do not believe He is able in this life to get His work done without their help, so why should they think any different about this period of time after the so-called *rapture*.

Jesus said in John 5:28-29, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of

damnation.” Then we read the language of Paul in I Thes. 4:16-17, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Not one word is said about Christ setting up a kingdom on the earth, — just that we are going to be caught up to meet Him in the air, and that we shall ever be with Him. According to this language Jesus is not going to actually set foot on the earth again, rather that by His power we will meet Him in the air and forever be with Him. Those who are waiting for Him to come back and set up His kingdom are about two thousand years too late. His kingdom (the Church) has been here for that long, and He is still ruling and reigning over it.

ELDER JIM TURNER, JR.

(Editor's note: The above article by Elder Turner arrived shortly after I had received an inquiry on the subject from an interested sister in Kansas. I have an excellent old Oxford Dictionary that defines rapture as meaning "the act of conveying a person from one place to another, especially to heaven"; transport of mind, ecstasy, especially ecstatic delight or joy." These definitions could be applied to the resurrection of the saints, but certainly not to the resurrection of the wicked, and, contrary to popular opinion, both will be raised on the same occasion. The resurrection will be a rapturous experience for God's children, but it will be an unspeakably horrible day of judgment for the ungodly.

Many unenlightened religionists are expecting a resurrection of the righteous, that they call "the rapture", followed by a resurrection of the wicked after an interval of a thousand years. However, as Elder Turner has pointed out, such a notion is in direct opposition to such scriptures as John 5:28-29 and Daniel 12:2.

It is true that the dead in Christ will "rise first" (I Thes. 4:16), but that does not imply two separate resurrection days, but simply gives the sequence of events on the same occasion.)



ORIGINAL SIN

The disobedience of Adam was an offense against God because of the commandment not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam knew when he partook of the fruit of this tree that he would die. The tree was a natural fruit-bearing tree. Nobody knows specifically what kind of tree. It is positive that it was good for food and pleasant to the eyes.


I Timothy 2:14 - The scripture tells us that Eve was deceived by the serpent and yielded to his subtlety, but Adam knew he was walking into death by taking the fruit his wife gave to him.

Man transgressed God's law which was sin, and sin brought death. The moment Adam ate the fruit he died, not *physically* but *morally*. He was separated from fellowship with God. His innocent state was lost and his good image marred. Adam could not escape from the sentence of physical death and also eternal death. This death passed upon all men, for we were in the loins of our parent and stood guilty of sin (Romans 5:12).

God pronounced the sentence of physical death upon man. "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). Nothing can change the sentence. It is irresistible and irreversible, for sin hath reigned unto death.

All men without exception are depraved, and therefore cannot and will not return to God. The Lord "drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." I've heard it said that God gave man another chance through Jesus Christ. If that is the case, he gambled with man, which still leaves him without hope. God would not leave the redemption of sinners to chance. Jesus completely satisfied the flaming sword of Justice by dying in His people's stead and freed them from the law of sin and death.

ELDER DAN PARKER
Danville, Virginia



WALK ABOUT ZION

“Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof” (Psalm 48:12). This verse seems so sweet to me this morning as I meditate upon the goodness of the Lord and the blessed seasons we have enjoyed. The Lord has been so merciful to us in permitting us to feed upon His word and in leading us about Zion.

Certainly we believe that the unregenerate will not walk about Zion because they have no spiritual discernment. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God...because they are spiritually discerned” (*or understood*) — I Cor. 2:14. How many of those with spiritual discernment would say they lead themselves about Zion? How sweet to realize our dependence is upon the Lord that we may see Him and walk with Him!

We often say that we feel to be on the mountaintop. Brethren, this mountaintop is Mount Zion. The prophet Isaiah spoke in this manner: “Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken” (Isa. 33:20). This verse first says, “Look upon Zion.” Dear ones, has the Lord ever blessed you to look upon Zion? What a solemn question to consider! When I consider this question it stirs great joy, for if I know my heart I can say with all humility that I feel the Lord has been merciful to permit me to “taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8).

Is not the love of the Lord sure and steadfast? The Scripture says that “not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed.” This reminds me of the words of Jesus to Peter when he said, “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Certainly we can liken this “city of our solemnities” to the everlasting kingdom that Jesus spoke of. When I examine myself and look at my experience, I find that I have not always walked about Zion. Has this been your experience? This precious Zion has neither been removed, nor has it ceased to exist. The Lord is faithful concerning His promises. We realize that our flesh is weak and so prone to err. If it were not for the Spirit and the grace that God

gives we would not have any desire to see this "city of our solemnities" or to "walk about Zion." Surely all to Him we owe! He not only gives us the desire, but also the ability. When we realize this we begin to see just how weak we are in the flesh, and how merciful the Lord is to bless us to see Him in the midst of Mount Zion.

