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DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

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J.M. Mewborn, Editor • PO Box 1358 • Coats, NC 27521
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A STATEMENT CONCERNING THE PERPLEXITY OF THE WAR ON TERRORISM TODAY IN IRAQ, AS IT RELATES TO THE BIBLE. WHO ARE THE SUNNIS, SHIITES AND KURDS PEOPLE MENTIONED SO OFTEN IN TODAY'S NEWS IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PROBLEM? HOW ARE THEY INVOLVED IN IT? IS THERE A SOLUTION?

Iraq is an Arab country where the world's first (and oldest) civilization developed almost 4,000 years ago in the beginning of the second dispensation of time. This was, approximately, 900 years after the time of the flood, or about the year 1892 B.C.

The scripture records that it was only a short time after the flood when God brought Abraham from the Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 15:7 - this place was then in what is today known as Iraq) into the land of Canaan, when a son, named Ishmael, was born to him and his bond wife, Hagar. His name was Ishmael, given to Hagar by the angel of the Lord. Now when "Sarah saw the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, which she had born unto her by Abraham, mocking", she had Abraham cast both Hagar and Ishmael out of their household. It was in the wilderness of Beersheba, where the two wandered, that

Ishmael would marry a wife out of Egypt. (See Genesis 21:21).

Ishmael and his Egyptian wife had thirteen children, twelve sons and one daughter, Mahalath, who married Esau, (See Genesis 28:9) son of Isaac and nephew of Ishmael. (Note: Esau was a twin-brother to Jacob.) (Genesis 28:9). God comforted Abraham in his suffering due to the separation from his household of Hagar and Ishmael, when Sarah demanded that he put both of them out the door, saying, "it is in Isaac shall MY seed be called." (See Genesis 21:13 & Hebrews 11:18). It was God's purpose that His seed not be called through Ishmael. God had a purpose in Hagar's and Ishmael's expulsion, as He has in all things, although sad results stem from it, as seen in today's troubled world because of it.

Like the sons of Jacob, who gave rise to the twelve tribes of Israel, Ishmael, also through his twelve sons also gave rise to and founded tribes, some of whom still today are known in history by their names. At the present time about 95% of Iraq's people are Muslims, descendents of Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael. Most of these people, the descendents of these tribes of Ishmael, live in central and southeastern Iraq, and in the Baghdad, the capitol area, and others in the extreme northern regions. Those in the central area belong to the Shi'ah (or Shi'a - Shiite) branch of the Muslim religion, called Islam. The others, including the Kurds of the north, are members of the Sunni sect. All of them are bonded in bands and tribes in their religion, as indicated, known as ISLAM, who believe in ALAH, their god, as taught in the Koran, the Bible of Muhammad, as his prophet, who founded ISLAM, that all

Muslims follow today.

There are at this time, to list some of them, bloody terrorist groups in the Middle East, Arab countries as follows: (1) the insurgents in Iraq, (2) the Hezbollah, in Lebanon, (3) the Islamic Hamas and the Islamic Jihad in Palestine, (4) the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan where these built-in cells of well-organized extreme radicals exist within the framework of these tribes that make up the Muslim/Islamic world and religion for the sole purpose of using and stirring up strife. This is only for the sole purpose and objective of the total destruction and annihilation of Israel because of their perfect hatred against it, that reaches back to the establishment of Israel, as a nation in 1948, and from there on back to the separation from the seed of Isaac in Abraham's household almost 4,000 years ago, in the morning of time. In a certain sense of the word in fighting them, we are fighting their religion, and they are fighting us back hard. We see it taking place here now, and they are dying for it.

These violent organizations are dedicated with the full use of human suicide bombs, car suicide bombs, plane suicide bombs and roadside bombs to accomplish this purpose and goal - the total, complete destruction and annihilation of Israel, as a nation and people, and for all nations, including the USA, that support Israel.

The United States of America, our beloved country, has been brought into the front line of this terrible conflict because of our support of the State of Israel to exist. This led to the 9/11/01 terror attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, and for our country's efforts to build stable, democratic governments

in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The cost of the War on Terrorism in the above countries, not counting what yet may come in Iran, together with great, natural catastrophes here with hurricanes and huge fires, has brought us, as one news channel telecaster recently put it, "the United States of America is literally drowning in debt." It is now reported to be well into the trillions. The question is, "Can and will this War ever be won?" How much more can our beloved country take? Is the prophecy of the late Elder J.E. Adams of seeing the weasel suck the blood from the neck of the eagle (representing The United States of America) until it died correct? (Please re-read Page 8 of the September-October, 2004, issue of Zion's Landmark.) Surely we are living in perilous times as spoken of in II Timothy 3:1.

Since 4,000 years have not changed the disposition, manners, habits, occupation, government, or dress of these Arabic people, the question now is, "Can President Bush's War on Terrorism, costing at this time in the trillions of dollars, with the nearly 2,300 soldiers who have already lost their lives, notwithstanding the wounded, change them now? It is possible to build a stable democratic government for them? The hatred of these people against America is getting worse, the longer we remain in this deadly conflict with them. 4,000 years is a long time!

J.M. Mewborn
March 10, 2006

"BORN OF GOD"
(THE HEAVENLY BIRTH)

The doctrine of the "new birth", as taught by God our Saviour in the Holy Scriptures, is at first glance

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rather elementary for many of God's people, --- yet, the truth of it is so unique---, that for thousands of years from Adam to the Apostle John, the terms "born of God" and "born again" did not exist. That is not to say that God's Holy Spirit was not "new birthing" the saints of the Old Testament era (and dispensations of time), for He most assuredly was. The marvelous truth of Salvation and Redemption was there right from the start in the book of beginnings, Genesis. However, to repeat, the phrases "born again" and "born of God" are not found in the scriptures until the gospel, as recorded by John. This great aspect of the mystery of Godliness was revealed and made known during the earthly ministry of our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The word "born", with all of its variations, beget, bare, bring forth, begat, begotten, etc. is used almost 500 times in the Old Testament. By far the vast majority of these are references to physical births, and in Genesis alone where many of these are recorded, the words are used almost 175 times.

The Greek word, 'gennao' is in the New Testament over 90 times, again for the most part referring to someone being born physically. As expected, in Matthew Chapter 1 --- which describes the earthly lineage of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit used the word many times. To my knowledge, the very LAST time the physical birth of an infant is recorded in all of the scripture ----- it's the grand proclamation describing the birth of the LORD JESUS CHRIST! When the King of kings had been born in the incarnation, there is no more need to record the birth of anyone else. He is the last Adam, (1st Cor. 15:45), the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, (Rev. 21:6), Beloved Son, (2nd Peter 1:17), Bishop of our souls, (1st Peter 2:25), Captain of our Salvation, (Hebrews 2:10), CREATOR, (Col. 1:13-18), DOOR, (John 10:7-9), Deliverer, (Rom 11:26), Everlasting Father, (Isa. 9:6), Emmanuel, God with us,

(Matt. 1:23), Faithful and True, (Rev. 19:11), First and Last, (Rev. 1:17), GOD, (John 20:28), Governor, (Matt. 2:6), He Who Is, He Who Was, and He Who is to Come, (Rev 1:4), Head of the Church, (Eph. 5:23), Image of the Invisible GOD, (Col. 1:15), Israel's King and Redeemer, (Isa. 44:6), Jehovah, O. T. LORD, (Isa. 26.4), Jesus, the Son of God, (Heb. 4:14), King of Israel, (John 1:49), King of Saints, (Rev. 15:3), Lamb of God, (John 1:29, 36), Lord God Almighty, (Rev. 4, 8), Man, (1st Tim. 2:5), Mediator, (Heb. 12:24), Name above every name, (Phil. 2:8-9), Nazarene, (Matt.2:23), Only begotten Son of God, (John 3:18), Redeemer, (Job. 19:25, Isa. 54-5-8), Resurrection and Life, (John 11:25), Saviour, (Luke 2:11), Son of God, (Mark 1-1), Son of man. (Matt. 26:24), Teacher from God, (John 3:2), The Truth, (John 14:6), Upholder of all Things, (Hebs. 1:3), a Witness, (Isa. 55:4), and Word of God, (Rev. 19:13).

These are only a few of all the names and attributes listed in the scriptures about our Almighty God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Someone has named almost three hundred. The elect of God will continue to be shown more of His exceeding riches of Grace and kindness throughout the ages to come! (Eph. 2:7). Therefore, is it any wonder that the incarnation of the Lord Jesus is the last recorded physical birth in all the scriptures.

The literal, spiritual birth of the children of God must and will take place with each and everyone of His elect, as was determined in the will, mind and purpose of the Almighty God before the foundation of the world, before their resurrected, changed bodies will finally enter eternal glory. Let us briefly scan the verses that declare this truth. They are almost all in the Apostle John's writings. In 1st Peter 1:23 the phrase "born again" is found --- although it is a slightly different Greek word according to some dictionaries. For this study on the spiritual birth, we're only looking at the words, born, begat, and begotten. There

are, of course, obvious synonyms, to-wit: regeneration, eternal life, quickened, redemption and sometimes, "saved," salvation, etc. For an example we use the word regeneration a good deal; however, it is used only twice in scripture, both in English and in Greek. And Titus 3:5 reference-verse seems to be the only one synonymous to the "heavenly birth". So, the terms "born", "begotten of God", and "born again" are more prevalent in the Holy Scripture.

Now, some will try to make a big difference between conception and the birth. Why? It may be because they want to make the conception a work of God, and birth a work of man. It is true, in the physical there is a difference; however, even in the natural there has never anyone born, that was not conceived. It is also interesting to note that in Matthew 1:20, the word, "conceived", is the same Greek word-gennao, as "begat, born", etc. In the grand purpose of God, all the elect would be spiritually conceived by Him, and ultimately "born again" of His Holy Spirit. God's children are never spiritually aborted! There is and can be no failure in God's sovereign, all-powerful work, as recorded, "that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. 1:6).

As stated earlier, the Apostle John was the first inspired of God to literally pen the words, born again or born of God.

John one reads, "He was

in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were BORN, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:10-13).

The Lord Jesus created the world, came into the world, and, yet mankind, when left to itself, will never recognize Him as the omniscient Jehovah God. Not then and not now. Oh, people will acknowledge Him as a good man, a historical figure, --- someone that we should emulate ---, but never as the perfect, resurrected Saviour, who paid for all the sins of all His elect, chosen family. It was a free gift with no obligation for return repay. Even His own Jewish-kinsmen people, for the most part, did not receive Him. Not yet; but thanks be to God a remnant would right then and there in Judea and Galilee. WHY? Because John the Baptist preached a "Billy Graham - Just As I am" type message and folks were emotionally moved? No. We must read further, they received power to become the children of God and believe on His name because they were born of God. He is the first cause of this Heavenly birth, not man. Plainly, we are told it is NOT of our blood, (race, ethnic group), will of our flesh or carnal mind, nor any other will of any and all human beings. Man has a will of car-

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"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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nal flesh and mind; however, when left to himself, he can never receive these Heavenly things from the Sovereign God of Heaven. There it is in black and white, not my words or any other person's, but only in God's inspired Word. Read it again, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but OF GOD". (John 1:13). How the Devil and all his fallen angels must hate this verse, He has deceived the reprobate into believing the lie of the so-called "free-will" of man. The Lord God already gave His verdict about this pompous and prideful beast, Satan—Devil—Lucifer.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north: I will ascend about the heights of the clouds; I will be like most High. Yet, thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." (Isaiah 14:12-15).

In this passage of scripture there are five proud "Wills" of Lucifer, who then passed them on to our first parents in their transgression of the Law of God in the Garden of Eden. Through this first transgression of Adam and Eve, we have all inherited the same self-will, proud free-will, conceited ideas from them. There is no exception to this rule. So, no marvel that the fallen race of mankind believes that they are the ones deciding their own personal eternal destiny. It is a natural, normal reason why all people are somewhat religious --- at least --- to various degrees --- and unless born from above, will always worship the god of this world and his false doctrine of free-will. That god comes in many colors and flavors. Could this be another reason why the Lord Jesus continued the subject of the new birth in John, Chapter 3?

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3).

Here is the blessed Son of God, the Creator of the universe, condescending to us mere mortals. We are, as Nicodemus, sinful, ignorant man, unfit for Heaven, spiritually dead, unable to stand alone in the presence of the MAN, GOD Himself. The Lord Jesus used the double emphasis, "verily, verily", or truly, truly, amen and amen, -- not to exaggerate, (He never does), but to underscore the truth of this great Biblical doctrine, the Heavenly birth. Never spake a man like this MAN. By that time, human beings had been on the earth approximately 4,000 years or so. There wasn't any Roman, Greek, Persian, Babylonian, Egyptian or any other philosopher of whatever stripe, who had ever spoken of being "born again." Nicodemus was astounded and incredulous that his own Pharisee brethren had never taught him of this new heavenly birth. And without that divine experience, no man can even see, let alone enter the kingdom of God!

"Nicodemus saith unto Him, how can a man be born when he is old?

Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus Answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:4-5).

It seems fair to say that, perhaps, in a moment, or maybe sometime later, Nicodemus, (his name means "victorious among his people") would become a blessed recipient of this holy birth. Only the Sovereign God would know the precise time. But for now, Nicodemus was perplexed, and even with all his formal education, he could only murmur something about a grown person entering the second time into his mother's womb. History has been rather hard on Nicodemus; he and many others of his kind thought salvation was by race, --- his own Jewish flesh and

blood --- and not by the Heavenly birth. The Lord Jesus would tell him in a few moments, (John 3:15-16) that eternal life was given to the world of His chosen, beloved family, not only of the Jews, but also among the Gentile world. Had he been in Nicodemus's place, we might have asked even sillier questions. The Lord answers him again with the two verily-verily...how important it is—that we take heed to His words. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Born of water and the Spirit. Why water? People have debated the issues for centuries; this must mean a physical water baptism, or it is the mother's water during childbirth. No. These quick answers do not quite satisfy a seeker of the truth, for the Lord is telling us of a Heavenly birth. Was He not describing two different types of water to the woman of Samaria? In John 4 we're given the account, particularly verses 13-14. "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; in reference to the physical liquid the human body needs everyday. But "whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This is altogether a different water than H₂O. It is the Heavenly Water of life, and can only come from above! It is given to each of the Elect of God at the time of their Spiritual birth, -- springing up into everlasting life. Notice the four shalls in this verse of God's Word. The Lord Jesus Christ said it; therefore, it shall be done! It appears this same Heavenly water is also applied in the daily walk of the believer. For we read of the one true Church who Christ loved, and gave Himself for it. "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of WATER by the word." Eph. 5:26. "That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph 5:27.

Jesus Christ came by water and blood the Holy Spirit tells us in John's epistle. "This is He that came by WATER and BLOOD, even Jesus Christ; not by WATER only, but by WATER and BLOOD. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." 1st John 5:6. As the literal streams of water and blood flowing from the Saviour's pierced side are inseparable, so is the little child of God, when united to Him in the new birth of water and spirit. All praise to Him!

The Lord spoke very directly of the two births, the first of the flesh, the second of the Holy Spirit. There are similarities and vast differences between the two. He does not say much about the first, because everyone already knows about the physical birth. That one is easy. It is the second birth that is impossible for the natural man to understand and comprehend. But, remember they're both called births, which is an important similarity.

John 3:6 records, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Also, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." (John 3:7). First, let's ask a few, simple questions regarding the fleshy or physical birth. Did you "make a decision" to be conceived? If so, why did you decide to be born in the 20th Century? We all seem to want to go back to the "good old days", so why not the 19th Century, or for that matter, the first Century of time, over 2,000 years ago? Or, why not wait until next year, 2007, to be born, for times might just be a little better, and, possibly, the world might be filled with a little bit better of human-kind around? Did you pick your parents of royal heritage, high IQ's, handsome physiques, or was your desire to be born into a poor, peasant family? Perhaps, even as an orphan with no earthly known father? None of that suited you, so you just simply "decided" to be middle-class? Did you choose the color of your skin, eyes, and hair? Why weren't you 100% (per-cent) exactly like someone else? On and on, we can ask questions, but

the universal truth is, we had absolutely no choice in our physical, fleshly birth. Our "free-will", so-called, was not consulted, even in the naming of ourselves! Every human being with a reasonable sound mind will surely agree, that we had no choice in our natural birth. But, when it comes to the Spiritual birth, almost all religionists claim we can "exercise our free-will," and decide to be born (again), get saved, and go to Heaven. Why this stunning reversal?? The Lord said in verse 7, "Marvel not", yet most people today do marvel and think you're crazy if you tell them, that man makes no choice in being born again. If man has no "say in the matter" in his first birth, which is only physical and eventually he will die, how can he possibly "make a choice" in the second, spiritual birth unto eternal life, lasting forever? Utterly impossible!

Listen to the Lord once more, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell WHENCE IT cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:6). He (our blessed Lord) is, indeed, the wisest MAN that ever lived. He taught a most profound truth in a very simple way. He used natural illustrations to teach the super-natural. Here, the Lord irrefutably tells us the Holy Spirit comes and goes without any help from man. Like the wind, -- the Greek word is the same for Spirit, --- blows where it wills, we hear the sound, (voice) thereof but canst not tell when it comes or where it goes. The Eternal, all-knowing (omniscient) Lord God who can not lie, said that we do not dictate the wind-spirit. All of this is proven by the scripture when His disciples once feared for their lives, when they were on the sea. "Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, WHAT MANNER OF MAN IS THIS, that even THE WINDS and the sea obey Him!" (Matt. 8:26-27). All of this is made very apparent to the children of God, but modern man thinks he can direct the Holy Spirit. His puny effort is like a mere 6 inch (small, electric) circular fan against the force of a mighty Category "5" hurricane,

the likes of 'Katrina' on New Orleans and the USA Gulf Coast in August, 2005. Yet, men in their unregenerate arrogance, will keep saying, we need money to get out here and save souls, god needs our help to get people saved and finally into heaven. All the while, they drive fine, expensive cars, live in nice homes, and eat rather well. Why don't they live like paupers and go door to door around the world, because after all, according to them, everyone needs their particular brand (or kind) of religion in finally making that right choice (and decision) to be born again. Hypocrites. Some, indeed, do compass sea and land to make a (just one) proselyte. (Read about these characters in the language of our Lord & Master from Matt. 23:15.

According to the Lord Jesus Christ, who in the last clause of verse eight of John 3, said "so is every one that is born of the Spirit." All those born of the Spirit were completely passive, actually spiritually dead before the quickening came upon them. (See Ephesians 2:1). This is crucial in understanding the Heavenly birth. A dead man, either natural or spiritual, cannot "make a decision" to be born again. Each and everyone, (it's the same Greek word as whosoever in John 3:16) of the elect of God, will experience this Spiritual birth before he or she is called from this time world. They must. It could take place early in life, like John the Baptist as a babe, "leaped in his mother's womb for joy:" (Luke 1:44), or at the door of death, when Christ told a thief, adjacent to him on Golgotha, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43). We cannot tell when the Holy Ghost comes, or where He goes upon His Sovereign way. He is the Absolute, Triune God, and no man, even in his best state tells Him what to do. The prophet, Issiah, beautified this point when he said, "With whom took He counsel and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment." (Isa.40:14.)

SOME EVIDENCES OF BEING BORN OF GOD ----

We now move on to the next set of scriptures, giving us a few clues about this mysterious work of God, the new birth.

These are also found in the Apostle John's writings, but here in his epistles. Remember, we are only looking at the "born of God" verses. "If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him." (1st John 2:29). Someone might say, see, you have to do righteousness to be born of Him. Is this really what the verse says, and, therefore, we have a contradiction? No. The context in which the Holy Spirit inspired John pen these words, were to the little children of God. (1st John 21:1,28). So, they were already "born of God." Also, we're told in the previous verse, that when Christ shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed at His coming. If ye know that Christ is righteous (just) and none of God's born again children believes otherwise, everyone that doeth righteousness, --- would include believing or having faith in Him alone for salvation, since faith is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:22). So, those that do righteousness are (already) born of Him. We do not do righteousness to become born; all our own righteousness is as filthy rags, regardless. Therefore, the Heavenly Birth always precedes any outward fruit in the believer, if even for a moment.