Brethren, when the Lord blesses you to walk about Zion this is a blessing that He has given to you. The Lord deals with His children individually and personally. Have you been able to find the words to express your gratitude to the Lord for His mercy. It seems this morning that my words have fallen far short. I pray and hope that the "Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

ELDER BRIAN BALLENGER
Hagerstown, Indiana

NO PROOF WITHOUT THE BIBLE

Two men were traveling together on a train. One denied the inspiration of the Scriptures while the other was firm in the belief that they are the infallible word of God. Said the Christian, "I'll argue with you if you will agree to not refer to the Bible." "I will readily agree to that," said his companion, "for I do not believe its teachings." "Well," said the Christian, "will you please tell me what you are?" "A very foolish question, but I'll answer it; I am a man." "I deny it," said the Christian, "and demand the proof." "But you know I am a man," said the skeptic." "You may be a man but I demand the proof. If you believe yourself a man you must have some reason for your belief—some proof that you are, and I insist that you give me that proof. Tell me plainly why you believe that you are a man." After a few minutes meditation, he said, "Why my friend the Bible says..." "But sir, we agreed to not refer to that book. And besides, you say you do not believe it and it would be very inconsistent in you to introduce testimony to prove your

assertion which testimony you yourself declare to be false. Give us some evidence which we can rely upon." He was silent for a few moments and changed the subject and they parted without again referring to the Bible. He could not prove that he was a man without the Bible and yet made bold to declare it spurious. —**Elder William H. Crouse**, *From "What Is Truth?" 1918.*

THE LORD SENT IT

I heard once of a poor destitute widow whose food supply became exhausted and she bowed in her humble home in prayer to the God of providence and asked Him to provide for her. A wicked boy passing by heard her and thought to have some fun. He brought a box of provisions and set it on the doorstep of the poor widow's home. Later he came back, and she was telling him how good the Lord had been to her in answering her prayer. The boy then told her it was not the Lord, but that he had brought the box himself. "No matter," says she, "the devil may have brought it, but the Lord sent it." —**Elder S. N. Redford**, 1930.

NO SET TIME TO JOIN THE CHURCH

Some say there is a certain time for each child of God to join the church, a set time when he cannot stay away. If that were true then every child of God would become a member of the church at some time in his life. The fact that a very large number of them never do join the church proves the falsity of that theory. Moreover, if that were true no self-denial would be necessary or possible, for the obedient child would be passive in his obedience and would thus have nothing to deny. Again, instead of the cross being *taken up* it would simply be *laid upon* him, and there would be no alternative but to follow Jesus; hence, there would be no place for exhortations to duty or punishment for disobedience.

Such a theory has no foundation in the teaching of the Bible, and

is at war with the best interests of the church of Christ. Let a child of God who has never joined the church become settled in that opinion and he is likely to stay away, for he will make no effort to deny himself, take up his cross and follow the Saviour. If he thinks he ought to stay away as long as he can he will try to stay away rather than to go home to his friends as he is commanded to do.

Reader, be not deceived by such a false notion, but deny yourself at once, take up your cross, and become an humble follower of Jesus, if you have not yet done so. —**Elder John R. Daily**, *Zion's Advocate*, 1903.

BY GRACE OR BY CONDITIONS?

If salvation is by grace as all admit, then why tell the sinner that he has to perform certain good works in order to receive it? If I should work for a man for a certain consideration and at the end of our contract he pays me as was promised in contract, has he bestowed grace on me? Or has he not rather paid a just debt?

If God has promised me salvation if I will perform certain conditions, and I comply with my part of the contract, that is, do what he bids me, and at the end God gives me salvation, did He not justly owe it to me according the contract? Am I saved by grace then, or has God just paid me a just debt He owed me? —**Elder T. S. Dalton**, *Zion's Advocate*, 1896.

SISTERLY RELATIONS OF CHURCHES

The sisterly relations of churches involve sisterly obligations. They are all members of the same mystical body of Christ, permeated by the same Divine Spirit, and should be sweetly constrained by the same heavenly love to maintain the same strict faith and order of the gospel, to have tender regards for one another's feelings, and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (See Eph. 4:1-6). —**Elder William H. Crouse**.

CHRIST THE CREATOR

Paul would prevent the shadow of a doubt crossing our minds about our Lord having a right to the divine honors of the Creator. "By him," he says, "all things were created" (Col. 1:16), and as if an angel, standing at his side when he penned these words, had stooped down to whisper in his ear that men, attempting to rob Jesus of His honor, would rise to throw doubt upon that truth and explain it away—to make the truth still more plain, he adds, "that are in heaven, and that are in earth." Not content with that, he uses yet more comprehensive terms; and to embrace all the regions of God's universe above the earth and beyond the starry bounds of heaven, he adds, "visible and invisible." Nor leaves his task till, sweeping the highest and lowest things, men and worms, angels and insects, all into Christ's hands, he adds, "Whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." —**Dr. Guthrie**, *From Zion's Advocate*, 1905.

NO CHRISTIAN LIFE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

Some say they can live a christian life as well out of the church as in it. This is a false notion. One may be a child of God and have eternal life out of the church, but it is impossible for him to live a christian life out of the church. He may be upright in his moral conduct, and pay his secret devotions to God, and attend upon his public service as a spectator, and rejoice very much as he hears the melting story of the cross proclaimed, but he is not living a christian life if he is out in the world. His standing classifies him with the world professionally.

He may be regarded as a "Dry Land Baptist," and he may take great pride in being so regarded. But a "Dry Land Baptist" is such a poor sort of a Baptist that he is really no credit to the Baptists. He may pretend to be very steadfast in the Baptist doctrine, and may be quite skillful in contending for it, but his life is a continual contradiction to his arguments. He talks one way and lives another.

To be steadfast in the baptist faith is not to sit upon the "stool of do-nothing," and to be immovable in that faith is not to stand still like a stump or a stone. This is Paul's exhortation: "Be ye therefore steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." In this he teaches that to be steadfast and unmovable it is necessary to move forward in abundant service, and not to sit down or stand still. —**Elder John R. Daily**, *Zion's Advocate*, 1903.

A NEWS BOY'S STORY

"I am not a member of the church, or of a Temperance Society of any kind, and yet I haven't taken a drink of whiskey, or other intoxicating liquor, for eleven years. When I was twenty-one years old my mother, who was a widow, gave me a party. In the evening, before supper, the boys or young men of the company proposed a walk. I went with them and found that the terminus of their walk was a saloon. In order to be sociable with my companions I drank with them for the first time in my life, and as I was not used to it (being raised without it) I was soon drunk. Then my companions laughed at me.

I made my way back to the house, and reeling and staggering in at the parlor door, I steadied myself as best I could, and said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I am drunk.' A titter and smile passed around, and I heard one of the girls say to another, 'We would have known he was drunk without his telling us.' 'Yes,' I said, 'I know you do, but I have more to say. I have taken my last drink of whiskey.'

"Then one of the young ladies jumped up, came to me and said, 'And so help me God, do it, and that will be our pledge, and then join our society, and God will help you, and we will help you to keep your pledge.' 'I will keep it without calling on God or man,' I said. The lady seemed shocked, and said, 'How can you talk so? Don't you believe there is a God?' 'Yes, I do,' said I, 'and that is the main reason that I feel so mortified. God has given me brains, and intellect, and good common sense, and one of the best of mothers,

who from the cradle has taught me the evils, yea, the horrors of drunkenness, and I have had negative lessons of a drunken father. My first recollection of him is that he made his home at a saloon and came back drunk. He reformed at the age of forty-five and died a sober man. Now with all this before me, and having sound reason, why should I call on God to help me if I basely turn my back on all this help already received?' And now, sir, eleven years have gone by, and I have kept my word."

The above story was related to me on the train by a news boy. He is now married and has two or three children. I was impressed with his story and felt like giving it to the readers of the Advocate, especially to the boys and young men. Look over the list of good things. God has given you reasoning powers. Are you using them to discern between right and wrong in a moral sense? Are you using your feet, which God has given you, to get away from places of vice and vicious company? In short, are you using the powers of mind and body, which God has given you, in such a way as to be useful to yourselves and others? The physical and intellectual powers which God has given you, under proper care, training and culture, will enlarge and expand, and lead on to greater usefulness.

My news boy friend made no claim to religion, but let me carry this lesson farther. How many who read this have, in addition to natural powers—physical and intellectual—eternal life, which enables us to understand spiritual things! Have we God's word to read, and have we the blessed privilege of hearing the gospel preached in its purity? If so, are we following on to know the Lord (Hosea 6:3)? Are we growing in grace (II Peter 3:18)? In short, are we using the good gifts, natural and spiritual, which God has given us, to the best advantage? Read Luke 12, especially from the 35th to the 48th verses. Let us fly in the way of the Lord's commandments when we can, run when we can't fly, walk when we can't run, all in the name and strength of the Lord. —Elder T. N. Alderton, *Zion's Advocate*, 1902.

If there were more prayer in the pew there would be more power in the pulpit.

FORSAKE ALL OTHERS FOR CHRIST

Following the world and following Jesus are opposite courses. You can no more do both at the same time than you can travel in opposite directions at the same time. "Whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Oh, dear brethren and sisters, let us think about this! The world, with all its societies, with all its unscriptural doctrines and practices and pharisaical worship, stands opposed to God and His cause. If we are friends to one, we are enemies to the other. Where are we disposed to let our friendship rest? Under whose banner do we want to march?

Righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness; light has no communion with darkness; Christ has no concord with Belial; the believer has no part with an infidel; the temple of God has no agreement with idols. Come out entirely from them, then, and be completely separate. God your Father will then receive you as His own valiant, faithful, obedient sons and daughters, and will be a Father unto you indeed. Oh! dear readers, let us forsake all others for Him. —Elder John R. Daily, *Zion's Advocate*, 1903.

NEWS NOTES

HARMONY CHURCH CELEBRATES 160 YEARS

Harmony Church near Alexandria, Ohio is celebrating 160 years. A special all day meeting at 10 a.m. with dinner at the church will be held Sunday, Nov. 30, 1997 to offer thanks to God for this blessing. The members invite all who would like to praise God to join with them.

Elder Clyde Farmer, former pastor, now from Illinois is scheduled to be with them and they hope to have other ministers take part also. A Saturday evening meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the *Friendship* Church in Newark with Elder Farmer present. Supper is planned at the *Friendship* Church for 5 p.m.

There are several Baptist homes in the area with plenty of beds, and the church invites all who can to come and stay over for both meetings. For directions to these churches check the Muskingum Association Minutes or call **Elder Jack Allen** at 614-924-7425.



NEW PRICES FOR OLD SCHOOL HYMNAL

Effective Oct. 1, 1997 some changes have been made in the price of the Old School Hymnal, 11th edition. They are as follows:

- 1 copy\$8.50
- 2-11 copies\$7.00 each.
- 12-49 copies\$6.50 each.
- 50-99 copies\$6.25 each.
- 100 or more copies\$6.00 each.

On orders of less than 50 books add 10 percent for handling. On orders originating in Georgia add local sales tax. Send orders to:

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P.O. Box 57
Ellenwood, GA 30294



ORDINATION OF A DEACON

On Saturday, Aug. 30, 1997, Brother Charles Ward of the *Zion's Rest* Primitive Baptist Church near Bentonville, Arkansas, was ordained to the office of Deacon.

The following Elders and Deacons were in attendance: *Elder Bill Wood* of Weaubleau, Missouri, and *Elder James Kimbrough* of Peace Valley, Missouri; Deacons, Donald West of Loveland Church; Joe Lakins and Clifford Lawrence of Little Flock Church, Hurley, Missouri; Marion Stanley and Ezra Crawmer of Clear Creek Church;

and Adrian Talley and Edwin Boyd of Zion's Rest Church.

A presbytery was formed by electing the pastor of Zion's Rest Church as Moderator and Brother Ezra Crawmer as Clerk. The wishes of the candidate were respected and Elder James Kimbrough was chosen to pray the ordination prayer and Elder Bill Wood to deliver the charge.

All functions having been performed to the satisfaction of Zion's Rest Church, Bro. Ward was delivered back to them as a duly ordained deacon.

The presbytery was dissolved and the right hand of fellowship was given to Deacon Ward and his wife.

OBITUARIES

BROTHER BENJAMIN RICHARD BALDWIN (81) of Brandy Station, Virginia, died at his home on July 5, 1997. He was born on Jan. 9, 1916.

Brother Ben, a faithful soldier, served as a Trustee and Deacon of *North Fork* Primitive Baptist Church, located in Purcellville, for more than fifty years. To him it was a delight to meet together with God's people and hear the word of God.

Survivors are his children, Herbert and Larry Baldwin and Joyce Beales, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on July 8 at the Found and Sons Chapel with his pastor, Elder J. Frank Coppedge, and Elder E. S. Skeen officiating. Burial was in Fairview Cemetery in Culpeper, Virginia.

DONATIONS TO THE ADVOCATE AND MESSENGER, INC.

Virginia T. Knighting, Va., \$10.00; Sis. Dorothy Huffman, Ne., \$25.00; Mary Griffin, NC, \$5.00; Mary Lee Olinger, Va., \$5.00; E. B. Eckler, In., \$5.00; Draper Street, Va., \$20.00; A Friend, Ark., \$20.00; Jewel H. Bender, W. Va., \$5.00; Dolores B. Wayland (In memory of Bro. John D. Wayland), Va., \$15.00; Nelda S. Ritter, Tn., \$10.00; George E. Blair, Ala., \$5.00; Elder Oscar A. Harris, Va., \$5.00; Walter & Letafern Pile, Ill., \$10.00; Vertie W. Nott, Va., \$5.00; Michael Turner, Va., \$100.00; Janet Y. Ford, Va., \$5.00.

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. '97

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.; 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 Mariboro, 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. '97

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