Here is the next "born of God" verse. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1st John 3:9). This has puzzled and consternated many of God's little children during their earthly sojourn, particularly at the beginning of their experience. But, as they are enabled and blest to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, this passage brings great comfort. The Heavenly Seed, which is planted in the soul at the time of the new birth cannot sin, because that same Spiritual Seed is from the Holy God, who is not the author of sin. The born-again believer has both an inward and outward man, which he is made to know by his experience and from the scripture. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." (Rom. 7:22). "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (II Cor. 4:16), and also by his own per-

sonal experience. There is a warfare between the two (of these men). It is well described by the Holy Spirit in Romans 7:8, and elsewhere. This warfare is the way of all the saints of God, not only now, but it has been so throughout all the ages of time.

Also, here in John's epistle, we read in 1st John 1:8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." If any say they have no sin, God's word and truth is not in them. Serious words. So, then, this must refer to the believer's outward, adamic, inherited, sinful man that perishes and dies, --- or else will be gloriously changed at the last trump. No one will be carried to the eternal Heaven in an earthly, sinful, mortal body. Impossible. But, thanks be to God, He places His Seed within the earthly tabernacle of each and everyone of His elect sheep, and they never perish, but have everlasting life.

Another "fruit" the born or begotten of God are blessed with is (gk agape) love or charity. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (1st John 5:1). "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten of Him." (1st John 5:1). In their inward Man they have a great love for their Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. And they love Him, only because HE FIRST loved them! And that love will grow on and on into eternity. That Love is far beyond any earthly love, (there are other definitions for that kind); it extends past that of husband for wife, and wife for husband, and children, etc. This love is of God and must, therefore, be perfect, unfeigned and unfettered by any and all human effort. You can not drum it up and just make it happen. There are many imitations, but this love is real, genuine and spotlessly pure. It lies in the bosom of every little born- again child of God. Many times he is made to wish and desire for a greater indwelling of this great Love --- sometimes called charity---, but, nonetheless this fruit remains, regardless of its size. He loves the Tri-une God, His finished work and person of the Lord Jesus Christ. His

Eternal Decree, His everlasting covenant, His Sovereign, electing grace, His substitutionary death, His sin-cleansing Blood, His resurrection from the dead, His intercession, His second coming without sin unto Salvation, His Holy written Word (the scriptures), and on and on. Be it ever so small, yet, he does love all this and more. He is also made to love the true brethren of God, as recorded, "Love the brotherhood." (1st Peter 2:17). Whoever and wherever they are, in Heaven or scattered upon the face of the earth, here and yonder, as the Lord providentially brings them together. He loves the apostles and brethren of the New Testament, the prophets and patriarchs of the Old. It matters not what age, male, female, color of skin, Gentile or Jew, whether they be many or few, if they have been begotten of God from above in blessed hope, he is made to love them and will forever. Outwardly, there are many, vast differences, but inwardly and secretly, they have one thing in common. All are born of God, and that not of themselves!

The verse also declares everyone that is born of God, knoweth God. Intimately. Does that mean they know everything about God? No, not in this world. But this wonderful knowledge and understanding will continue to grow in the ages to come. However, this same knowledge begins here in time at the "new birth." The Apostle Paul said, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (II Peter 3:18). It is a spiritual relationship. The children of God do know their Heavenly Father. They also believe Jesus is THE Christ. Not "a" Christ, but the Christ, Messiah, the Anointed One who alone takes away sin. They rejoice in the words of the Angel of the Lord to Joseph about Mary. "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins". (Matt. 1:21). The Name JESUS means Jehovah is Saviour! Indeed, He is the one, true, and only Saviour,--- all the "begotten of God" know precisely that --- they believe and trust Him only for their salvation.

The last two verses in all of the Bible with the particular phrases, "born of God" are in 1st John 5. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." (1st John 5:18). Here, then is the final victory for all those "born of God." They are ultimately victorious over the evil, self-will, pagan world that surrounds them. They're victorious over their own carnal, fallen flesh, the outward man, that besets them day by day. And they finally at last overcome the great arch enemy of the saints, that is the Devil and all his host of fallen angels and unholy spirits. How do they overcome? By their own free-will efforts, human works of righteousness (so-called)? Never! They could easily make a vast universe, as the one that surrounds us here, as create the Heavenly birth within themselves. With man these things are utterly impossible, but God makes His born-again child an overcomer by the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 12:11). He gives them of His faith, for without faith it is impossible to please Him. Faith is given as a free gift by the faithful God to each and everyone of His own. (Eph. 2:8). The wicked one cannot touch them because they're born of God. O, he can harass, discourage, influence and raise a host of other charges against the child of God. But, the Devil can never possess--- that is what the Greek word for touch means, intimate relationship---, because he is begotten of God and bought with a great price. The Bible is filled with passages teaching the everlasting life of the born-again child of God. Tell me, how could one lose eternal life? It certainly would not be eternal to begin with if mere man could "lose" it. The born of God believe the Bible, and keep the words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is

greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand. I and my Father are one." (John 10:27-30).

So concludes this little study of the doctrine of the "new birth". It seems obvious from the Apostle John's writings, that one does not need to know how to be born, to actually experience the divine birth from above! All the elect saints of God of all the ages of time have been, or will be born of God! And, although they are only a very small remnant of the whole of the mass of humanity --- (Romans 11:5) --- they are all one in the sight and purpose of Almighty God, and will be literally and finally brought by Him, a multitude which no one man can number in the final or last day, even without the loss of one. (See Rev. 7:9 & John 6:39).

"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 with 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." (Rev. 7:9-10).

Truly, the begotten or born of God will continue to gladly declare, now and forever, --- that their Heavenly birth in its very first conception --- is a gracious and precious gift from the Triune God, the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is worthy of all honor and glory!

Enos S. Gingerich
RR 2, Box 178 - A
Rose Hill, VA 24281
1-276-861-3536
July 26, 2005

A RECENT QUESTION OF INQUIRY IS SENT TO ZION'S LANDMARK WITH REQUEST FOR AN ANSWER IN THE PAPER.

We have recently received a question of inquiry from one of our readers concerning the Primitive Baptist church's ordinance of communion with the emphasis and stress that it be closed to outside participants and non-members. The request has been made to explain the reason for this custom of the church that has been maintained as far back as memory will carry.

The critical question from the inquirer and friend is as follows: "Can you tell or state the reason why Primitive Baptists will not commune with other denominations? I have observed in recent months and years that some Primitive Baptist churches with their pastors and deacons have opened their communions to any or all denominations everywhere, regardless. Is this practice consistent with the teaching of the Bible? Thank your for a timely response to my question. From a friend, I hope, to the sacred cause." (End of inquiry.)

Elder P.D. Gold, longtime editor of this paper, Zion's Landmark, for a period of 50 years from 1870 to 1920, when he died, who was also considered a standard-bearer of the faith in his Godly service to the church in his day and lifetime, answered this dire question many years ago. We are republishing his answer to this decisive question concerning this vital, indispensable ordinance of the true communion of the Church of the Living God, with my comments to follow below.

COMMUNION

"Brother S.R. Morris of Oklahoma requests me to state why the Primitive Baptists will not commune with any other denomination(s). Answer: This is because no other denomination believes as they (the Primitive Baptists) believe. It follows in the scripture, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Communion is a solemn expression of gospel fellowship. The Lord's people are one bread, one unleavened loaf, one chaste kinship in Love, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, and of one calling. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are ONE BODY: so also IS CHRIST." (1st Corinthians 12:12). Being unified in His peace, they dwell together in Unity, as one in this body. How can those that believe as Primitive Baptists do, commune with those not loving, nor believing, what they have been made to love and believe? Their faith is dearer to them than all the world, and His people are separated from all the world.

"Those true believers in the days and times of the apostles

abode steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and were the ones that broke bread together. 'And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.' (Acts 2:42). Should it not be so now? It is the Lord's table, not ours. It is the Lord that invites His guests by putting it in their hearts to love the doctrine of God our Saviour, working in them that which is well-pleasing in His sight as gospel obedience. Such humble guests are always welcome at the Lord's table.

"Why one should wish to commune with us — that does not believe as we do — is strange! I have never heard of a true Primitive Baptist, either elders, deacons or members', expressing any desire to commune with any other denomination.

P.D. Gold"

(From the Zion's Landmark record)

COMMENTS FROM EDITOR

In endeavouring to comment on the above question of delicate nature, I shall be grateful if my inquirer and reader will allow me to borrow one of Elder P. D. Gold's expressions from his excellent writing above. He said concerning the true communion of the Church of the living God, "It is the Lord's table, not ours." This statement is entirely correct, and is substantiated from 1st Corinthians 10:20-21. "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not God: AND I WOULD NOT THAT YE SHOULD HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH DEVILS. YE CANNOT DRINK THE CUP OF THE LORD, AND THE CUP OF DEVILS. Here, the Apostle Paul made it emphatically clear; he said, "YE CANNOT BE PARTAKERS OF THE LORD'S TABLE- AND THE TABLE OF DEVILS." It is unmistakably clear, there can be no mixing, mingling or any form of amalgamation, whatsoever, between these two tables, as he has described them.

It is also made clearly manifest by the Apostle Paul that there is a distinctly drawn line of separation and discrimination between "THE LORD'S TABLE" and the devil's table. He also said "For we being are ONE BREAD and ONE BODY:

for we are all partakers of that ONE BREAD." (1st Corinthians 10:17). The bread, cup and table of the devil are the ones in the world that belong to "MYSTERY BABYLON, THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (Rev. 17:5). May we ever be blessed to remember that the manger, elevated above the ground, holds the corn and grain for the clean animal, those that chew the cud and part the hoof, while the trough, lying flat on the ground, holds the food for the swine. There is are a big difference here: The manger, and the trough hold two entirely, altogether, different kinds of food, for two entirely, different animals. One is clean and the other corrupt, (I saw the latter taken from my, mother's kitchen many times by my brothers to the pen.) The prodigal son in due time learned this difference, when it was said to him, "And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the SWINE did eat: and no man gave unto him." (Luke 15"16). He was kept by the power of God and his feast was to take place up the road a piece, while he previously had feasted and devoured his living at the table of harlots, would later have the fatted calf (Christ) slain for him, because he was an elect, chosen vessel of God's mercy.

The seven woman in Isaiah 4:1 wanted their cake and eat it too, so to speak, but this was not possible. "In that day seven woman shall take hold of one man, saying, WE WILL EAT OUR OWN BREAD, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called BY THE NAME, to take away our reproach." They wanted to stay at the table of devils, and, yet "be called by thy Name," the Name of the Holy God. And this was not possible. They wanted to eat their own (man's) bread of works, and yet have the name of the Lord. It remains so until this day, not possible, that true, orthodox (in faith) Primitive Baptists can conscientiously commune at the table of the unbelieving world that believes it is saved by its human works it has done for the Lord, which are an abomination in His God. Clearly, it is not what we have done for the lord, but what He has done for us, if we are in His number.

Moses beautifully told it, "For their vine is of the vine of

Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall. Their clusters are bitter: their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps. Is not this laid up in store with me, and SEALED UP among my treasures?" (Deut. 32:31-34). Moses was blessed to see this difference way back, hundreds of year earlier in the legal dispensation of time, before all of it actually came to pass in the gospel day and last dispensation of time. I hope I have answered, at least, in part, my inquirer's question in the outset of this writing.

J. M. Mewborn,
March 1, 2006

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ZION'S LANDMARK FROM A LOUISIANA SUBSCRIBER

Dear Elder Mewborn,

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the HAND of GOD, I feel, in blessing you in the excellent work in editing and publishing Zion's Landmark. I have enjoyed reading every issue that I have received and have been enlightened, more than you can realize, in the scriptures and the church's rules of order and decorum. Please keep the paper coming. Also, I feel blest to have received spiritual food in recent issues with the history of the church and what it truly believes. In following these things in the paper I am made to see how much closer we, as a people, endeavor to hold to the Word of God than the Conditional and Arminian churches, around us, of today.

You will find enclosed a check, not only for my continued subscription, but a little to help you with the extra expenses in publishing this sound paper.

Sincerely yours, in hope,
James E. Smith
West Monroe, LA 27358
January 30, 2006

HAVE YOU EVER FELT THIS WAY

You may have said, "I wish I had a great experience like the Apostle Paul." It may be that you have and are not aware of it. Let us examine his testimony and see what the record shows. He said, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given." (Eph. 3:8). Do you feel to be less than the least of all saints? If so, you must be akin to Paul. Do you feel to be the chief of sinners? If so, your experience is in line with Paul, for he said, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." (Tim. 1:15.) Have you

been made to know that there is nothing good in you? Paul said the same about himself. "I know that in me (that is in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing." (Romans 7:15).

You may have said, "I wish I had an experience like John." May I ask are you having tribulations? If so, he is your brother. "I, John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation." (Revelation 1:9).

You may have said you wished you had the experience of Job. Do you feel to be vile? If so, you must be related to him for he said, "Behold, I am vile." (Job 40:4).

When we are given eyes to look within and behold the wretchedness of our own life, it is, indeed, a comfort to read the experiences of these great men of God. Humbly submitted,

T. F. Adams, (Editor of Zion's Landmark from 1951 to 1973)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ZION'S LANDMARK FOR YEAR 2005

Since the establishment of the publication, Zion's Landmark, 139 years ago, it has been the custom of the paper to acknowledge all outside contributions (those over and above the regular subscription rates and price of the paper) at least once each year. We wish to say to each of you, "thank you" many times for each and every penny, which is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated! We also want you to know that a portion of these funds is used to pay for the subscriptions of those unable to pay, as well as for the continuation and financial upkeep of the paper. Thank each (and all) of you again and again!
J. M. Mewborn, Editor
February 1, 2006

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LINDSEY B. TART
1914 - 2004
(Age 89 Years)

LINDSEY B. TART

Brother Lindsey B. Tart, the son of the late Brother Hannibal T. (Bud) Tart and wife, Sister Geneva M. Tart, was born in Harnett County, North Carolina, July 26, 1914, and was called from this life June 8, 2004, at Duke University Medical Center, Durham, at age 89. He was one of four children born to his parents. He left behind at the time of his death his three sisters to whom he was closely attached, Mrs. Juanita T. Harris and Mrs. Pearl T. Lumley, of Raleigh, and Mrs. Frances T. Matthews, Coats, NC. His brother, Mr. Jack Tart, preceded him in death on August 8, 1987.

He was married to the former Hazel L. Pope, his local high school sweetheart, to whom he gave his school class ring as his pledge to her of their betrothal, prior to leaving his home April 4, 1942, in the height of World War II to serve his country during this terrible conflict. This she kept until the war was over in 1945, when he returned home again, and they were married September 19, 1946. To them were born two fine children, a son, Mr. Joseph L. Tart, a local, successful attorney in Dunn, NC, who resides with his family in nearby Erwin, and one daughter, Mrs. Linda Tart Thompson, who

resides with her husband, Mr. Wayne Thompson, in Halton City, (near Dallas), Texas.

During World War II he obtained the rank of Sergeant in the 121st Army Air Force Base Unit. His service record proved his faithful performance as a dedicated soldier in the battles of Egypt-Libya (North American Front), North Apennines and Southern France. Among his service decorations and citations included the European-African Middle Eastern Service Campaign Medal with four Bronze Stars, a Service Stripe, four Overseas Service Bars, Good Conduct Medal and Asiatic-Pacific Theatre Service Medal. He was an avid, talented woodworker and crafted many fine pieces of furniture and ornate mantels in dwellings. He had his own cabinet making and home construction business for many years before he worked for 23 years in Civil Service as a career Special Project employee with the U.S. Government at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.

I shall always fondly remember Brother Lindsey B. Tart as a gentleman of high order and whose set of principles always conformed to the highest standard of character and integrity. I never knew him to compromise them. He was greatly beloved by a host of friends throughout this area, who loved him for his godly walk in life and faithfulness. Solomon said, "A GOOD NAME is rather to be chosen than great riches." (Proverbs 22:1), and this he had. This was proven by the host of friends and profuse floral arrangements that both lined the entire funeral home and chapel during his funeral wake on June 9, 2004. Being a veteran he always maintained a close vigil of the affairs of our country with his extensive reading in the actions of our government on both local, state and national levels. He was well informed on many subjects. A more hospitable and polite person at his home could not be found, and was kind to ministers and of the gospel, especially those of the Primitive Baptist faith. He always championed the cause of the underdog and those victims of injustice in life and persecution. He was my good friend and neighbor, and we shall always miss him. He was found in that diminishing, today's breed of people, where "your word is your bond;" he was a man of superior intelligence.

He grew up in a Primitive Baptist home, where his parents were members of the Church. He had actively supported several churches in every way for the past 50 years, but it was not until the first Sunday in October, 2002, when he asked for a home with the Lamm's Grove Church, Moore County, NC, was happily received, and was baptized by Elder Calvin Harward, his pastor.

Through the years he was an

ongoing subscriber and supporter of Zion's Landmark in many ways. He never let me down in procuring new subscribers and his help in a financial way. All of this is as I knew him.

J.M. Mewborn,
March 2, 2006



LOTTIE C. TAYLOR
1923 - 2005
(Age 82 Years)

LOTTIE C. TAYLOR
(1923-2005)

Roxboro Primitive Baptist Church, Roxboro, Person County, North Carolina, has appointed me to write the obituary of a precious sister of our Church, Sister Lottie C. Taylor, and my Mother of the flesh. I am not worthy to acknowledge that I have been given a hope that this doctrine is mine in my heart, much less make the attempt to write an obituary of a precious sister who was made to love and to stand in this truth and faith so firmly. In my weak attempt, I will try to pen down the precious Word of God that was given to Sister Lottie to speak so clearly with all praising and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour. She so loved this precious doctrine and felt to be privileged to walk among God's children as long as she did. This was my mother's life.

Sister Lottie C. Taylor was born September 29, 1923, in Person County, Roxboro, North Carolina, the daughter of the late Brother Lem and Sister Lonie Carver. She was betrothed to the late brother (and Deacon), Earnest Taylor. Born to this union were four (4) daughters, Gloria Taylor Anderson, Barbara Taylor Shotwell, Linda Taylor Perkins, and June Taylor Ashley. There were seven (7) grandchildren, nine (9) great grandchildren, two (2) step grandchildren and three (3) step great grandchildren.

Sister Lottie asked for a home on August 27, 1961, at a meeting at Flat River Primitive Baptist Church. She requested that her membership be at Roxboro Primitive Baptist Church, where she was baptized on September 3, 1961, along with her husband,

Ernest Taylor, by Elder L. P. Martin, pastor of the Church. She was a faithful follower of this doctrine for 44 years, 2 months and 20 days. She attended church services regularly until two years ago, for that was when she underwent knee replacement surgery. That was the beginning of her downfall. Her health declined steadily after this occurrence. We could see all of this coming daily. During the last six months of her life, her sickness made her weak in strength, as well as in her speech. She had become so dependent on oxygen for breathing and a walker, and at times a wheel chair, to get about. The last week she lived, she was in the local hospital. She had gotten where she couldn't get out of bed, and her speech was so weak you could barely understand what she tried to tell you. She often said to me, "I need rest." She desired mental rest, as well as physical rest. Her mental state kept her very tired for she was revealed at a very young age that the flesh was corrupt, vile and sinful. God made her so humble her entire life.

She often told me about a funeral service that Elder Burch Wray conducted over a Sister of the church. She said to me, "it was the most beautiful funeral service I have ever attended." The Word had been spoken and this wonderful Truth sustained all. This was her desire. She did not want anyone to speak of this flesh for she said, "there is nothing good about it for which to speak." She felt in her heart that the Word could not be spoken over her body for she felt to be the devil, himself. "How can it be, how can the Word be spoken over me, for there is nothing but flesh that dwells in my body," she said. These were her feelings.

I would like very much to share with you the experience of what our family witnessed in her room the day before her passing. Understand, please, that Sister Lottie was in a weak condition, gasping for air and breath. On Wednesday, November 16, 2005, I received a call at 7:10 a.m. from my sister, Barbara, telling me to come by the hospital before I went to work, for Mother was not responding to anyone. When I arrived there, she was just lying, not responding to anyone, even as I called her name. She stayed in this condition until around noon, when she began to revive. She first looked around. Then with a strong voice, she began to sing hymns. They were, "God Moves In A Mysterious Way", "Oh What Must It Be to Be There", "Nearer My God To Thee", "How Firm A Foundation", and "Precious Lord, Take My Hand".

Then came the Word, the Words that would sustain us all during the trying time that was to be ahead of our family. The Words were: "I want Bobby Daughtry to be in complete control of my funeral. I do not want a mixed funeral. She paused. Then the following words were spoken by Sister

Lottie. With such strong voice and with such force she said: "Beautiful, Beautiful. Perfect, Perfect, PERFECT". She paused once again, Then she continued by saying: "God Is Perfect, but we are not. God makes no mistake, we make mistakes. God is perfect. He is Controller of all things, even to the devil for he made nothing greater than He, Himself. I am the devil and He controls the devil. This is the God I believe in, The Almighty God." Then her head just dropped, her breathing stopped for about 5 seconds. We thought she had passed away that moment and that quickly. But she lifted her head and she heard a sound of crying. It was my son, her grandson. He was crying from deep within his heart. She heard his cry and called him out." "Ernie, is that Ernie?" She called him up to the bed where she could see him. She told him, "you will be okay when you are in the place that I am in." She was rejoicing so! She was telling all in the room she loved everyone, and she loved everyone there in the room. Then she lapsed back in the same condition as before.

My son's words to me were, "I have never seen anything like that before in my life." I feel it reached a place in his heart that had never been touched before. I believe in my heart it was the Holy Ghost for she was not of this world. She was in no pain, and had all love in her heart. I feel it was the pure Love of God. She had no strength of her own to have spoken those words so clearly and so distinctly. My Mother, Sister Lottie Taylor, not only was the word spoken over her body, she was the Lord's mouthpiece. It was so beautiful. She barely spoke again after that, only mumbled which we could barely understand what she was saying to us.

On November 17, 2005, around 5:00 p.m., she passed away peacefully. The beautiful song,

"In Sharon's lovely Rose,
Immortal beauties shine;

Its sweet refreshing fragrance shows

Its origin divine,
was all I could think of. As the days went by after her death, everything unfolded before our very eyes as this "Rose." This song remained with us all during the entire time she was laid to rest.

Her funeral service was conducted on Sunday, November 20, 2005, 2:00p.m. at Roxboro Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Bobby Daughtry, pastor of the church. Her earthly body was laid to rest at Person Memorial Park, where it awaits the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Our hearts are left with a big emptiness that will never be filled, but the joy of knowing she is no longer suffering in this world and is resting in that peaceful sleep she had so longed for, gives us inward relief.

Be it, therefore, resolved, that a copy of this obituary be placed on the church record, a copy be given to the family, and a copy be sent to Zion's Landmark for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference, December 4, 2005, and written by Sister Lottie Taylor's daughter, and, I hope, Sister in the Church.

Linda T. Perkins,
Roxboro, North Carolina

BOBBIE GRIFFIN BENTLEY

We, the members of Haynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Gwinnett County, Georgia, bow in humble submission to the loss of our sister and member, Bobbie Bentley. Sister Bobbie was born October 13, 1906, to Gordon and Louella Griffin. She wed Claude Bentley to whom she was married 54 years. They had four sons. Sister Bobbie was preceded in death by son, Billy, and her husband.

She joined Haynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church August 14, 1948. She was a faithful member for 47 years. Sister Bobbie really loved being and worshiping in the Lord's House.

She passed away September 4, 2005. Sister Bobbie is survived by her sister, Effie Hall, and sons, Claude, Jr. (Carol), Leon (Joyce), and Dean (Jo); 9 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Sister Bobbie Bentley went to as many Associations and Union Meetings, far and near, as she could for as long as she could. But when she came back, she often said that no church was any sweeter than Haynes Creek. She will be sorely missed.

The Church requests that three (3) copies of this obituary be made, and that one be sent to her family, one to Zion's Landmark for publication, and one be kept for the church record.

Done by order of Haynes Creek Church, Gwinnett County, Georgia, in conference November 19, 2005.

Elder Eugene H. Gunter,
Moderator
Nancy G. Wilson, Clerk

LOWER MAYO (FIFTH SUNDAY) MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association (Fifth Sunday) Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, April 30th, 2006. We hope to start singing at 10:30 a.m. with preaching at 11:00 following. Spoon Creek Church will host the meeting and it will be held in The Russell Creek Meeting House.

Directions: Russell Creek Meeting House is located approx. 9 miles south of Stuart, Virginia, near the Va. - N.C. border. Those coming north or south on Route #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road #653 for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road #631. Go 1/4 mile to church loca-

tion on your right. Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827. Turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go 1/4 mile to church location on your right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

In bonds of love,
Lowell Hopkins, Clerk

YELLOW RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 180th Annual Session of the Yellow River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, with Mt. Zion Church, Clark County, Georgia, on the third Saturday and Friday before in May (May 19th & 20th, 2006).

Directions to Mt. Zion Church: From I-20 West, exit 172 (Thomson-Washington Hwy. 78). The Church is located approximately 5 miles West of Athens City limits on Hwy. 78 across from the Georgia Square Mall. From Hwy. 441 South, exit onto the North Athens BY-Pass 10 Loop (and North 129). Travel 5.5 miles on 10 Loop and exit at the Winder-Atlanta exit (left section of the exit - not the side that takes you to the Mall.) then 1 mile on left across from Georgia Square Mall.

We look forward to and anticipate the continued correspondence of our brethren and sisters in the Lord to be with us this year, 2006. We trust that it will be His will to give us a manifestation of His love in our midst.

Hawatt L. Fleming, Clerk
161 Poss Road
Danielsville, Georgi 30633
Tele. (706) 795-3297

COMMUNION MEETING SCHEDULED BY MAYODAN CHURCH, MAYODAN, NC, MAY 21, 2006

The Mayodan Primitive Baptist Church, Mayodan, Rockingham County, North Carolina, will meet for our communion, if the Lord will, May 21, 2006, with preaching service to begin at 10:00 a.m. We hope to assemble at 9:30 a.m.

Directions are from north or south on U.S. Hwy. 220, turn onto 220 (Business) into the town of Mayodan. Church location is on the west side of the street being this same Hwy. No. (Business) 220. Those coming by way of N.C. Rt. 770, turn south on Janet Road; go 2 miles to U.S. 220 (Business); turn right and go 1 1/2 miles to church location on your right.

We invite our ministering brethren, brothers, sisters and friends of our correspondence (associations and independent churches) to come and be with us.

Georgia M. Thomas, Clerk
Mayodan Primitive
Baptist Church

ZION'S LANDMARK

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

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March - April 2006

Number 2

CHILDREN,"

(5) "Having washed the saints' feet,"

(6) "Having relieved the afflicted, "and"

(7) "Having diligently followed every good work."

It is the purpose of this article to honor the sacred memory of one of these widows, and we will concentrate on characteristic or trait ***No.4** in the above listing of these heavenly qualities, while Nos. 1,2,3,5,6,&7 were also in compliance by her. **"HAVING BROUGHT UP CHILDREN"** is the reading of Item No.4, as it relates to a sister in the church who died almost 80 years ago, Virginia Newton Williford. She was born in Granville County, North Carolina, July 14, 1864, and died May 1, 1927, at age 62 years, 9 months and 16 days. Today, many people have lost sight of her existence and little is known or recalled about her.

On December 21, 1881, the rite of Holy Matrimony was celebrated between she and Mr. Henderson H. Williford, also of Granville County. She bore him 24 children, among them one set of triplets and also one set of twins. Hers is, no doubt, a record among the membership of the Primitive Baptist Church in the United States of America.. There is a generation span of 28 years between the births of the oldest child and the last one from 1882 to 1910. We are listing below the names of these 24 children with their dates of births, respectively in chronological order as follows, to-wit:

1. Joseph Clord Claude Williford, born September 20, 1882

2. Nannie Nora Williford, born December 30, 1883

3. Willie Lee Williford, March 26, 1885

*4. Lester Williford, born July 10, 1886

5. George Thomas Williford, November 6, 1887

*6 Ollie Williford, born January 20, 1889

7. Louis Hassell Williford, (TWIN), born February 18, 1890,

8. Infant son, (TWIN), born February 18, 1890

*9. Partheny Alice Williford, born October 4, 1891

10. Johnnie Williford, born December 20, 1892

*11. Eugenia Williford, June 28, 1894

12. Bessie Williford, Born December 27, 1895

13. Lillie Williford, born May 1, 1897

14. Alfred Fredy Williford, born May 30, 1898

*15. Minnie Williford, born September 28, 1899

16. Henry Edward Williford, born April 9, 1901

!7. Abraham Williford, (TRIPLET), June 27 1903

18. Issac Williford, (TRIPLET), June 27 1903

19. Jacob Williford, (TRIPLET), June 27 1903

20. Ira Alton Williford, born August 31, 1904

21. Sarah Etta Williford, born January 19, 1906

22. Ida May Williford, born August 13, 1907

23. Lee Williford (?)

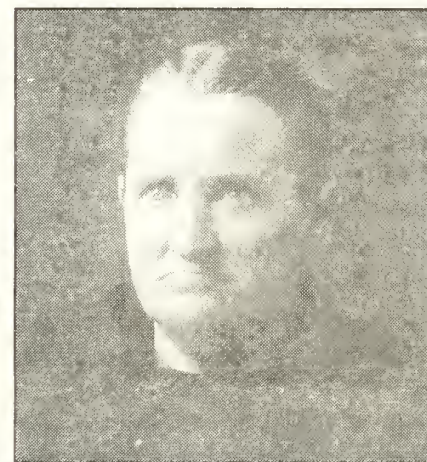
24. Theibert Jonah Williford, born June 4, 1910

The family record states (after having already fathered 16 children, two of them twins), it was in the early part of the year 1903, when the Lord revealed to Mr. Henderson H. Williford that his wife, Virginia Newton Williford, would have three sons born to them in one birth, and that he would name them Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the order which they saw the light of day. To this couple on June 27, 1903, were born three sons, and they were named exactly in the order as Mr. Williford said they would be. The trio of sons lived only one week. It was earlier on February 18, 1890, that also twin brothers, Louis Hassell Williford, and his Infant brother, who died shortly after birth, were born to grace the Williford home.

In this home, when the older children had already married and were out and gone, establishing their own homes, the last ones where being born. I have been told

recently during the time when the majority of them resided in this household at one given time, it required a half barrel of flour per week to supply the family's cooking needs for the three daily meals that were always served in abundance!

It is of special interest for us to briefly stop and compare the life-style of this family in that generation of people one hundred years ago to the cur-



VIRGINIA ELIZABETH (NEWTON) WILLIFORD
1864 - 1927

"Honored widow" and mother of 24 children, "If She Has Brought Up Children", (1st Tim. 5-3&10), that included one set of twins & one set of triplets.)

rent measurement and standards that surround us now. In those days there were no family planning and counseling forums on birth control, no legalized abortion clinics, all of which would have been millions of miles from the minds of this venerable, revered couple, as so well known and used in today's modern society. That day's generation had the benefit of very little medical technology. It was revealed to Mr. H. H. Williford and his wife, Sister Virginia Newton Williford, that they would have born to them triplets, these three sons as previously mentioned, and their names were given to him for them by the living God. The pediatricians and obstetricians in today's modern world of medicine can now tell the couple early on, not only the number in the conception, but also the **sex** of each child, whether **single**,

HISTORICAL

VIRGINIA ELIZABETH (NEWTON) WILLIFORD

A matriarch of the faith in the family of patriarchs, 123 years ago, who brought 24 children into the world, is remembered today as a living example of great courage and strength.)

"HONOUR WIDOWS THAT ARE WIDOWS INDEED." "LET NOT A WIDOW BE TAKEN INTO THE NUMBER UNDER THREESCORE YEARS, HAVING BEEN THE WIFE OF ONE MAN, WELL REPORTED OF FOR GOOD WORKS; *IF SHE HAS BROUGHT UP CHILDREN, IF SHE HAS LODGE STRANGERS, IF SHE HAS WASHED THE SAINTS' FEET, IF SHE HAS RELIEVED THE AFFLICTED, IF SHE HAS FOLLOWED EVERY GOOD WORK." (1ST TIMOTHY 5:3 & 5:9-10.)

The inspired writing of the Apostle Paul in 1st Timothy, Chapter 5, verses 3&10, designates and sets aside among the people of God a special class of widows, who he calls "widows indeed." He says they should be honored and respected by the church of the living God. Here, he enumerates again their Godly qualifications, as set forth from the above scripture:

(1) "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years of age,"

(2) "Having been the wife of one Man,"

(3) "Well reported of for good works,"

* (4) "HAVING BROUGHT UP

twins, triplets, or whatever. It was not necessary that Mr. Williford have them in his day, since the Lord of Heaven was guiding him. We are told he was blest with a faithful physician, who was always very loyal in standing by him for the many deliveries of his many children.

I first met this family in the year 1955, many of whom were dedicated, true members of the Old School or Primitive Baptist Church. It came about in the following manner. It was in the fall of 1954 when I graduated from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C., obtaining my degree, and I returned to my mother's and father's home in Greene County, expecting to seek employment the following spring, 1955. My Dad had asked me to stay with him that winter to help feed his livestock and cattle, after which I would be free to go and be on my own, where-ever.

It was a cold wintry day in January, 1955, when Elder T. Floyd Adams drove in our yard. My dad was not well at the time, and the two of them had been close friends in the church for many years. During the time of his visit, he stated to my mother, my father and me his business, saying that both he and Sister Adams had agreed to ask me to come to work with them as an employee in their insurance agency and business. He said that he wanted Sister Adams to spend more time at home with him and to be relieved from the pressure she was having in her office coupled with her home duties; also, they were looking for someone who they felt was honest, and they could trust to work in their office-place. My Dad said it was up to me, that I could go where my mind led me when spring-time came. (He had supported me greatly, financially speaking, in my college expense.) I then told Elder Adams I had to find work some-where, and having confidence in both him and Sister Adams, I would see them, if the Lord will, in late March of that year, 1955.

In the meantime Elder Adams had contacted two natural sisters, who made their homes together and were and also members of the Willow Spring Primitive Baptist Church. They had a nice home in Fuquay-Varina, Wake County, N. C., Sister Alice Williford Bullock and Sister Minnie Williford Dean, making

arrangements with them to furnish me lodging (a nice room) with food and meals. They so graciously took me in, making me one of their family, and we went to church meetings together many times. These two kind ladies, beloved sisters in the church, are listed in this article in Nos. 9 & 15 of the 24 children of Mr. Henderson H. & Mrs. Virginia Newton Williford. (It was during my tenure of living with them in their home when I met Susie, and we were married March 29, 1958.) Being part of their household for this three year period of time is how I first became acquainted with the wonderful Williford family.

I would like to mention here that five of Sister Virginia Newton Williford's children joined the Primitive Baptist church. They are designated by an asterisk * in the above listing of the 24 names with their children's (her grand-children's) names who also joined the Old Baptist church, whose names are familiar to many of us, to-wit: *(4) Bro. Lester Williford, his children: Bro. Victor Williford, Roxboro, N.C., and Sister Nola W. Day, Durham, N.C. *(6) Bro. Ollie Williford (none) *(9) Sister Alice Williford (Bullock), her children, Sister Lillie B. Kearney and Sister Virginia "Vergie" Dean (all now deceased) *(11) Sister Eugenia Williford (Clayton) (none) *(15) Sister Minnie Williford) Dean, her children, Brother Hersel Dean, (Dec'd.) (While Mr. Henderson H. Williford was a strong believer in the doctrine, he never united with the militant church here.)

In order to bring out the good report of this dear woman's, Virginia N. Williford's life, I am republishing below a portion from the sketch of her life, written by her daughter, Sister Minnie Williford Dean, with whom I lived in 1955, from pages 238-239, in the June 15, 1928, issue of Zion's Landmark:

"My mother, Mrs. Virginia E. Williford, joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Tar River, Granville County, N.C., in the year 1901. There she lived a faithful member until death. She loved the Primitive Baptists, and always filled her seat, if she was able to attend. She was a good mother, a good neighbor and friend. Mother was blessed with a cheerful disposition and a smile for everyone, and was strong in faith. She was always ready with a word of comfort to those in trouble. She could take her

troubles the best of anyone I ever saw or knew. She would read her Bible and sing. I well remember one day before I was married, she was singing. She got so happy and told me, if I was the longest liver, that she wanted her favorite hymns sung at her funeral service. She said that she was cooking dinner one day and this hymn was singing within her heart and soul. She said she had never heard it before, and she could not rest until she found it in her hymn book. She said she thought it was the prettiest hymn she ever heard, and on the next meeting day at Tar River Church, she asked her pastor, Elder McKinney, to sing it for her. This was the hymn,

"My soul doth magnify the Lord,

My spirit doth rejoice
In God, my Saviour and my God;

I hear His joyful Voice.
I need not go abroad for joys,

I have a feast at home;
My sighs are turned into songs,

The Comforter is come."

"I have heard Mama say that she was willing to die for she believed, according to her hope, she would be better off, that she would be at peace and rest. I believe that when her spirit took its flight from earth, the gate of heaven opened wide for her entrance. She was never confined to her bed, but had been feeble for about two years with heart trouble. She would have spells and could hardly get her breath. She was able to go to church the day she was taken away, then went to spend a week with her brother in Roxboro. She attended church there that night with him. After the service was over, when going with him

to his home, she was stricken just before she entered his house. He carried her inside, and called the doctor. He came immediately. They did all they could for her, but nothing could stay the cold hand of death. She passed away in about twenty minutes.

"She took great pleasure in waiting upon the sick and doing all for them her kind hands could find to do. She would say if she could feel as happy when she came to die as she did the day she joined the church and was baptized, she could leave this world rejoicing. She was loved by all who knew her. I feel like the best friend I have on earth is gone. It was so hard to give her up, but the good Lord knows best and took my darling Mother home with Him to rest and await the great resurrection morn.

"Her funeral services were conducted by her dear pastor, Elder B. F. McKinney, and Elder J.J. Hall. They were blest to speak many comforting words. It was held at her home and then her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery beside her husband, beneath a beautiful bed of flowers. My prayer is that the same grace that made her dying pillow soft, will strengthen and comfort us through this lonely journey of life, and at last reunite us in that eternal bliss where there is no more separation.

"Dearest one, thou hast left us,

We thy death do deeply mourn:

Thy body has returned to dust,

And we are left alone.

"But all her toil and grief are over,

And she is freed from all pain;

Zion's Landmark

"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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Paper Established August 20, 1867

Her face on earth we'll see
no more,

But in blessed hope, we will
meet again! "

"Written by her heart-bro-
ken daughter,

Mrs. F.P. (Minnie W.) Dean,
Holly Springs,

Wake County, N.C."

In closing this writing I will
quote (by permission) excerpts
from an article that was written
by her grandson, Mr. Heulon
Dean, Fuquay-Varina, N.C., that
was published in The Raleigh
Times, some years ago, as fol-
lows:

"Back in 1881, when 21-
year-old Henderson H.,
Williford of Granville County,
married 17 year old Virginia
Elizabeth Newton, one of North
Carolina's largest, if not the
largest, family began. From one
to three children were born
every other year into this prolif-
ic family and names became
quite a problem with 24 in all,
including one set of twins and
triplets, each.

"The Willifords were one of
the pioneer families of Granville
County. They owned a planta-
tion and raised about every-
thing they used . They had
cows,hogs, all types of vegeta-
bles, cane, wheat, peanuts and
popcorn. Much was stored to
be used later by the hungry
horde for the winter's season
that always followed.

"Mrs. Alice W. Bullock and
Mrs. Minnie W. Dean, two of the
children, remember having
plenty of hard work to do, but
they also recall that their father
provided well for them. Mrs.
Bullock said it took a half-bar-
rel of flour each week for the
growing youngsters. It was her
job, she said, to help make the
biscuits three times a day. All
the children had to go to the
fields and do the hard, manual
work as soon as they became
old enough.

"With 24 children in the fam-
ily," she said, "there was
always a fight going. But Father
Henderson ruled with a firm
hand, raising them to be God-
fearing, parent-fearing, men
and women. Like every thing
else, firm discipline was plenti-
ful, when needed!

"Mrs. Minnie W. Dean
recalls that when her father
went to Oxford in the fall to sell
tobacco, he would always
return with a huge burlap bag
of brand new, brass-capped,
brogan shoes for all of the chil-
dren. He bought sugar, several
hundred pound bags at a time,
coffee beans by the bag, and

cloth by the bolt. Thread was
woven on the spinning wheel to
make the stockings.

"The five-room house they
occupied had three bedrooms,
a living room, and large kitchen
that opened and doubled as a
dining room. All the girls slept
in a room with three beds. The
boys' bedroom, likewise, had
three beds too, but they admit
they were sometimes crowded.
After the death of Father
Henderson in 1914 at the age of
54, two more rooms were
added. Mrs. Williford died at
the age of 62 May 1, 1927.

It was a sad time in the early
days of 1942, when U.S.
Government officials arrived to
advise all the citizens that their
land, homes, schools, busi-
nesses, churches, including all
properties of every description,
would have to go in order to
build Camp Butner, a U.S. Army
installation, necessary in fight-
ing World War II. The Williford
homeplace, cemetery, old Tar
River Primitive Baptist Church
with one more nearby Primitive
Baptist Church, called "Camp
Creek" were soon no more. A
huge swarth of land, thousands
of acres, that lay just north of
Creedmoor in both Granville &
Durham Counties, were confis-
cated and taken over by the
Federal government between
the communities of Berea and
Moriah, in both Person and
Granville Counties, N.C.

The Tar River Primitive
Baptist Church, according to
reliable historical records,
began as early as 1749. and
embraced in the 1760's what is
known today as Flat River
Primitive Baptist Church, a still
active body, located just south
of Roxboro, Person County,
N.C. in the very beginning,
"where a meeting is kept in a
school-house", according to
the ancient record. This old
school-house church bldg. at
Flat River Church was torn
down and replaced about the
year 1947. Family surnames
who helped establish Tar River
Church were Sherman, Goss,
Ledbetter, Gibbs, Veasey,
Langston, Lewis, Hubbard,
Forrest, Shoemaker, Thompson
and Spain, over 250 years ago.

While Sister Virginia N.
Williford is said to be the
record, as of this date, May 1,
2006, the leading mother in the
State of North Carolina, with 24
births, the Guinness World
Records Book, 2006, gives the
world's record on page No. 22,
as follows:

"Most prolific mother ever:
In 27 confinements, gave birth

to 69 children (16 pairs of twins,
7 sets of triplets, 4 sets of
quadruples.) This means she
holds also the record for the
most sets quadruplets and the
most sets of twins ever born in
this time world to one mother.
Her name was Mrs. F. Vassilyev,
born 1707-ca-1782, from
Russia.

"Most sets of triplets ever:
Gave birth to 15 sets of triplets.
Her name: Maddalena Granata,
born 1839, died 1886, from Italy.

"Oldest mother to have
quadruplets: Gave birth to
three girls and one boy on April
18, 1998, at the age of 55 years
and 286 days. Her name: Merryl
Thelma Fudel, born 1942, still
living at this report, from
Coward, Australia."

I have enjoyed writing this
article. J. M. Mewborn, May 1,
2006

"THOU ART WORTHY TO TAKE
THE BOOK, AND TO OPEN THE
SEALS THEREOF: FOR THOU
WAST SLAIN, AND HAST
REDEEMED US TO GOD BY
THY BLOOD OUT OF EVERY
KINDRED, AND TONGUE,
AND PEOPLE, AND NATION."

(Rev. 5:9).

-ALSO-

"ALL THY CHILDREN SHALL
BE TAUGHT OF THE LORD;
AND GREAT SHALL BE THE
PEACE OF THEM."

(Isaiah 54:13)

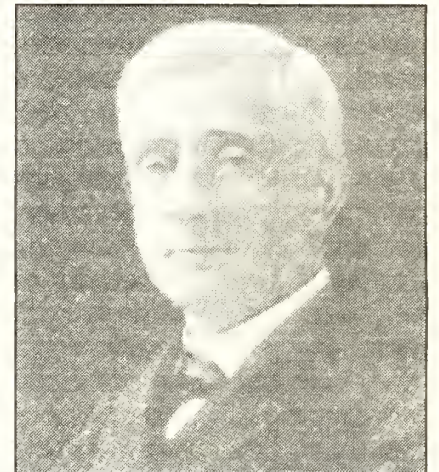
The Zion's Landmark is
publishing in this issue for the
first time ever, since it's origi-
nal publication in the
September 3, 1864, issue of
The Primitive Baptist, Vol. 26,
No. 10, pages 145 - 153, the
experience and call to the min-
istry of Elder James Hinton, a
black, slave member, and elder
in the church. According to
information in this article,
Elder James Hinton joined the
Skewarkey Primitive Baptist
Church, Williamston, Martin
County, North Carolina, some-
time in the very early 1800's,
and commenced speaking in
public about the years 1814 -
1815.

Elder James Hinton was,
naturally speaking, completely
illiterate, and Elder Sylvester
Hasseli personally transcribed
and recorded his words from
him on paper just prior to July
9, 1864, when it was first pub-
lished. Excerpts and portions
from it have been published in
several periodicals of our faith
through the years, but never
before in fullness and entirety.

It would be interesting to
know today the name of James

Hinton's old pastor about the
year 1800, who made the fol-
lowing statement after James
Hinton had related his experi-
ence to Skewarkey Church.
James Hinton said, "The old
elder declared in the midst of
the Church that it was useless
to examine him any further,"
for said he, "We cannot go any-
where that he cannot go with
us." Those careful Old Baptists
in that day and time listened to
every word the candidate said
to them in relating the experi-
ence. They had become unani-
mously agreed in their feelings
in the Love of Christ for him.
This issue of The Primitive
Baptist, September 3, 1864,
belonged my great-great
grandfather, Elder Parrott
Mewborn (1899 - 1864), and
has been preserved in our fam-
ily for many generations.

Editor
(May 8, 2006)



ELDER SYLVESTER HASSELL
1842 - 1928

He transcribed and recorded the
experience of grace and call to
the ministry of James Hinton, a
black, slave elder, July 9, 1864.
Elder Sylvester Hassell was pas-
tor of Skewarkey Primitive
Baptist Church from 1880 to
1928, moderator of Kehukee
Association from 1880 to 1928,
also Co-author with his Father,
Elder C.B. Hassell, of the
"History Of The Church Of God
From The Creation."

For the Primitive Baptist

Dear Brother Temple:

I have thought that an
account of the Christian
Experience and Ministry of old
brother JAMES HINTON, — an
aged, colored preacher of our
faith and order, yet living in this
neighborhood, — would not be
uninteresting or unprofitable to
the readers of the Primitive. —

His exercises are as scrip-
tural as they are extraordinary.
His truthfulness and sincerity
are attested to by the unim-
peachable integrity of his char-

acter, and by the intrinsic excellence and tendency of his observations. "By their fruits ye shall know them." — Matt. vii. 20. — With his thoughts, his conversation is continually directed towards Heaven, where all his treasures lie. In the immovable firmness of his faith, he recalls the assurance of Abraham; in his sublime communings with God, he most reminds one of the sweet Psalmist of Israel; and in the untiring earnestness of his humble zeal, he brings to mind the indefatigable Apostle of the Gentiles, who, on one occasion (Acts xx. 11), preached and talked from, perhaps, 8 or 4 p.m. until break of day, one long winter night.

It is the promise of the Lord that He "will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." — Joel ii. 28 -- During the period of Sacred History, trances were by no means infrequent, — in which the (human) bodily senses were locked up, and spiritual things clearly revealed by the external Power, fully as impressive as any object which addresses the natural organs of perception. The following passages may be given as examples: — Gen. 15: 1, 22: 1, 31: 10, 11. 40:2. Exodus 3:4. Numbers 12:6. 24:16. 1st Psalm. 3:4. 1st Kings 3:5. Job 4:13, 33: 15. Psalm 89. 19. 99:6. Isaiah 1:1.6. 1:21:2. Gen. 23:28. Ezekial 1:1. 8:1-4. 40:2. Daniel 7:1.8:2. 10:8, 16, 17. Matthew 1:20.2: 12, 13, 19. Luke 1:11, 22. Acts 7:55. 9:1-19. 10: 11, 17, 22: 17-21. 2nd Cor. 12:1-5. Gal. 1:15, 16, and the whole of Revelations. I am not aware of any text which can be construed to mean that such communications should be confined only to the first 4,100 years of the world's existence, and never be repeated during all subsequent time.

No real believer in the Divine Inspiration of the Bible can deny the necessity of a special revelation of the Holy Spirit to "quicken the dead sinner to life," to "guide him into all truth," and to "keep him through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Ephesians 2:1. John 16:13. 1st Peter 1:5. Matt. 11:25-27. Luke 16:17. Gal. 1:12. That His Spirit is sovereign in the distribution of His manifestations is unmistakably clear.

1st Cor. 12:1-11. And we know that under whatever circumstances or to whatever individual the Great Judge and Arbitrator of the Universe doth speak, it wisely becometh His dependent creatures to attend with the utmost solemnity, reverence and awe. It is a high duty, as well as most pleasant and improving, to meditate upon God's dealing with His people. He has never said or done anything which is not important for us to consider diligently and practically. And especially worthy of our observations are the various, yet harmonious, processes of regenerating grace. An acquaintance with those spiritual exercises, which are in accordance with His written Revelation, is, under His blessing, well adapted to direct anxious inquiries in the "good old path." (Jeremiah vi:16), and to confirm the faith of the saints. (Exodus 12:42, Deut. 8:2,3. Psalms 66:16-77: 5-12. Acts 22:3-22.

I would only stop to remark that Brother James Hinton does not know a letter of the alphabet in any book, Bible or otherwise. He has evidently derived his information and divine understanding by revelation only from that Super-Human Source. I now give you his account, as personally transcribed by me, in very nearly his own simple and expressive language, which is everywhere marked with the character from the Supreme Power.

Sylvester Hassell
(July, 1864)

Experience and Call to the Ministry of Elder James Hinton

"I am 83 years old. They tell me I was born in the year 1781. I was born and raised in Bertie County, North Carolina. My first master was the old man, Billy Hinton. I have had five or six different owners during my life. All of them have been kind to me. I have been twice married, and have twelve children by my first wife, and two by my last and present wife. Most of them died in infancy. My son, Bosen, became a Baptist and also a preacher, though unlearned, like myself. But, with his master and others of my children, he removed many years ago to Mississippi. I do not know the number of my grandchildren and great-grandchildren."

"I was twelve years old when first struck under convic-

tion. Up to that time, I had been required to do scarcely any work. My old master wanted me to grow and get strong and be of some account."

"One day, I challenged several of my playmates to box with me, declaring that I could outfight them altogether. We had been thus roughly engaged some moments, when I heard a voice, loud enough, I thought, to be heard 4 miles, calling out most distinctly—**JAMES!** I looked all around and up but saw nobody. My arms and wrists grew weak, and at a second, similar call, became powerless, so I backed away in silence, and sat upon the ground. I wondered that the boys did not hear the call, but they did not, for they kept thumping me for some time, crying out they had whipped me; but, I did not care for it. After they had left me, something feeling about the size of a great blue huckleberry, seemed to fall from the heavens and dropped into my bosom. Ere long, it spoke and said—"Christ is the Way for saving sinners!" I trembled like a leaf, and wept like a child. From that day forward, it kept talking to me gospel, scripture, justice, and righteousness, ---continually pointing out the way for me to go. I never was more puzzled, ---could form no idea what it was. I tried my best to run away from it, by moving from place to place. But it was all in vain, the talking went everywhere I did. It kept up with an annoyed me so, that I thought it must be my tongue, something speaking, and I pulled it out and tried to hold and stop it, believing I could control it; but, it quickly darted back, and the talking went on worse than ever. Well, thought I, what was it? I was fond of frolics. The voice told me to stop going. I resolved not to obey it, and continued to go. But, at last, I was in so much trouble that I promised I would not dance, but sit civil and not be chargeable. I did so, but while walking one day, the voice reminded me of my promise and added, "James, I say unto you, if you will go to such places, when not compelled, for this heinous sin called mirth, I threaten you with my dreadful wrath!" I shook with terror. I wept as though my heart would break. I never went to any more frolics after that. I kept wondering what could be the matter with me."

"One time, it spoke to me

and said, "come out from among them, be ye unspotted from the world, and I will receive you, saith the Lord." Then I knew, and not until then, that it was the Lord, who had been dealing with me. "Come you, by prayer to me," He said. I told Him I did not know how to pray. "Cry out to Me," He replied, "through faith for God to have mercy on you, a poor sinner, and I will have mercy." I tried to pray this prayer a long time, and thought I had been heard by the Good Master. But, one night, I went off to pray in great distress; my tears struck the ground before my knees did. I prayed with a new and true fervency of spirit, and the Lord said to me, "James, this is the first prayer of yours that I have heard. The work has now begun between you and the devil." I now felt a love for the prayer He had taught me, and when He prayed another of His own, I learned and loved that one too."

"One very clear, fair day, while I was looking for steers, I saw in the west as plainly as I see you, a great Beast, spotted and pied, as high as any tall pine tree, having 70 odd horns with points, keen and barbed, and 80 odd eyes, as large as any plate upon your table. I threw away my steer-rope in the woods and forgot I had any master. I looked at this dreadful beast well, and could not comprehend what he could be. I cast my eyes around, and saw a circle, as round as any silver dollar, and in the middle of the circle a house, whose joints could not be seen. In the door of the house, there was a Man of a most beautiful, shining appearance. Before Him was a disciple who said to Him, "Good Master, what Beast is that?" He replied, "marvel you not at him. This day shall we proclaim war against him, as shall conquer him as easily as I sway My Hand." I walked backwards and forwards looking. I saw around this Beast an army equal to the number of bees in seven hives, and all of them were as black as a kettle, and himself in their midst with a drawn sword. I saw in this circle Michael and Joshua with 12,000 saints apiece, who were to fight against the Beast and his army. Tears ran out of my eyes, and I trembled violently. The Man in the door said to Michael, "come hither, go out and meet that Beast, and conclude with him today where we shall proclaim war." Michael

started off and He called him three times, "come back hither." And, at the set of His command, one of the disciples handed down to Michael one of the best robes for him to wear, when fighting against the Beast. That dress outshone the light of the sun. The Master directed Michael not to meet the enemy in anger, but in peace. Michael told the Beast to meet him in front of the gate of the circle, and I heard him agree to do so. Michael then returned, and pretty soon I saw the Beast stealing around to the back of the circle (he thought all were looking for him at the front), and he kept punching his sword against the enclosure till he got clear around to the gate. He then raised up his horns and stood boldly as though he had just come. I heard the Master speak and say to Michael and Joshua, "stoop hither down, and draw out wine and sacrament, and let all the disciples drink to revive their spirit for the war." They seemed to turn the faucet of a large, snow-white barrel that stood near, and milk and wine ran out in abundance. It spread so that all the disciples stooped and drank their fill. No more ran out than what they wanted. And oh, I never heard such Godly talk as those saints uttered. Nor did I ever see any persons filled with such warm and holy love for each other."

"Then, the Beast spoke gross, and said to his imps - 'Well: let's draw out of our barrel.' It was perfectly black. They drew, and, as I am living, there came out nothing but mixed fire and brimstone, and his followers drank eagerly of it.

"The Master told His disciples to raise a hymn of praise, and go forward and fight. And as they did so, the Beast required his followers to 'strike a tune', and they sung just like bully negroes at a corn-shucking! Each of his disciples had a sword. Michael and Joshua went before them. The Beast fought exactly 24 hours, and, as he saw his line giving way, he all at once raised up his dreadful spear, straight and tall, while he addressed and encouraged his forces. 'Anoint your swords', said the Master to his Army, 'in the healing Oil of Salvation.' They did so, and their weapons flashed and shone with exceeding brightness. He then commanded the two leaders to throw their swords, and clip down the

spear of the adversary. They obeyed, and the disciples trampled it under their feet. The Beast and his troops instantly fell back, and sank downward out of sight. The victorious saints sang a hymn of praise, saying, 'Glory to God! that we have won our great Salvation. And, then, they held a feast of forty days. The Lord said to me, 'I am the Lord-God of wisdom. This is the dissolution war. All that are to be born of Me fought in this battle, and drank of my sacrament. You fought in it, and have won your righteousness, breastplate, sword and shield. Now, do you march in the field boldly on.' He then unbound me, and stamped a vision into me, so I can remember and preach of it to this day. After all was over, I stood very foolishly for some time, but my knowledge came to me after a while. I found my rope and continued to hunt up the steers. I told nobody what I had seen and heard until my conversion.

"Thus did He work within and upon me for 17 long years—years with their days and nights like these. A year before He delivered me, He said —'James! I shall be as sure to pardon your sins, as though it was done now; and when I do it, you shall be wide awake in soul and body. Your sins shall rattle off your feet as iron chains.' (I thought I was to literally hear them rattle off like plough-chains, but so I was not told, and so it did not turn out.) 'When I do this', said He, 'you will not be thinking of me.' I thought this was impossible, because I seemed always to be thinking of Him. But, He reassured me that it should be so. My deliverance occurred in May, about weeding-corn time. I had been abroad over the swamp, and came home early sunset. I was hearty in body. I told my wife to fix the bed, while I would go out and split up some lightwood. I intended to go right to sleep, and wake up some 3 or 4 hours before day-break and then strike a light.

"All this while I had entirely forgotten God, —thought no more of Him than that door there. I went to bed and slept till two or three hours to day-break. Then I awoke and found myself lying straight and flat on my back, as though I was dead and laid out, —a position I never lay in before to my knowledge. My wife was awake too. She is, yet, alive, and can testify to what she heard, said,

and saw that night. I was as wide awake as I am now. I felt a weight press down upon the middle of my breast. I could not understand what it was. It grew so heavy I thought it must be a witch, trying to ride me. (I had heard silly stories of this kind.)

"So, I brought my hand from my knee up to my breast, thinking I would catch her foot in my hand, and hold her till my wife could make a light and we would see who she was. I looked and saw, hanging from 6 cords, a great body of darkness, about 2 1/2 feet above my breast. I could not tell what it was. I then asked my wife—what was that great body of darkness hanging over me and her, and as large as three great houses that I mentioned, all put together?' I told her, 'all the iron in the world could not stop it, and, if it fell, it would sink us for ever and ever.' She said she did not see anything, and kept silent after that. The strange thing in my bosom then moved and spoke —'GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER!' I knew what was the matter then. This cry was repeated the second time. I thought I would try to get up, and move away from under this terrible object, so my wife only would not be hurt by it. But, I found myself unable to stir, and, looking, saw myself right in the middle of the jaws of hell.' Oh! what a great Ocean! them flashes and flames, as large as ten foot rails; I saw them splitting through the darkness above me, and it boiled like a hot dinner pot. I gave up utterly and confessed —'Lord, this is my sins. Would you be merciful, would you be good, would you be so kind as to pardon and forgive me? Oh! Lord, I am not able to stand them—they are greater than I can bear.'

"At once a straight line of light, as large as a broomstraw with a point as keen as a two-edged sword, came swiftly as a shot, cut down the great body of darkness, and slipped it by me. It sparkled like a shop-forge as it went, and I thought it surely carried away the house floor. — Oh! then and there that Light broke in and about me, as old Brother Paul says, 'above the brightness of the sun about noon.' If brought into this world, it would make noonday look like darkness! I thought it was day, but found it was not. I felt as light as any down in your head-pillow, and seemed to fly upon the hearth. I kindled a light twice and it went out each

time, but an attempt at the third and it remained. I kept inching closer and closer to the chimney, for I believed that the floor was gone.

"Now, the devil said to me—'Do you believe your sins are pardoned?' He told you they should rattle off your feet like iron chains, and you know you have not heard them rattle.' I cried out—'Lord! if this work is done for my soul, would you be pleased to leave some evidence of it?' 'JAMES,' SAID HE, 'why do you doubt? That body of darkness was your sins, that you committed in the Garden of Eden and every one of them since. When I broke that Light into you, your sins rattled off you in iron chains; they sunk below Me, God, and my Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. They will never rise to condemn you again in death or judgment. My son stepped to the devil, and He drew the note, paid the whole amount off for all your sins. You are in Me, and I am in you, —your sins are pardoned and your soul converted! You are the apple of my eye! —Whose eye? That of your Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. You are the Darling of My Heart! —Whose heart? That of your Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! all the sins you have done and ever will do, are pardoned.' (This word cut off the devil.) It is recorded in the 12th Book of the Holy Ghost, that you are Mine, and I AM YOUR GOD for ever and ever. Be of good cheer, your Father has given you the Kingdom, and it will be yours forever.'

"My old Master Hinton was a mild, free and open-hearted man. He had hundreds of servants, whom he clothed and fed well. He use to sell thousands of barrels of corn a year, and send off hundreds of fattening hogs to Richmond, Petersburg, Suffolk, Smithfield and Edenton. He would put them under my charge, and allow me to bring home the bags of money he received in payment.

"One spring, when I was hauling rails, he thought I was staying too long in the woods, and so he took to watching me. He did not tell me of it, though until I went to ask for an order to relate to the Church what I had been given faith to believe the Lord had done for my soul. 'Jim', said he, 'Do you believe He has done anything for your soul?' 'Yes, sir', said I. 'And I believe it, too,' he answered; for I have watched you for

years, and often seen you in the woods after you loaded your cart, kneel down and pray for yourself and for me, but I would not interrupt you.' He told me to take all the rest of the day to talk with him, and that I might go to meeting whenever I pleased, for the time was not his, but mine. But, I only stayed a while with him, and then slipped off to my work, —it was such a good day for work.

"The Lord promised me that when I went to give an account of my exercises to the Church, He would be with me and bless the day. It, indeed, proved to be a lovely day, and the good Lord seemed to manifest His special presence. As I was telling of His dealings with my poor soul, I could see the gentlemen and ladies trembling, and wiping their eyes with their handkerchiefs. The old Elder declared in the midst of the church that day that it was useless to examine the candidate any further, 'for,' said he, 'we cannot go anywhere he cannot go with us.' Many said they had not seen such a candidate in 30 years, and after I was through, they told me to talk on, 'for it was greater than the preaching they had heard.' —One great gentleman was struck, then and there, under conviction. At the beginning of the service, he sat away up high in one corner of the meeting house, but before I finished speaking, he was standing at my side, half-bent and trembling. he did not rest until he experienced conversion and was baptized a year afterwards. Then, he used to hail and talk with me every time we met, and we were like children of the same mother.

"On the day of my baptism, before I reached the water, the devil tried to persuade me that if I was baptized, I should be drowned. But I did not believe him, and as always, he turned out to be a liar.

"Some 6 years after I joined the church, the Lord told me He was going to make me a Minister of the Gospel. Before the year was out, too,—no matter how much I might run and try to hide from it. But, I thought surely not yet. I went one Sunday to Billy Thompson's Quarter, where two old colored brethren were expected to preach that day. When I arrived, they urged me to go forward and speak to the people, saying that I was better taught of the Spirit than they. I wanted to run away, but saw no chance. I felt I had nothing to

say, and trembled like a leaf. But, when I arose, this hymn at once came to me, and I gave it out:—

"That awful day will surely come,

The appointed hour make haste;

When I must stand before my Judge,

And pass the solemn test, &c."

"I tried to pray, and when I finished that duty, I was as much at a loss what to say as ever. But this text was given to me, as well as every word I spoke from it:— 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.' (Rev. iii 20.)

"The strength and warmth of my feelings overcame me, and I could not help from weeping, while I spoke of the Saviour's sweet, kind call and welcome of poor, lost sinners unto Him. The people said they never heard better preaching than on that day. They called me 'preacher,' after that.

"Another text given to me once was "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry." Psalms 34:15. And another one was "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch is in me that beareth not good fruit, He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." (John xv 1,2.)

"By invitation I would often preach, especially on funeral occasions, on porches of gentlemen's houses, to congregations of sometimes two or three hundred persons. After service, the gentlemen occasionally would crowd around me, and push a book before my face, and ask me if I could not read. I assured them that I could not read a letter, and could not tell one, if they were going to hang me unless I did. They said,—'How can you preach so then? We would rather hear you preach than any body else.' I told them the LORD was my Teacher. Other books can be burned up, but mine is fixed with the seven seals of the LORD. No power can dig up or around it. Oh! if any person wants real, higher learning, let him get the Grammar of Christ.

"I must not forget to tell you that He once said to me, 'Always be dutiful to your earthly master, and tell him the

truth, and you can ever meet him gladly. And so, by always living in prayer and faith to Me, you will at least invite, instead of dreaming, death, you will face it boldly.' This Command of His was greater than any overseer master ever put over me. I thought that I never could do enough for Him after that.

"In the Lord's direction to me in pursuing His ministry, He has said —'JAMES! You know my terrors, and shall persuade me to strive for beauty that will never die, for crowns of righteousness that shall never fade, and for wealth that shall never perish. You shall warn sinners to repent. You shall preach My Gospel close by the Tree of Life. I AM THE TREE OF LIFE.

"I once prayed to the Lord to take away this talking, and deal with me as with others of His people. And, for a while, He left me in silence, and did not visit me at all. But, as I was going across an old field one day, I heard a singing low down at a distance, which gradually ascended the heavens. It followed and overtook me. It struck me down upon my face. 'Ah! James!', said my inward Monitor, 'you disbelieved the way in which I was bringing you, but I shall not deal with you otherwise. — Talk with your brethren and you will find that they and you witness the same truth, have all drank of the same Spring, and have been born of the same God. If any one does not testify to the truth of my language with you, that one is not born of me. I saw you fleshed, boned, blooded, and breathed you before the flood of creation in the morning of time, and prepared this way for you. I know your way. I shall talk to you thus, as Man to man. You shall feel, hear and see with your inward ears and eyes, and you shall believe. These are the great witnesses that shall stand death and face judgment.'

"Before you were born into the world, I asked my Son what name we should give this servant, and He said, "let him be called 'Good old James, the prophet.'" You shall pray and thank Me every Christmas and New Year's day, that your life has been preserved. You shall glorify Me. I will be with you, support and supply your every need with gospel and scriptures. You shall drink of me and never run dry. While you are preaching, I shall be sitting at my golden table with my golden pencil. I shall speak, while

all of my Angels shall be silent, and I will say, —"Hear what my servant, James, is speaking, and how he is holding up My Name." And I will record every word you utter in my Book. I shall keep you here a long time, labouring for me. You need not think of that pain or that chill will carry you off. You shall know when I call you. I will send six angels when you expire, who shall convey you home to Heaven. And then one of your attendant spirits shall exclaim — 'Fly wide open, ye pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and let the righteous nation in! A crown of glory shall be put upon your head, and you shall take your seat at My Right Hand, and your end shall be peace. — This is not a world of peace. Seek your rest above.'

"One day, while I was plowing in the field, it seemed as though He slipped around in front of me, and treated me with such a drink far sweeter than all the sugar and coffee in the world, that, if the taste had remained, I should never more have wanted water.

"During all the night of the shelling, (July 6, 1863), near Williamston, North Carolina, I sat in my door facing the (Roanoke) River, assured by the Lord that I should not be harmed. And I was not, though I could see the shells bursting through my walling and firing a neighborhood dwelling-house. The Yankees (Federals) asked me if I did not want to go with them from my old home, where I already knew the people, and have my freedom. I told them I did not want to leave and go off with them, where I knew nobody, and besides that I was already free, — that I had a freedom that no man could take from me, even the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said they wished they had that 'freedom'. I thought to myself you won't get it by throwing bombshells, and they let me alone and moved on.

"Oh! this something within me (when I am kept silent) often sings its own praises, prays its own prayers, and preaches its own sermons. As I am working with my hoe in my little field, it often holds a meeting like an Association. And, as it talks to me of the greatness and goodness of GOD, I have to stop working, sit down, and my eyes become leaky, as a spring of water, and my tears drop like rain. I never stop thinking of

Him — I can never thank Him enough for His many blessings. I have tried hard many a year to get a better love for Him, but I find I can only feel this same old first love still. Sometimes, I rise and set up in my bed at night, rapturously listening to the marvellous, glorious language of my God! Oh! the teachings of this Heavenly Voice will never leave me. No thunder or bombshell from a Federal army can drown it. The sword of the world and the devil cannot stop it. — It is my blessed hope that Old Jim is going to die there! For almost fifty years, as I trust my Great Master has blest me, I have endeavored, as only a mouthpiece, that, as I trust, He has spoken through me, defending His blessed Cause and laying off His parables. Poor old fellow, **JIM**, he is most gone, but not afraid to die! for his hope is that his life is hid with Christ in God, safe from harm. (Col. iii 3.) There's my dependence. I'm not living here for a peck of meal or a pound of meat, but in my hope endeavoring to live here so as to have something to eat hereafter, that I may not perish there! I long to die the death of the righteous, and have my last end like His. (Numbers xxiii.10.) The Good Lord sustains me with His life-giving Word. 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.' (Rev.xiv.13)

"Our work in the Lord is not done after God speaks to our soul. It is rather just begun than ended. We are made to follow all the directions of the Spirit in trying to serve the true and living God aright, to know that we get all of our help from Him, —for without Him, we can do nothing, —endeavoring to die in the triumphs of faith. Ours is a whispering God. He speaks so softly that, even if another head be touching yours, it cannot hear Him, while He is making the tears run down your cheeks!

"The spirit is made The Overseer of the body, to mortify its lusts of the flesh. We shall carry this warfare with us until death. If the body was holy, it could not live here in this unholy world. When we are not kept and offend, the Good Lord whips us well for it, but, if His child, He will never take His loving-kindness from us. (Psalms lxxxix 30-34.) We are careful, if possible, to avoid that place in future. 'When grace is given to

the soul,' He has said to me, 'it keeps pushing away sin, and distilling it, until it drives out every unclean thing. In death it washes it as pure as gold, and makes it fit for the Kingdom of Heaven above.'

I could not tell you the end of His instructions in a thousand years.

"We shall all meet at the great Assize. All the judges in the world will be there, be silent and tremble, while THE ONLY GREAT JUDGE of all judges shall speak. There will be no rocks or mountains to hide the wicked from His august vengeance. They will all be turned into hell, while the righteous shall be welcomed into life eternal."

"Sometimes, I doubt, but deliverance comes and stamps the foundation sure. I feel that I have been made to know by His divine blessing this **GOD**, who thunders when He pleases, and calms the troubled seas and rolling oceans, who directs the whirlwind, and who rides upon the storm! I have thought that I loved my wife and children better than anything else in the world. — But now I know that I love my God, His ways and His people, better than these and best of all!"

s/ James \times Hinton
(his mark)

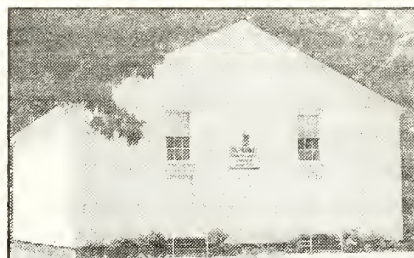
Witness: Sylvester Hassell

Thus, dear Brother Temple, have I given you an account of some of the experiences of this truly, wonderful man of God. His brethren know that his is "the path of the just, which is the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Romans iv. 18 — The substance in which he has been taught and teaches, was thus condensed and expressed by the Psalmist some 3,000 years ago: — "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statues of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. They are more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them are thy servants warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." (Psalms xix. 7-11).

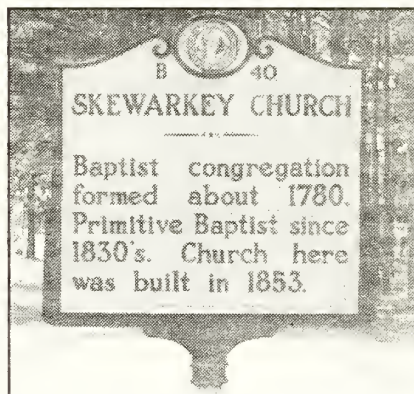
Yours in hope of Eternal Life,

Sylvester Hassell
Williamston, Martin County,
North Carolina

REMARKS FROM ELDER SYLVESTER HASSELL IN HIS PAPER, THE GOSPEL MESSENGER, 53 YEARS LATER IN AUGUST, 1917, ISSUE, ABOUT THE FAITHFULNESS OF OLD BROTHER JAMES HINTON, A SLAVE, AND ALSO MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN THE OLD BAPTIST CHURCH BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR.



SKEWARKEY PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH (Meeting House), Williamston, Martin County, N.C., where James Hinton, a black slave, united with the church in the early 1800's, and was later ordained to the gospel ministry. Photograph made 2004.



SKEWARKEY CHURCH
"Baptist congregation, formed about 1780. Primitive Baptist since 1830's. Church here was built in 1853."
(Official N.C. Hwy. Hist. Marker, sit. US 17 (Bus.) near Meeting House.)

Elder Sylvester Hassell said, "I was baptized by my father, Elder C. B. Hassell, into fellowship of the Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church, in the Roanoke River, at Williamston, Martin County, North Carolina, January 11, 1864, and it was just a few months later in the same year that I personally recorded from him his (James Hinton's) experience and testimony for publication in The Primitive Baptist. I can tell you that it was a blessing to me then, and is a blessing to me now. I cannot read it without shedding tears. May the Lord bless it to the many readers at the present time.

"The shelling of Williamston, N.C., by the Federal gunboats on the Roanoke River July 6, 1863, in Brother James Hinton's account came from a few Confederate soldiers, passing

through at the time, who however, did not shoot at them. The bombardment continued part of the afternoon and all night. Nearly every resident, except a few Old Baptists, fled the town. Two houses were burned by the exploding shells, but no person was hurt. When the Federal marines (soldiers) marched up Main Street next morning, they saw my father, Elder C.B. Hassell, sitting on his front porch. They stopped and asked him, "Now, what have you been doing all night?" He replied, "I have been praying for you." If all men had this spirit, there would be no more wars, and fewer troubles in this time world.

Sylvester Hassell,
August 1917

(In connection with the above article of Elder James Hinton, an uneducated, black, slave minister in the ante-bellum days of our country, America, Elder P.D. Gold tells us below how and why a minister can preach the gospel without education. Editor.)

EDUCATED MINISTRY

For some cause it seems to be the general opinion of people at large that we, the Primitive or Old School Baptist people, and as the church collectively, do not believe in, advocate, or endorse the education of our people, especially our preachers.

That we oppose the education of the academic world for any people any where of literature, the arts and sciences, so common among and profitable to mankind, is no where declared in any of our rules of decorum, articles of faith, church covenants, periodicals, history, or books of record, belonging to, or proceeding forth from us, either as individuals, associations or churches, neither is it declared from our pulpits by our ministers.

We hold that an education is a natural blessing to him who possesses it, and properly applies it, and not only to him, but to all with whom he comes in contact: but, if it is improperly used, like any other things so used, it becomes a curse to him, and to some extent to all who are affected by it. An educated man of finest purpose of heart is a blessing to any community, and should be sought after for the enchantment and well-being of the public good, but, on the other hand, an educated swindler, thief or robber, of which there are many around us, is a living machine for the destruction of the prosperity, peace and happiness of the people, unless apprehended and restrained.

Education does **not** give a man better faculties, **nor** does it

add to them which he already has, but simply arouses, draws out, enlarges and strengthens them, thus fitting him for greater usefulness in the sphere designed for the operation of such faculties. It does not make a wise man of a fool, but does sometime seem to make a fool of a wise man. "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him." (Proverbs 26:12.)

When we are charged with holding that the education of the natural mind is not essential to the effectual workings of the spirit of God in quickening and revealing in the heart of man the power and sufficiency of the Spirit and Grace of God in forgiving sins and imparting to the sinner the evidence of Salvation, the charge is correct!

We do not object to our ministers being educated, yet we do not admit that a literary education is indispensably necessary to enable one to understand the direct teaching of the Holy Ghost in Christian experience, and the dispensation of the gospel which the Lord commits and imparts unto those whom He calls and sends to preach the gospel. This dispensation, while necessary and essential to the true, full understanding of the way of life and Salvation and the proclamation thereof, is, itself, the true education of the gospel God-called minister, and is imparted to whom and when it is committed. "I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12.) Now, Paul, are you certain about this matter? Did you not first go into Arabia and attend a theological school about this matter and learn this truth there for three years? Hear Paul's answer: "But, when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His Grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem." (Galatians 1:15 - 18.) That Paul might preach the Son of God among the heathen, God revealed His SON IN HIM (not to him) (there is a big difference in the meaning of the prepositions "in" & "to"), hence the saying must be true, "I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Had it been revealed to Paul's old man, Saul of Tarsus, he might would have had where-

of to glory, but not before God!

Paul did not confer with the flesh and blood of any man, nor did he consult and advise with the apostles; in fact, he did not see any of them for three years after that, and then only saw Peter and James, the Lord's natural brother, when he first went to Jerusalem.

Any one of ordinary intelligence and a little education can preach. But, however, much intelligence and education one may have, he cannot preach the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ except a dispensation of it is imparted and committed unto him, nor can he in any sense know aught of the power of God unless Christ is revealed in him the hope of glory. The dispensation of the Gospel is the understanding and knowledge of the power and operation of the Spirit of God in the revelation of Christ Jesus, the anointed, who is the Salvation, the hope and confidence of the people of God with the evidences of these things revealed. Also included in this great dispensation is how those who are truly manifested as His people are led by the Spirit, with the Gospel order of the Church that embraces the rules, regulations, duties and privileges of the church and of each member thereof.

If one is called of God to work of the ministry, the Spirit of God will fully teach him in that call to know of those spiritual Heavenly, Divine things of the Living God. There will be an inward irresistible burden and accompanying desire in his heart to lend his attention to the scriptures with meditation upon them, while giving attention in reading them, meditating upon the things of the dispensation of the gospel which is committed unto him. In being so blest, the full proof of the ministry will be made manifest in him of his ministry, while showing himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. That which was predeterminedly designed and purposed in his ministry will be accomplished, whether he is educated or not.

If a young man should join the church and give evidence of a gift to exercise in a public manner, and his preaching should seem to be acceptable to the churches, and he should be desirous of obtaining a better education that he might know more of the natural world in which he lives, and that he might be able to express himself in language more agreeable to himself, and should attend some good school for the simple pur-

pose of obtaining a personal education, I have no idea that there is a church in our fellowship which would set up the slightest objection to him in his effort to improve his natural ability to express himself, but if he should claim that he must obtain this education as a further or more complete preparation for the work of the ministry, and that he could not sufficiently understand the scriptures without a knowledge of the dead languages and so forth, there is not a Primitive Baptist in all the land that would further hold his call in confidence, if they did not lose entire gospel fellowship for him.

There is to our understanding all possible difference between an educated ministry and an uneducated ministry. The term ministry, to my mind, has a far deeper signification, as used in the scriptures in early Biblical times, that is commonly used today. It means more than just the ministers of the gospel, as a body or that which they do, commonly called "the work of the ministry." Such scriptural expressions as, "seeing we have this ministry", "putting me into the ministry", "take heed to the ministry thou hast received", "Watch thou, make full proof of thy ministry", and "now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry", seems to me to set forth the fact that there is something about it which only the Lord bestows, into which He puts His ministers, which cannot be done by man in either respect.

The functions of the gospel ministry are the effect of that God-given unction which is done of Him who calls and sends whom He will to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and thus feed the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost makes them overseers. Paul in enumerating the powers and virtues of the gifts in the ministry declares them to be all of the Spirit, and that they are given by the Spirit and are all to profit with all. It seems to me but reasonable to conclude that as the gospel ministry is of the Spirit, its operations and consumations are necessarily spiritual, and that those who are put into this ministry and to whom it is committed, and who only are set apart to the work thereof, must be qualified for the work alone by the Spirit by which they are set apart, and that in all essential respects, this qualification is full and complete. It seems to me to be gross presumption to claim that man by obsession can (of himself) embellish the work of God and thus better prepare one for the work unto which He had called him. It is said of God that:

"He is the Rock, His work is perfect." (Deut. 32:4.) This is true, or it is not true. It must be true, and the man who says to the contrary is, therefore, false in his declaration.

Most denominations of various religious orders in the world today have their synods, presbyteries, conferences, dioceses and boards which determine and decide who shall (and shall not) be educated for the ministry, and when he is sufficiently educated in their judgement, he is then accepted into their ministerial body. They will not allow one to preach and exercise the functions of the ministry until he is fully educated, as they see it, which goes to show that they do not think the Lord is capable of determining so grave a matter!

If those who are educated for the work of the ministry could preach the gospel after being thus qualified, the subject would put on an entirely different phase, but they cannot do this, we claim, neither after nor before; therefore, instead of becoming a power for good, as they claim, they become a power for evil, by being better equipped for the work of beguiling and leading into error the unsuspecting.

Christ said of Himself by His Apostle, Luke, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor." (Read Luke 4:18.) The passing out of the Spirit upon Christ by God, His Father, was essential to His preaching the gospel, and in every way doing the will of His Father, because it was given for that purpose. He was made to fully and perfectly exercise in the work of the ministry as that great Preacher of divine Righteousness, and in Himself and by the Almighty power of God, His Father, which was given unto Him. He, and He alone, forever perfected the gospel ministry unto which He now puts His servants, who He also calls and sends them forth to preach His unsearchable riches and everlasting truth. And to everyone of them is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. "Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (Ephesians 4:8.) Just as the Spirit of the Lord upon Christ enabled Him to preach the everlasting gospel, and otherwise do the will of His Father, even so do these gifts unto men enable them to preach His gospel, a dispensation of which is committed and imparted unto them.

P. D. GOLD

(From the Zion's Landmark Record)

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL SUBSCRIBERS AND READERS OF ZION'S LANDMARK -PLEASE READ-

Effective with this issue, "MAY-JUNE, 2006," the subscription price of Zion's Landmark is being increased to \$15.00 per year, or \$27.00 for two years. Since our last price increase that began with the "May-June, 2001" issue, I have absorbed several price increases with our printer, as well as for postage. The good Lord has blest us to continue 5 years without an increase.

I am giving below the total amount of income, which includes funds received for all renewals and gifts, as well as the total amount of money paid out for all printing and postage expenses, for the year January 2005, through December, 2005, as follows:

Total income for all renewals, new subscribers, gifts	\$5,126.00
<hr/>	
Total expenses including printing, mailing, postage, taxes, etc.	\$4,891.00
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Net Profit	\$ 235.00

Each year for the past several ones, I have been blest to receive sufficient funds

required to keep the overall cost of the paper in the black, but very little over, if any, as the above figure will indicate. The subscribers and readers have been very good to help me to this end, but, as the above figures indicate, we cannot survive at this time without an increase in the overall yearly rate for cost of publication. My dear wife does all the clerical and book-keeping work without any remuneration, whatsoever, together with my labor in getting the paper together for each issue, all of which from both of us is a gift and labor of love for the cause we love so dearly.

In most recent years we have lost so many of our old, faithful subscribers by death with so few new subscribers, all of which with other causes, has caused our subscription numbers to come down and be reduced substantially. When possible, please send us a new subscriber (or subscribers). It will help! And please keep us in your prayers and love, as well as our paper, Zion's Landmark, that it be God's will for it to continue.

J. M. Mewborn
June 22, 2006

THE RAINBOW (A Visable Miracle and Promise Of God. - Its Cause and Meaning.)

(A dear brother has asked me to explain the SCIENTIFIC CAUSE and the SPIRITUAL MEANING of the Rainbow. In the scriptures it is mentioned 6 times directly by name, and 3 times indirectly by allusion. For direct reference by name, as such, please see Genesis 9:13, 14 & 16, Ezekiel 1:28 and Revelation 4:13 & 10:1. By indirect, or alluded reference, please see Isaiah 54:7-10 and Ezekiel 1:27. S. H.)



ELDER SYLVESTER HASSELL
1842 - 1928

Profound scholar, educator, editor, author and servant of the most, high God, who wrote the article titled THE RAINBOW, as published in this issue of Zion's Landmark.

THE SCIENTIFIC CAUSE OF THE RAINBOW

A Rainbow is defined as "an arch of light exhibiting the spectrum colors in their order, and due to the refraction, reflection, and dispersion of the sun's or moon's rays in drops of rain falling through the air, it is seen usually at the close of a shower in the quarter of the heavens opposite to the sun or moon." The white light of the sun or moon is composed of the seven prismatic colors, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Each color, when passing from air into water or from water into air, is refracted, or bent from its original direction, always at the same angle, but different from the angle at which every other color is refracted; this causes the separation and spreading of white light, when refracted, into the colors of which it is composed, always in the same order; and, as the falling drops of rain fill that part of the heavens where the rainbow is seen, the constancy of the angle of refraction for each color makes each color appear to the eye as a part of a circle; to a person upon a great height, a rainbow appears as a full circle.

The colors of the bow made by the moon, though similar, are much fainter than those of a bow made by the sun. When the field of falling drops is large, and the white light of the sun thrown on it is very bright, there is not only a primary bow, formed by one reflection of the light from each drop, but sometimes a secondary bow, formed by two reflections, and still more rarely a tertiary bow, formed by three reflections. The white light of the sun falling upon a prism, or three-cornered piece of glass, is separated into the same colors as those of the rainbow, always in the same order; the colored band is called a spectrum; and just beyond the red end of the spectrum, there are invisible thermal or heat rays; and just beyond the violent end of the spectrum, there are invisible actinic or chemical rays, which produce the chlorophyll or essential green life coloring matter of vegetation. The spectroscope shows a great many dark lines crossing the bright colors of the spectrum, the darkness being caused by the interception and absorption of the bright light of the sun by substances in our atmosphere. Permanent light in large quantities can come only from a heated body. Light is propagated by some mysterious activity (thought to be the undulation or polarization) of a highly refined (almost immaterial), uniform medium filling all matter and all space, and called luminiferous (light bearing) ether.

Only the Creator of nature could have imposed its laws or qualities upon it, and made light and air and water what they are. There is but one God, and He is the God both of nature and of grace; and the kingdom of nature was made by Him, not only for the use of His living creatures in time, but also, for those of

them who can understand such teaching, as an illustration of spiritual and eternal truth. This grand fact shines all through the Scriptures from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation. Meditation upon the resemblances between the kingdoms of nature and of grace is most delightful, instructive, strengthening, purifying, comforting, and elevating.



SYLVESTER HASSELL

A.M., LL.D (UNIVERSITY OF NC)
EDUCATOR, MINISTER AND
RELIGIOUS WRITER. SON OF
CUSHING BIGGS AND MARY
DAVIS HASSELL.

July 28, 1842 - August 18, 1928

PASTOR, SKEWARKEY PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST CHURCH 1880 - 1928
MODERATOR KEHUKEE PRIMI-
TIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
1880 - 1928
CO-AUTHOR WITH HIS FATHER
OF "HISTORY OF THE CHURCH
OF GOD FROM THE CREATION."

(Granite Monument with epiteth at
Elder Hassell's grave, Skewarkey
Church Cemetery, Williamston,
NC)

THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF THE RAINBOW

The spiritual lessons to be learned from the Rainbow are deep and manifold. The Rainbow is referred to in Gen. 9:9-17; Isaiah 54:7-10; Ezek. 1:26-28; Rev. 4:3; 10:1. As God alone created nature, including light, air, and water, according to His own pleasure, and makes the sun shine on falling drops of rain when, where, and for whom He alone pleases, the first lesson that we learn from the Rainbow is the absolute and universal sovereignty of God ("I set My bow in the cloud," Gen. 9:13). From the exceedingly refined, everywhere present, and uniform ether, by which light is propagated from the sun to the raindrops

and from the raindrops to our eyes, we learn the spirituality, omnipresence, and immutability of God. From the circular form of the Rainbow, we learn His eternity, infinity, and perfections: and from our seeing only a part of the bow, we learn His incomprehensibility; and from the real, but unseen Heat and Chemical Rays, we learn His reality, but invisibility to mortal eyes. From the Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Bows, we learn His trinity—the Father seen by the eye of unsophisticated reason in the works of nature, the Son more rarely seen, and the Spirit still more rarely. Ezekiel represents the Rainbow as manifesting "the glory of the Lord" (Ezek. 1:26-28). The white light of the sun, before falling upon the raindrops, illustrates the holiness (the wholeness, the total glory), the perfect purity of His Divine nature. The seven colors represent the seven attributes of His holy character manifested to His intelligent, His spiritual creatures—Righteousness, Knowledge, Wisdom, Power, Truth, Mercy, and Love, all perfectly harmonious and blending into each other; and as expressions of these attributes, the seven colors also represent the glorious promises and providences of God, working together perfectly for His children's good and His glory. The Light Rays show the illuminating, the Heat Rays the warming, and the Chemical Rays the life-giving and transforming power of His grace. The dark lines crossing the bright colors are not the darkness in God or His word or His works (for He is Light and, in Him is no darkness at all), but the dark lines are the darkness in our sinful and finite minds imperfectly interpreting the perfect glory of God. The emerald, or pure and permanent color of the Rainbow round about the throne of God and the Lamb (Rev. 4:3; see v.6)—green being the life color of vegetation—shows that God is the Center and Fountain of life, especially of spiritual and eternal life; it is only those, thus living, that are in His immediate presence and service. All true light comes

from God, who is to sin in every form and in every being a consuming fire.

After the deluge, the Lord appointed the Rainbow as the token of His covenant with the earth or His absolute promise to all flesh, that He would no more destroy all living creatures with a flood of water. It is an appropriate and splendid sign of mercy, rejoicing over judgement,—undeserved favor staying the floods of righteous wrath, and preserving and blessing the guilty. It shows that the cloud is not universal, as in the deluge, but that it is broken and partly dispersed already, and that the sun is shining out, and imprinting His glittering triumph on the retreating clouds, uniting heaven and earth together with a wrath of beauty after they have been engaged in an elemental war. This meaning of the Rainbow is also shown in Isa. 54:7-10 and Rev. 4:10, with special reference to God's Covenant of Grace with His Son for the eternal salvation of all His chosen people, not withstanding the lightnings and thunderings of His holy law against their sin. It was because the Lamb that had been slain from the foundation of the world was in the midst of the throne, that the Rainbow of mercy and life encircled the throne for the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures, all the redeemed family of God, who worship Him in Heaven. Christ, the Angel, Messenger, Mediator, and Surety of the Covenant of Grace, appeared in the pillar of cloud in the wilderness and in the cloud in

the temple and on the mount of transfiguration, and as He ascended from Olivet to Heaven, and will appear in a cloud when He returns to the earth, is clothed with a cloud in Rev. 10:1, and has a Rainbow upon His head, and His face was as the sun, and His feet as pillars of fire to consume His people's enemies and uphold His elect against all the powers of earth and hell. The Rainbow has its arch turned upward, and it has no string and no arrow, showing that God's wrath has been satisfied by the atonement of the shed blood of Christ for His people. It is a bow hung up to look at and not to be used for war, the bow of peace. But the children of God are blessed to use it in approaching their Heavenly Father with the string of faith that they may direct the arrows of prayer and praise to the throne of grace, confessing their sins which deserve everlasting banishment from God, and which inflicted death upon their meek and loving and holy Saviour, and praying God to pardon and sanctify them, and joyfully thanking and praising Him for His unmerited, marvelous, and eternal love. The moon represents the church under the law, and the Rainbow, cast by the moon, shows that His promise of hope to the children of God in the (legal-law) night of time will ultimately be conformed in their measure to the glorious image of His perfect Son.

The Rainbow is chiefly symbolical of PEACE. God is the God of Peace, and His

Zion's Landmark

"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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kingdom is a Kingdom of Peace, and His people are the Children of Peace. They best manifest His Spirit and glorify His name, when in accordance with their lively hope, they are blest to see their obedience and submission only in Him. Through Him alone and His great Love, are they given to cultivate Godly relations of humbleness and sincerity of love and peace toward all the other members of the mystical body of Christ, the One Divine Head, the Perfection of Love and the Prince of Peace, who, just before He offered Himself to God as a Sinless Sacrifice for their sins, prayed that all who believe on Him might be one, even as He and the Father are One. (John 17:20, 21).

Sylvester Hassell

(Taken from *The Gospel Messenger*, September, 1898, issue, page 383.)

JACOB MADE JOSEPH A COAT OF MANY COLOURS. (Genesis 37:3).

Many people have read this scripture, "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours." (Genesis 37:3).

The question here that we now ask, "What was Joseph's coat of many colours?" "What is its spiritual meaning?" We know that every scripture in the Bible has both (1) a natural meaning, and (2) a spiritual meaning. Also, it is recorded that "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (II Peter 1:20-21). God must always reveal their spiritual meaning.

For many years this scripture concerning Israel's (Jacob's) coat of many colors that he made for his son, Joseph, had dwelt upon my mind of meditation. I knew I had never heard any elder (or minister) speak upon it in a public way; also, I had never seen anyone attempt to write

upon the subject. The only time I had remembered it being discussed was from a speaker, a so-called doctor of divinity, (D.D.), in Duke University Chapel, Durham, NC, during a Sunday morning service years ago, when I rode to one of my own appointments. (I often listened to radio services, when driving to church on Sunday mornings). I knew he was off track, trying to get to the bottom of this scripture's meaning from a carnal mind interpretation of it. I knew he was on a dead-end road, leaving me more confused when he ended his discussion, than when he started.

But after reading Elder Sylvester Hassell's article concerning the Rainbow, just republished above in this issue of Zion's Landmark, brought back my memories of being made to see, possibly 30 years ago or more, that the many colors in Joseph's coat, given to him by his father (Israel-Jacob), relates to the gift of light from the great, natural sun in which are contained the seven colors, a perfect number. They are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red. In the natural light of our sun, they are invisible to the human eye, except they be interpreted through rain drops into the rainbow, a miracle of God's natural creation. Yet, this coat of many colors, given by Jacob to his son, Joseph, portrays the great, mighty purpose of God's love for Joseph that He was with him and had clothed him in that invisible Robe of Righteousness that clothes everyone in the Kingdom of God, the children of God's free-grace. Christ, Himself, wore and was clothed in this seamless Robe. This robe of many colors, worn by Joseph, as a free-gift, points to that everlasting Robe of Christ that He will be wearing when He comes back here again, the second time without sin unto Salvation. John described it in Revelation 19:13, "And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His Name is called the Word of God." Paul described the final perfection of this Robe of Christ in

Hebrews 1:3, "*The Brightness of His Father's Glory and the express image of His Person.*"

As our natural sun above with the gift of water, yields the seven colors of the beautiful rainbow, a symbol of promise, the everlasting Son of Righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ, will one day yield the fulfillment of that blessed promise "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality", there will be no more need of the rainbow and its colors, no more "need of the light of the sun, no more need of the candle, for there shall be no night there, for the LORD GOD giveth them LIGHT; they shall reign for ever and ever, and they shall see His face." (Rev. 22:4&5).

J. M. Mewborn

THE EXPERIENCE OF GRACE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF ELDER J. J. TURNIPSEED

At the request of many of my dear kindred in Christ, I hope, I will send in some of my poor, imperfect writings of more than fifteen years ago, which tells of just a little of my life and experience in going to the church. I was born in the southern part of Montgomery County, Alabama, April 5, 1871, being the second child and oldest son of John Wesley and Nancy Elizabeth Turnipseed. My parents belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and I was sprinkled in infancy. I was brought up after this tradition, attending Sunday School classes from a very small child. I cannot remember my first attendance at Sunday School; but well do I remember what an impression was made upon my childish mind that my strict, perfect attendance at Sunday School and joining the church, listening obediently to my parents, and doing the right thing at all times, would gain for me a home in heaven; but my failure in all this would be quickly attended to by the bad man, or the devil, who had a place to put bad boys, where they would burn forever and ever. And I was so dis-

turbed over this matter until I would dream of the devil coming after me; and I would have such narrow escapes that I even feared to pass by rooted-up trees for fear the bad man would come out from the place and get me. I felt to know that I was not up to the requirement to escape him, as I had not at this time joined the church, and in my efforts to do all that was told me to do at the protracted meetings, I had failed to get the blessing that I was told I would get, and, of course, I didn't desire to be hypocritical in such a sacred matter as I felt that was. So, I would not join, thinking I must feel the happy state or condition that I saw others seeming to feel. I knew I had not had this.

I went on this way for about three years at which time I was made to feel that my case was different from all others, because the mourners' bench, with all of its hints and helps, had failed in my case. I felt to be a poor, lost, ruined, condemned, hell-deserving sinner, that my time on earth was fast closing out, and I must soon pass to a never-ending eternity of woe and misery for me. I tried to pray, but the more I tried, the worse I got. The sound of my groanings seemed to be limited to the extent of my feeble cries, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I well remember when I went, as I felt, for the last time, my very breathings being, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." All nature appeared to be draped in mourning for me. I remember how dimly the sun shined. I have never been able to tell how it was, as there was a space of time in there lost to me; but, when I knew anything of conditions surrounding me, I was full of joy, and the sunshine seemed brighter to me than ever before—and the trees seemed so different, as I was in the woods at the time. But I felt no fear of the devil at this time for the first time since I was taught to fear him. However, before the day was gone, I remembered my instructions, and the thought came to me that now if I don't join the church and do right, the devil will get me yet. So I was very eager for an oppor-

tunity to join; but, when I did join, I was very quiet about it, and I was very much surprised when they told me I would not be baptized as I had been sprinkled when a baby; but that was all right with me since my tradition was very strong and effective.

So, as time went on, I went to Sunday school and to meeting, and learned to believe that the Methodists were the best, most decent Christian people on earth. When I was in my twentieth year, I felt a strong impression that I would have to preach the gospel; and I felt impressed, too, and just as strong, that I couldn't preach. And so here I had more trouble on me. At this time I began to have some very strange experiences, and at different times I would behold the sublimeness of the Deity. I enjoyed a great many revelations, some of which were very marvelous. The first year I was married, I remember telling my father of some of these experiences, and he said he knew they were wonderful, but he didn't know what they meant. This was in 1894; and it was in 1896 the Methodist conference licensed me to preach. I got deeper and deeper into trouble, when I began to realize that preaching was teaching, and being a teacher in the public schools of Alabama, and seeing as I did know how important it was to teach right and correctly, the fundamental principles of each subject, my mind was filled with the thought of how much more important it must be to teach aright in spiritual things. I knew I did not have the wisdom, nor the understanding, but inwardly I felt that I was rightly impressed to do what the apostle said to do, beg for them. Yet, at this time I didn't know that there was such a scripture, in James 1:5, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God", while, of course, there were many other important Scriptures which I didn't even know were in the Bible, although I had been brought up in Sunday Schools.

However, in my ignorant, traditionalized way, I went on and tried to speak in a public

way of the wonderful love of God to poor sinners, if they would only accept Jesus Christ, His Son, as their personal Saviour, and do what He said for them to do; but unless they would do this, God would not love and save them. But all this time, from the deep of my soul, I was trying to ask God for wisdom and understanding. I was reading and searching for the truth, as I never had before. My principal search was for the things that, I thought, would edify the church.

I soon became involved in a very perplexing question. One day, while reading, the thought came into my mind like a flash, "Why do all churches use the same Bible, and yet all differ?" So I sought a preacher to immediately find out why. And, of course, he told me that some saw it one way and some another, but that in the main that all denominations and religious groups were all headed for the same place, that they were all roads that lead into Heaven, that home of glory—the Bible being only the waybill pointing us in that direction. But just here, I became lost in thought upon another question, which had suddenly fastened upon my mind; and, as strange as it may seem to the reader, this thought was upon the definite and the indefinite articles, as "The Church," and "a church;" and through reasoning, I soon became convinced that The Church was one, and could not mean many. So, here, I needed my preacher again; but he told me that the church was one, but that it had many branches; and that all of the "a churches" were only branches of "The Church," but, I could only accept this explanation with some degree of suspicion, for I had by this time found so much definiteness in the Bible that I found it rather hard to apply to it the indefiniteness required for me to hold my Methodist ground.

And just here, I will say, that I had been taught to shun and stay away from the teaching of "Hardshells," as I had learned their name, and I didn't know any better until after I married. However, my being

among them had not, in the least, shaken my Methodist tradition. As Paul said to Agrippa, "After the most strictest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee." Yes, my sole intent and desire was to uphold and substantiate the Methodist doctrine of the "do and live, Oh! do good and be saved" system. But, all this time, I was worried over the oneness of the church. I am sure that my being mixed up with the Primitive Baptists was providential, as these poor, ignorant things, as I felt towards them at that time, would say some of the soundest, deepest and most substantial things I had ever heard expressed, and that, too, with an expressed confidence that their position was Biblical—hence would ever stand. So, I determined hard within myself how to put doctrine of the "Hardshells" out of business. I began to read and study to that end. The first effect that my search revealed to me was a loss of confidence in my own religious teachings, or creed, as being the church, as I found so much in the Scriptures of divine truth which condemned the position I occupied; and here I became very greatly concerned about the church, and also as to what and where the true church of Christ was, where-ever.

So I began a diligent search of the Scriptures and a survey of religious history in trying to locate the church. I searched out the old landmarks, and set my compass at an established corner, and just as soon as the needle would become settled and still, it would be pointing to "them Hardshells". Then, I would incline my instrument by several degrees to make it run out to some highly respectable religious people, as the Missionaries, Presbyterians, Free-Wills, or just any outside of the Primitive Baptists. However, by this time I had become thoroughly convinced that the Methodists were not the church. But I could not entertain such a thought as the Primitive Baptists being the church. Notwithstanding, I had made up my mind that I wanted to live in fellowship

with the church, and I was then ready to leave the Methodist people to do so, if I could only trace the church to a people held in high esteem, somewhere, by the world. I had also made up my mind that I would never be called a "Hardshell." During this time, I was fighting the Primitive Baptists at every turn, and all the time reading and studying how to upset them; but I found the Scriptures turning against me and in their defense. As I would turn to some of the strongest points of my "do and live" system, they would fail me. I would see some things in them that I had never seen there before. Then, these extras, before unnoticed, touches, would make these pet texts of mine just exactly fit the contentions of these "Hardshells."

In looking over my field notes, the Bible one day, I found an old landmark described as *persecution*. I set my compass there, and when the needle settled, it was pointing to the Primitive Baptists. I saw another important corner stake, described as *hatred* by the world; here I set my compass and the needle quickly settled toward the Primitive Baptists. And from this time on, I went strictly by the field notes (the Bible), and found many old landmarks—such as *afflicted and poor people, having no confidence in the flesh, unworthy in themselves, trusting alone in the merits of a crucified and risen Redeemer, choice and election, foreordination and predestination, the preservation of the saints in eternal glory without the loss of one*. My compass, had been set at all these points with the same results as before. It was no wonder for I had been trained and taught from a small child in the Methodist Sunday schools, and had been a member of this church for many years, licensed to preach—and still I did not know of such principles as these being taught in the Bible, for all of them are some of the fundamental principles and landmarks of the church. Here, I began to see the wonderful beauty of the church, with salvation, for her walls and the power of God

for her bulwarks. The Word of God was now, as I felt, in my heart, as fire shut up in my bones, burning as live coals, so that I could not altogether keep it—so I found myself constantly speaking out for them when among the opposers of Primitive Baptists, trying in my weak way to defend these sacred principles. Notwithstanding, when I was in company with the Primitive Baptists, my entire wits were spent in an effort to refute these same principles. However, I only made a few efforts to preach these unsearchable riches of Christ among the Methodists before I quit trying entirely.

As I had failed to find the Church, as I had hoped to, a highly reputable institution in the sight of the world, and as I felt this to be of much importance to me in my vocation of life, I would not give up my Methodist profession. I had taken Masonry to the Master's degree, and joined the Odd Fellows and Woodmen of the World, and all my people and kindred in the flesh were Methodists—my father's family, finally numbering thirteen children—six boys and seven girls—and the very thought of giving up all these earthly ties and going contrary to all my former tradition was too *much for me*, as, at this time, I still had some hopes of finding that the true church was not the Old School or Primitive Baptists; but it might be the New School or Missionary Baptists, as I had the matter run out now to just these two.

I finally obtained a copy of *Hassell's Church History*, and then my hopes of finding it (the true church) among the Missionaries soon began to crumble, as I read the principles and practices all down the line, and the Scripture citations given upon every phase of the question. All during this time, there was a still, inward, small voice saying unto me, "Cry"; and from the deep of my poor soul I was saying, "And what shall I cry?" As clearly as I could see the church, my prejudice and self-conceit were still such that I felt to be so much better, so far superior, so far above the old Primitive Baptists, that I could never stoop so low as to be num-

bered with them. In this condition I began to try to reconcile my mind to the fact that I would never try to preach; because I felt that I had rather die than to be an ignorant Old Baptist, and I could not afford to contend for a faith that was no faith, seeing that there was one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, and that the faith that was once delivered unto the saints, and which had been so wonderfully maintained and contended for by them through all the centuries of time, and at times amid such sore trials and fiery persecutions, this being the only genuine faith I could conceive of being of God. I then went on in this condition for a time, all the while becoming more and more disturbed instead of becoming reconciled.

But to add to my agonies, my wife seemed to have a great desire to join the Old Baptist Church and be baptized, while I had tried to induce her to join the Methodist Church, but had failed. So I told her one day, that if she did join the "Hardshells", I would leave her then and there. And, if she thought more of them than me, to move on. Immediately afterward, all this became very grievous to me. As time went on, I could see more of my littleness and nothingness, and more of the greatness and goodness of the great God and His Church. Finally, I had sunk in my own eyes to the slums of despondency, and the dear old Church had been raised to my vision, at least, on a level with me. I began to lose all my confidence in all worldly, man-made institutions and quit attending all the lodges to which I belonged. All the time, I was being lowered in self-esteem, and the Primitive Baptists were rising higher. In my view, I felt to behold her grandeur and beauty exalted above the hills and established in the top of the mountains; and I could look up to her now with such a longing and craving desire. But poor unworthy me, I felt to know that it would never be my happy lot to have a home with such good people, as I was not worthy of such a place. While I could not doubt, at times, a change, and my hope

was so bright, too, that it was a change from nature to grace; but I had been such an unfaithful child, if one at all, and had mixed with the fair daughters of men in the way of worldly institutions, that I felt sure that the Old Baptists would reject me, if I should go and ask a home with them.

So I worried along in this condition for more than a year, when I suddenly resolved in myself not to worry any more over the matter, for I might be deluded in the whole thing. That I might be mistaken in the Old Baptists being the true church of Christ, any way, as I had no way of knowing positively, I thought I would just give it all up. About this time I moved from Montgomery, Alabama, to Little Rock, Arkansas, and then I felt I would be satisfied by moving away and I would not worry any more about the Old Baptists. So, I had my letter moved to the First Methodist Church in Little Rock, and made up my mind to go on and hold to my traditional teachings. But, I was there only a short while before I would have given anything in reason to have seen an Old School Baptist. So I began to make inquiry for them, and no one seemed to know anything about them. I finally asked my Methodist preacher, who informed me that there were none there, and very few anywhere, for that matter, saying that it would only be a short time till there would be none of them at all. Just here I gave him a little information, as he appeared to be so ignorant. I don't think he liked very much what I said to him, but I enjoyed telling him.

From this time I began to mourn and to groan, as the great weight of duty fell upon me so keenly. But, O, if I only knew where the true church was, and how to find it, I said I would be willing to go in the full discharge of my duty; and here I had the same perplexing thought to fasten upon my mind as I had before—namely, there are so many different denominations, all claiming to be the church, so how can I tell? My very groanings were, "O Lord, lead me in the way of thy sanctuary, teach me concerning thine ordinances, and

grant me wisdom and understanding, and so shall I be thy disciple." One night, I could not sleep until the night was far spent, and while sleeping I had a very impressive dream. Just here I will state that no one ever could have had any less use for a dreamer than I had. I had said a great deal about those Old Baptist dreamers. So, I will here relate my dream.

I was in a strange land. I seemed to be lost, having no knowledge of the place where I was. I was in a valley between two mountains, and I stood there wondering at my surroundings. I soon discovered that I was being encircled by a series of sharp blades resembling reaper hook blades of very huge size, these being about one inch apart, extending from the ground to a height greater than myself; and I saw at a glance that those blades were slowly closing upon me, having met already in front of me. I looked around to see what it meant, and there I saw the Satanic majesty—the most horrid smile on his (the devil's) face I ever saw, and holding two huge handles in his hands, he was gradually closing the huge blades upon me, and I felt sure that I would be immediately destroyed, as they would cut me to jiblets; and I could see no way out of the snare. Oh, the horror of my poor soul! All hope being gone—writhing in agony of mind, I suddenly felt a gentle, but impressive, touch upon my shoulder. In looking around, I beheld the face of Jesus, my Saviour, with the sweetest smile I had ever seen, as He was standing by me with His hand lying upon my shoulder. I did not realize what was going on until I was high up in the air, when I discovered that we were floating upward. I was still looking at Him, and His hand was still upon my shoulder. When we reached the top of the mountain on our right, we floated out and stood upon the top of it. I had not spoken a word to Him, or He to me, but just here I spoke and said, "I want to know if the true church still exists in the world today?" And He said unto me, "Yea, indeed, have you *not read in the Scriptures*, "In the days of

these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever?" Daniel 2:44). I said, "Yes, I remember this Scripture, and I would gladly go and ask a home in the true church, as I greatly desire to live in fellowship with the true church; but there being so many different people calling themselves the church, or belonging to a church, until I am so puzzled to know which is the true Church." And He said unto me, "Do you know a people who are called *the little few*?" I said, "Yes; but what about all the others, who are so great in numbers," and I named here the Methodists, the Missionary Baptists, Presbyterians, Campbellites and Catholics, and asked Him what about these, as they seemed to be good people in all these institutions. Then said He, "Yea; but have you not read in the Scripture, *'Enter ye in a the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.'*" "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." Said He, "Those referred to are not the children of God, who are in the broad way, not being content to deny themselves of those things which are pleasing to their fleshly natures and desires, they follow after them in the way of disobedience to the destruction of their spiritual joys and happiness." Said He, "You know *the little few*. Do you know any other name by which they are called by the world?" "Yes," said I, "they are called Hardshells by their enemies." "Well, you know," said He, "Where the true church is, go home. I am going." And He began to rise, floating upward, and left me standing there, gazing upward at Him until He went into the clouds out of my

sight. Just at this time, I awoke out of my sleep to find that it was only a dream, while the vividness of it was great and the experience with me was such that I could hardly realize for a time that the things referred to had not been real.

As I lay there in deep meditation, because I could not think of sleeping any more, the whole thing seemed to open up my mind as clear as the noonday sun. And, oh how sweet it was to me, when I could behold the evidences of the true Church of Christ, as witness after witness came up and testified in my meditations. After so MANY evidences came to my view as true marks of the church in the way of *poverty, afflictions, and trials* most severe; then came others, as *dependence, humbleness, meekness, faithfulness, patience, and charity*—all blazing and blooming in gratitude to the great King, the Head and Husband of the Church. And my dream or vision was opened up to me so that I could see that Satan here only represented the power of tradition which had me in its grasp; and the sharp blades of this instrument truly represented the false principles and theories which had held me so securely in its grasp, and would destroy me, practically, as a child of God, together with all my spiritual comforts and joys. I was there alone in this Satanic snare and I did not see any way out. It was true, indeed, for self consideration had already given me to understand that I could never give up those worldly ties, for it would be better for me to die than to do this. Yet, I had seen the fallacy of these things, and had felt deep down in my poor heart their destructive influence to true happiness and enjoyments of the kingdom of Christ and His Church. The appearance of my Saviour in this snare with me represented His gracious truths revealed to me by His Spirit, and which would teach me from whence cometh the *revealed truths*. They enabled me to behold the true church, and to understand the killing, condemning

power of all the idolatrous ways of unrighteousness, which the blades of that instrument about me represented, and to teach me that He had delivered me, and was there to deliver me, and would always be my *Deliverer*, to whom I should render all praise. And our floating up together, unconsciously, until I was half way up to the top of the mountain signified that all the time I was reading and studying, as I thought, for no other purpose than to overthrow the Old Baptist doctrine and position, that I was then being led unaware by my blessed Saviour into the precious truth and out of error as unconsciously as I floated out of that snare. I had a great zeal for the truth, and was looking for it, but all the while wanting it to fit popularity. But, I could not get rid of this dream until I went home to the Old Baptists; and then I determined never to try, in my weak and imperfect way, to preach again. Yet, all the time I had a burning desire in my poor heart to tell everyone of these great and simple truths, as they now appeared to me.

I asked a home with the Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, the fourth Sunday in November 1906, and was baptized that evening by Elder W. M. Smith, who was the pastor of the church; and when I came out of the water I felt so free, light and happy; but as the brethren and sisters were shaking hands with me, I felt a double impression come upon me to go and tell it, and keep on telling it. Now, my last trouble seemed to be heavier than the first, but I resolved with self to try and carry it. I will here state, that if I ever had a call to the ministry, it was pressed upon me at this time so that I could not rest. One day in conference, a dear brother made a move to liberate me, saying he felt that I had a gift. I got up immediately to oppose it, and began to tell of my unfitness. For a few minutes, I don't know what I did say, but they went on to liberate me to speak in public and exercise my gift wherever my lot was cast. I have never felt like I was big enough to put my

judgment against the Church, so I submitted. I went on trying to exercise my gift in a public way when called on to do so.

After a year, they wanted me to serve the church, and to have me ordained to the full functions of the gospel ministry. Here, again, I adamantly opposed the move, telling them I had all the liberties I needed, and more than I could fill properly; but as before, they moved on and completed their action. When they went to choose a presbytery, the Church asked me if there was anyone that I specially desired to be present in the work. I thought of how much I had fought and opposed the Old Baptists in Alabama, and how well Elder J. P. Nobles knew of these oppositions. I felt sure that he would object to me as a fit subject for ordination. I also requested that Elder P. E. Whitwell be present, feeling if the work must be done, I wanted him in it also.

The time was set, and came, and Elders S. E. Dykes, E. George, J. K. Stephens, P. E. Whitwell and J. P. Nobles were all present. They put Elder Nobles up to preach, and in his preliminaries, he told them of how long he had known me, and of how long he had known that I was fighting the Church, and that he had felt that some day he would see me occupying Old Baptist pulpits, preaching the way that I had been opposing. So, my last hope of getting out of it fell, and when the hour came, I tamely submitted. I have tried in my weakness to be submissive to the work, while I must admit that my weakness has been such that many times I have planned to quit, but never have been able to get everything in shape for it. As I grow older, the service of my Master with me grows sweeter and dearer and I now desire to fall at the post of my charge, when through with the trials and conflicts of this life. May God in His love and mercy guide me unto the end, and let me have His felt presence in death, and all will be well. Farewell.

J. J. Turnipseed
(The Experience of Grace and Call

to the Ministry of Elder J.J. Turnipseed was taken from the February, 2006, and March, 2006 issues of the Gospel Appeal, and is herein republished in Zion's Landmark by consent of its editor, Elder R.G. Dickerson, Jr. Ed.)



GEORGE H. GRAY
1937 - 2005
(Age 68 Years)

GEORGE H. GRAY

By the request of Mewborn's Church, Greene County, North Carolina, in conference December 10, 2005, we, the undersigned committee, submit the following lines in memory of our beloved brother, deacon and clerk.

Brother George Herman Gray was born July 18, 1937, the son of Brother George D. Gray and Sister Elitha Beamon Gray in Greene County, North Carolina, and passed from this life September 17, 2005. He was married to Shelby Jean Barfield on May 5th, 1962. George was the third child born to his parents with two sisters, Sister Evelyn G. Pollock, Sister Thelma G. Tart, and one brother, Lester G. Gray, all three of whom now survive him.

George left home in the fall of 1956 and went to Washington, D.C., to work for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He also enrolled at the same time in the Benjamin Franklin University and went to night school until he received his degree in Accounting. It was there that he met and married Jean Barfield, Kenly, North Carolina. George nearly finished his training as an FBI agent, but both of them did not wish to live in the large, metropolitan cities to raise their family, which would have been required of him to have perused that career; so they decided to make their home in Raleigh, where he was employed as a Real Estate and Commercial Tax Appraiser for Wake County until July, 1991, when he retired.

He was a good husband and father to his beloved wife, Jean, and his daughter, René Gray Evans.

She gave him a loving grandson, Daniel, a darling granddaughter, Elizabeth, and son-in-law, Mr.

Mark Evans. They are, indeed, a loving family. It is worthy of mentioning that many of his co-workers and employees, who worked under him as their supervisor, commented at his visitation of his kindness and faithfulness to them. They said their workload was very heavy at the office, when, many times, they had to work on Saturdays to stay caught up. They said he would always be there in their midst, gently helping them to accomplish it in his usual, kind manner and amicable way. This was not required of him.

He was blessed to ask for a home with the brethren of Mewborn's Church on September 14, 1980, and was baptized by Elder J.M. Mewborn. George had a quiet, non-assuming manner and was loved greatly by his brethren, as he was a man of few words; but when he spoke, he was always full of good meaning. The Church saw this good mark, as a true, God-given characteristic and called him to the ordination of deaconship, which took place June 3, 1985. He filled this calling and office in a most efficient manner. He was later called to be Clerk on August 7, 1993, which place he also faithfully filled with excellence until the day of his departure. He was held in high esteem by the members of his home church, as well as with the members of many sister churches, that knew him far and near.

We, at Mewborn's Church, keenly feel the loss of our dear brother, as his kind, fatherly and brotherly actions, together with his wise counsel, will be sorely missed. Yet, we say to his dear companion, daughter, grandchildren, son-in-law, sisters and brother, which are left behind, that he filled the days upon earth that God had appointed for him, and to not mourn for him as for others who have no hope. Knowing his life as we did, which was one of toil and sorrow, we feel that his soul has entered the Paradise of God, where it shall rest and remain until the second coming of Christ, when his mortal body shall be raised to that immortal state in the likeness of Jesus in that upper Kingdom, which was ordained for the children of God from the foundation of the world.

His funeral service was held at Coley's Funeral Home Chapel, Kenly, North Carolina, by Elder J.M. Mewborn, and his mortal body was laid to rest to wait until the morning of that great day at the Springhill Church Cemetery, Lucama, N.C.

Submitted at the request of Mewborn's Church, read and approved in conference, this the 11th day of March, 1006.

Thelma G. Tart,
Lester G. Gray
Committee



GEORGIA E. EDWARDS
1932 - 2005
(Age 72 Years)

GEORGIA E. EDWARDS

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalms 116:15.) If it is the Lord's will, I desire to leave on record these lines about one who, I have been made to feel, was one of God's chosen people, one of His little ones, a true witness of that great truth in this time-world.

Sister Georgia Louise Eaton Edwards, 72, of 192 McBride Road, Mount Airy, Surry County, North Carolina, passed away on Sunday, February 27, 2005, at her home. She was born October 5, 1932, in Patrick County, Virginia, to the late Roy and Vera Bowman Eaton. For many years she was a faithful employee of Proctor-Silex, Inc., where she retired in recent years.

She leaves behind to mourn her passing three daughters and sons-in-law, Kathy and Douglas Handy, Stuart, VA, Susan and Jerry Shelton, Ararat, VA, and Anita and Eric Linville, Winston-Salem, NC; a son and daughter-in-law, Anthony and Melanie Edwards, Rural Hall, NC, and six grandchildren; three sisters and one brother-in-law, Jean and Claude Young, Ararat, VA, Janice Collins, Winston-Salem, NC and Eva Wyatt, Reidsville, NC; six brothers and four sisters-in-law, Roger Eaton, Tobaccoville, NC, Roscoe Eaton, Stuart, VA, Neal and Effie Eaton, Ararat, VA, Clayton and Valerie Eaton, King, NC, Dillard and Ann Eaton, Dobson, NC, and Terry and Jeanette Eaton, Mt. Airy, NC. In addition to her husband, Mr. Roscoe E. "Bud" Edwards, and her parents, she was preceded in death by a beloved son, Barry Scott Edwards, and one sister, Betty Johnson.

Sister Edwards, received a sweet hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and about the years 1952 or 1953, was received into fellowship of Konner's Grove Primitive Baptist Church, (Laurel Springs Association), Mount Airy, Surry County, North Carolina, where she was baptized by Elder Joe Boles. She had been a member of the church for 53 years at the time of her death. When she passed away,

her membership was with Old Hollow Primitive Baptist Church also in Mt. Airy, North Carolina.

The testimony and Words of Jesus come into meaning at this time when He told His disciples, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) Then He went further and said to them, "If the Son, therefore, shall make you FREE, ye shall be FREE indeed." (John 8:36). The Apostle Paul makes mention of this same FREEDOM that Christ mentioned, when he said, "The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me FREE from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:2). If not deceived, this dear sister's soul had been made FREE from the law of sin and death by the Law of The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, making her a witness to that divine truth that "Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 2:9 and Exodus 14:13). Christ told His disciples, "Ye shall be witnesses unto ME," (Acts 1:8), and being so made, he gave our beloved sister an ear to hear that joyful sound, the Truth. David said, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of their countenance. This sister in Christ was blessed to both hear and know that joyful sound, Salvation is of the Lord. Likewise by being blessed, she could also discern the "uncertain sound." "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" (1st Cor. 14:8). This sister knew that difference and could catch it quickly from the pulpit. She did not hesitate to call it to the attention of the speaker who made it! Her inward ear was sharp.

She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in middle 2004, and death came quickly. This was a blessing since her suffering in the end was considerable. Her close sister, Sister Eva Wyatt, wrote me, "Dear Elder Mewborn: I wish I could put into words what Sister Georgia meant to me. She was a comforter, friend, mother and sister indeed and in truth. I missed her even before she passed away. The dear Lord blest me to be there those last days with her and that meant so much. In my hope I feel to be at peace with her death since I am made to know her soul, body and spirit are forever in God's loving care. A sister in Christ, I hope, Eva Wyatt, Reidsville, NC."

"We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are ASLEEP. 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 with the Lord." (1st Thessalonians 5:15-17). The bodies of the saints of God today are ASLEEP in Jesus, and their souls are at peace and rest in the presence of the Lord.

adise of God. Those who are alive here, when He comes again, will not prevent, nor have any preeminence over those who are ASLEEP in Jesus. As God's people heard the sound of His trumpet, here in this time world, they will hear it once more when IT will awaken them on the morn of the first resurrection, it "not yet appearing now what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1st John 3:2).

J. M. Mewborn
May 5, 2006

RALPH WILLIAM NORRIS
(1912 - 2005)

Brother Ralph W. Norris departed this life, here on earth, on Saturday, October 29, 2005, at Erwin Gardens Rehabilitation Center in Durham, North Carolina. He was born October 8, 1912, in Person County, Roxboro, North Carolina, the son of Ira Coleman Norris and Emma Grinstead Norris. He was ninety-three years of age, when God called him home.

On December 21, 1935, he married the late Rosa Allen Norris. To this union were born two children: a son, Ralph Coleman Norris (deceased), and a daughter, Betsy Rose Norris, Roxboro, North Carolina. There are four grandchildren: Ralph Coleman Norris, Jr., John Allen Norris, Gregory Todd Norris, and Jayne Elizabeth Norris. He had three brothers: Ira Kenneth Norris, of Warwick, Rhode Island, and William Coleman Norris and Robert Norris, both of them deceased.

On July 24, 1943, Uncle Ralph and Aunt Rosa joined Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, and were baptized August 22, 1943, by Elder L. P. Martin and Elder A. B. Barham, both now deceased. Uncle Ralph served as assistant clerk for many years at Flat River Church and was ordained a deacon on Sunday, May 26, 1946. It was a joy for him to serve his church. I remember the last time I saw him serve in the communion service. I don't remember if he served the bread or the wine, but he used his walking cane with one hand and served with the other, while tears ran down his cheeks and a big smile beamed through those tears. He was always interested in the welfare of the church. Since I did not live in Roxboro, I did not get to visit Uncle Ralph often, but when I did, it was truly a pleasure, and he was always so glad to see me.

To Betsy, we say to you that you were blest to do a wonderful job in taking care of your parents. I know it was trying with you at times, but you were enabled to do this for them to the end. Here, I would like to quote a verse of scripture from Psalm 20:1—"The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the Name of the God of Jacob

defend thee".

Our dear brother's and deacon's funeral service was conducted in Flat River Primitive Baptist Church on October 31, 2005, at 11:00 a.m. by his pastor, Elder Paul M. Clark, assisted by Elder Danny Carroll and Elder C. B. Davis, Jr. Burial was in Person Memorial Cemetery, Roxboro, North Carolina.

One of Uncle Ralph's favorite hymns is found on page No. 91, hymn no. 224, Hymn and Tune Book, "On The Mountain Top Appearing, Lo! The Sacred Herald Stands." I feel it appropriate at this time to quote the last verse,

"Peace and joy shall now attend thee;
All thy warfare now is past;
God, thy Saviour, will defend thee;
Victory is thine at last:
All thy conflicts
End in everlasting rest."

I once heard Elder Clark say, "God does not take our troubles from us, but takes us out of them." I believe this to be so true with this brother.

Be it, therefore, resolved by Flat River Primitive Baptist Church that three copies of this obituary be made: one for the family, one for the church records, and one for Zion's Landmark for publication.

Done by order of Flat River Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, North Carolina in conference on November 27, 2005, and written by a niece in love and sweet fellowship,

Irene Allen Holmes
Sumter, SC 29150

CLARABEL JONES MASSEY
(Elberton, Georgia)

On February 19, 2006, Clarabel Jones Massey of Elberton, Georgia, passed from this earth to her eternal home. She was 86 years of age and the widow of Stuart B. Massey. She was preceded in death by her daughter, Merrel Jane Massey Ginn; five Jones brothers: J. V., Clint, Horace, Fred and Sam; and two sisters; Ruth Kidd and Mary Emma Seagraves.

She was born April 9, 1919, in Bostwick, Morgan County, Georgia and was the daughter of the late Samuel H. and Mary Eberhart Jones. She resided in Athens-Clarke County and Madison County, Georgia, most of her life. She retired from the Navy Supply Corps School, Athens, Georgia, and received many awards during her career. She was the tour hostess in the City of Athens, Georgia, for the new Navy officers.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church April 20, 1957 and was a member of Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, when she died. She was Assistant Clerk for Mt. Zion for many years, doing a beautiful job. She also wrote "Historical Notes on Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church", while she was taking a

journalism class at the University of Georgia. Her health prevented her from attending her Church that she loved so dearly for the last several years.

Survivors include one son; Stuart Lynn Massey, six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren, and two sisters, Agnes Marshall and Betty Ford, who are the only ones left out of a family of ten children (five boys and five girls).

Services were held February 22, 2006, at Little-Ward Funeral Home, Commerce, Georgia, with Elder Kenneth Adams officiating. A eulogy was given by her grandson-in-law, Patrick Cramer. She was laid to rest in Gordon's Chapel United Methodist Church Cemetery beside her beloved husband.

Written By:

Sister Betty J. Ford, Clerk and Brother Meredith Watson, Asst. Clerk, Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church. Approved in Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church conference on April 9, 2006.

- DEATH NOTICE - ELDER WALLIS A. SMITH

As this issue of Zion's Landmark goes to press, we have learned of the passing of Elder Wallis A. Smith, June 22, 2006, at his home 1121 Rascoe Dameron Road, Burlington, NC, at age 69 years, after an illness of 3 mos.

Elder Smith united with the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, NC in 1958, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder W.C. King. He was later ordained to the ministry at his home church at this place April 8, 1962. He had served his home church at Bush Arbor since 1970, Gilliam's Church since 1963, Lick Fork Church since 1965, and McCray Church since 1971. He also had served the Upper Country Line Association as moderator with the exception of one year since 1979.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Ella Marie (Massey) Smith, a daughter, Mrs. Diana Smith Walker, a son, Mr. Timothy W. Smith, two grand-daughters, with one brother, Elder Donald Smith, and sister-in-law, Mrs. Lib Smith, both of Burlington, NC.

Elder Smith will be sorely missed by his four churches, where his faithful service, as blest of the Almighty God, rendered him a beloved undershepherd and pastor for their flocks, respectively, some as many as 36 years. In his passing we are blest to recall God's ancient promise that He would be a Father to the fatherless, and a Husband to the widow. (See James 1-27). To his bereft churches we recall the ancient promise of God to them through His servant, David, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor His seed begging bread." (Psalm 37:25).

May it be His blessed Will to remember them in His mercy.

J. M. Mewborn
June 26, 2006

ABBOTT'S CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 179th Annual Session of the Abbott's Creek Association will convene, if the Lord will, with Lamm's Grove Church, Moore County, North Carolina, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in August, 2006, and will continue through Saturday and Sunday following, these dates being 25th, 26th and 27th, inclusively.

Lamm's Grove Church is located in Moore County, North Carolina, about 200 yards off southwest side of U.S. Highway 15-501, six miles east of Carthage, North Carolina, and about ten miles southwest of Sanford, North Carolina. Those coming by way of Sanford, North Carolina, leave U.S. Highway #1 onto U.S. Highway 15-501, and continue westerly for about 5 miles to church site on your left. Those coming eastwardly by way of Carthage, North Carolina, follow U.S. Highway 15-501 to the same point.

We cordially invite our ministering brethren, brethren, sisters and friends to come and be with us this year, 2006 in our 179th session.

James M. Jones, Clerk
Katherine F. Harward, Asst. Clerk

SPECIAL (HISTORICAL) MEETING NOTICE

In our "November-December, 2005" issue of Zion's Landmark we gave an account of the founding of the Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church, organized November 22, 1755, and mentioned the founding of the Abbott's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, the following year, 1756, as a daughter (or branch) of the former.

Abbott's Creek Primitive Baptist Church, located near Kernersville, North Carolina, will hold a 250th Anniversary Meeting, the Lord willing, on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in July (July 29, 2006), for the purpose of thanking and praising the Lord for this blessing. Singing will start at 10:00 A. M.; lunch will be served and afternoon services held. (There will be no evening services.)

Abbott's Creek Primitive Baptist Church is the second oldest Baptist Church in the Triad-piedmont (upper North Carolina) area, and is a mother church to many other churches, all of which originally sprang from Sandy Creek Church in 1755. (The ancient graveyard has original tombstones dating back to the early 1800's.)

Elder Stephen Nichols is pastor, and for additional information please contact him at 1-336-699-8046.

Editor

ZION'S LANDMARK

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

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July - August 2006

Number 4

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THE EXPERIENCE OF GRACE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY OF ELDER P.D. GOLD

"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 and the prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themselves allow, that there a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Acts 24:14-16.

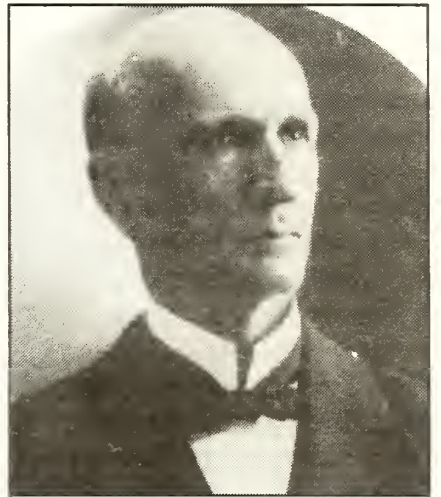
PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

Many have requested me to write my experience and manner of life, but it has seemed to me my life is so poor and sinful that it is unbecoming in me to make much personal reference. However, it is a fact that what each and every one writes reflects his own character and inner life. If a politician writes in bitter flings at the opposite party, it is because his heart is full of that strife. Should one's writing or talk be of lewdness, it is because his soul is full of that filth, and if you could mirror his heart you would see the imagery of this bestiality ruling him. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth

speaketh," according to scripture. (See Matt. 12:34).

The prophets and apostles spoke and wrote as they were moved of the things of Christ Jesus. For they spoke and wrote not by the will of man, but which they had seen and heard through the eye and the ear of faith and their hands had handled of the word of life they had declared unto us. Notice how constantly Paul refers to his own experience in his writings. Indeed, what could we know of redemption were there no living epistle written by the Holy Ghost in our hearts, and known and read by all men. In that sense the apostles were themselves a savor of life unto life in them that have hope they are saved, that is those who are blest and did behold in the apostles so sweet smelling a savor of Jesus that was delightful to them, and they glorified God for such gifts. So, the walk of every true God called servant will be to so act and conduct himself in both word and deed that all that love the Lord Jesus will be captivated with his good conduct. No one should ever be ordained to the ministry that has a bad name among them without, (those that are in the world), that is that acts so badly that outsiders have a right to speak evil of him for his dishonest conduct. It is not persecution for one to be talked about because of his defaulting conduct. The enemies could find no fault in Daniel except concerning his religion. Daniel could say like Paul, "I have defrauded no man, therefore receive us." (See 11 Cor. 7:2)

It is the inner, real life of a child of God that you desire to know. Hence, the writers so often tell of their own joys and sorrows. The scriptures are made up in great part of the recital of the troubles, trials and deliverances of God's people. It is only in this way, or by the fruits they bear, that



ELDER P. D. GOLD
1833 - 1920

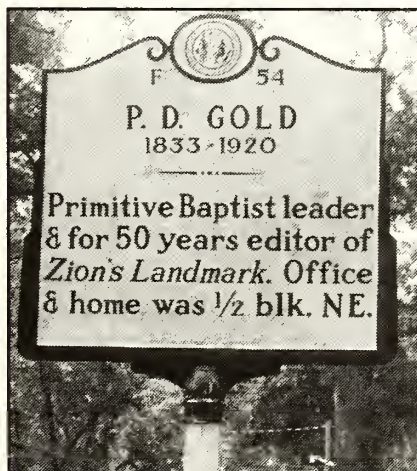
Co-Founder and editor of Zion's Landmark for 50 years from 1870 to 1920. His adversaries used the science of Phrenology on his personal being. (Phrenology is the study of the conformation of the skull as indicative of mental faculties and character.) His adversaries vilified him by saying that "My facial appearance and the construction of my brain made me "a predestinarian", and that my views would land me in the lap of Harshellism." Also, "Pious Dodger Gold is the editor of Zion's Landmark, the Bi-Monthly dream-book of the Hardshells."

one can see the handwriting of Deity in the life of another. Nor is there any other way for you to have hope that you are saved by His grace only as the Lord works in both to will and do of His good pleasure, also His working out of you and making manifest His salvation to others, as well as to your own comfort, so that we will be ready always to every man that ask a reason of hope that is in us with meekness and fear. For one that loves the truth desires to hear you tell what what great things the Lord has done for you, and had mercy on you. Hence, Jesus said to the one out of whom He had cast seven devils, go home to thy friends, and tell them, not what you have done, but what the Lord has done for you, and that is all that we hear of His doing afterward.

P. D. GOLD, CO-FOUNDER OF ZION'S LANDMARK, 136 YEARS AGO, IS REMEMBERED IN THIS ISSUE OF THE PAPER BY PUBLICATION OF HIS EXPERIENCE OF GRACE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

The Zion's Landmark in this July-August 2006 issue is publishing the below writing of one of its founding editors, Elder P. D. Gold. In this article he tells of the personal travail of both his soul, spirit and body, when being brought to the true church of the living God in his early life from a dead state of unbelief. Many of our current readers have never read it, and we believe you will enjoy it. Rather than divide the publication of the article between two issues of the paper, we are publishing it here in its entirety. Elder Gold was highly regarded and respected in his lifetime as an able gift to the church and editor to the paper. This writing took place about the year 1890, and was first published in Zion's Landmark at that time. We believe this article is both inspirational and educational, and is worthy of print.

Editor



P. D. GOLD
1833 - 1920

"Primitive Baptist leader & for 50 years editor of Zion's Landmark. Office & home was 1/2 blk. NE."

(Official North Carolina Division of Archives & History marker for Elder P.D. Gold, located at Vance Street & Maplewood Ave., City of Wilson, Wilson County, N.C.)

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Notwithstanding my embarrassment to refer to myself so much, when an aged and much beloved sister, Percy Ham, of Wayne County, North Carolina, recently said to me she desired to read my experience before she died. She earnestly requested me to write it out and publish it, and there was a willingness of heart to make the attempt. The text of scripture at the head of this article occurred to me this morning as embodying the substance of what it is on my mind to write.

MY RECALLING OF MIND OF MY BOYHOOD DAYS, MY DEVOUT PARENTS, AND THE TRUE ELDER DOBBINS, WHO SERVED THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH OF THEIR MEMBERSHIP.

I was born in what is now called Cleveland County, North Carolina (then it was in Rutherford County) on the waters of Sandy Run Creek, almost on a line equidistant between King's Mountain and Gilberttown, (southwestern North Carolina), places made famous by important scenes and events of the Revolutionary War. When a youth, one of these old soldiers lived near, and this old man is about the only Revolutionary War soldier within my memory. The date of my birth was March 25, 1833, so that the great progress in modern arts and sciences, such as the application of steam to machinery, has been done chiefly within my memory. Such a thing as telegraphy was not known then which has since so revolutionized business. There was not a railroad in operation in all this country at that time.

The name of my father was Milton Gold. My mother's maiden name was Martha Fortune. My father was a farmer and a poor man that never owned a servant (slave), though it was common in the South for men to own slaves. He and my mother with their children did the farm and house work. It was not common for him to hire work done. From early morn to dewy eve it was labor, labor. Seldom did we have a Saturday afternoon off, even for rest or sport. Then it seemed hard for me not to be able to rome and play or frolic.

For they did not allow their children to go to dances or parties. It was only a short while after crops were laid by that we went to school a few weeks. Our winters were spent chiefly in clearing up large new grounds for cultivation. That boys and girls of this generation may know how my time was spent in youth, this part is written. Now the memory of my parents, also, is dear to me for giving me the severe discipline while in my youth. I have been made to realize and appreciate it now!

What were my habits of life? While my morals, as I thought, were fairly good, yet, I believed my nature was abominably corrupt. It is not my way of thinking to gloss over crime, nor blacken that which is good. While men in writing memoirs of life or obituaries of those gone on hide the faults and magnify the virtues of their subjects, this is not according to the pattern shown in the mount. The scriptures tell of our first father's sin, and of our first mother's nakedness. It does not keep back the drunkenness of Noah, nor the adultery of David, nor the backsliding of his son, Solomon, nor the faults of God's people. When the Bible records the ugly traits of one, it does not select an obscure person, but includes the king on the throne, as well as the humble and obscure, is selected. God caused the writers of His book to tell the truth. He is the God without partiality. Just and right is He.

While I was never drunk with intoxicating liquor until I was grown, yet since then it has been shown to me that my thoughts were vile and every abomination dwelt in me. It was about the time of my birth and th division among Baptists began on the Mission question that Andrew Fuller and his aids devised in the preceding century, but the progress of Fuller's methods did not spread so rapidly in that country. For in my youthful days there was not a salaried preacher, nor a Sunday school, nor any of the modern machinery of the Missionary Baptists in all that country.

My father and mother were members of Sandy Run Baptist Church of the predestinarian faith and order in my youthful days. Elder Drury Dobbins, ""Uncle Drury" as many called him, was the pastor of that church. Not within my memory or observation either has a preacher been beloved or more deservedly so. His grave is dear to me now. Last summer, it seemed to me his dust was made so precious to me, as a friend and and myself visited it. Elder Dobbins was a true Predestinarian Baptist by any standard, and preached the whole truth ably. He was wonderfully gifted, and his conduct was exceptionally good. His manners were captivating, his wit without slur, his wisdom above guile, his eloquence burning, his speech sublime and his expositions of Scripture were indicted by the Holy Ghost. In the memory of the old people, he yet lives in that country.

It was as a youth that my days were passed under that wonderful preaching. Who can tell the power and influence of a Godly preacher on a community, county, state, or nation?

THE DAY AFTER HIS DEATH AND FUNERAL OF THIS TRUE ELDER, DRURY DOBBINS, THE MISSIONARIES TAKE OVER HIS CHURCH.

Elder Dobbins opposed the new measures of Missions in full as long as he lived. He was not in favor of protracted meetings, and stood as a wall against Mission schools to teach people how to preach, money beggars, and all that hive of modern schemes to control the world so endorsed and practiced by modern missions. He kept those things

out of the churches he served and out of the Broad River Association as long as he lived. These things are remembered by me. Besides, they are admitted in a history of the Broad River Association, recently written by one of its leading Missionaries, J.R. Logan, Esq., a man that was personally known to me a well and an honorable man. Drury Scruggs preached the funeral of Elder Dobbins about the year 1845. This man lauded Elder Dobbins with all the force of his speech, (the writer was present). On the next day he when down to Sandy Run Meeting House, at the church where Elder Dobbins had been pastor, perhaps 40 years, and had preached the doctrine of election and predestination or grace faithfully so long, and this man, Scruggs, said at a protracted meeting they had commenced, "As for the doctrine of election and predestination, I stamp my foot upon it," accompanying the remark with that ugly action of his foot on the pulpit floor in a very boisterous, loud, angry manner.

Then Missionism began to sprout up, and spread all over that country. Soon, it had overrun the entire country, and has deluged it ever since.

In my early days in the 1840's & 1850's, these protracted meetings were common everywhere. After crops were cultivated in the leisure weeks of August and September, the preachers would hold them and frighten people with their graveyard tales and old wives' fables,

Zion's Landmark

"Remove not the ancient Landmark which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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and get them up to the mourner's bench to get religion, as they called it.

Such scenes as these often frightened me, and to escape the awful doom they pictured, the young people generally, and myself among them, would kneel for prayer. Many made a profession of religion at such meetings, and many too, that professed afterwards, made it verbally manifest that they knew nothing of the truth. What is the good of so reproaching the blessed worship of God by these desecrations? By the lawful and true preaching of the gospel all that are ordained to eternal life will believe. Much scandal is brought on that blessed name of Jesus by such unhallowed measures. It is good to have gospel preaching, and God will not leave Himself without a witness. This gospel of His kingdom has already been preached to the end of the world, and the Jewish world has come to an end.

When attending these meetings many would be seized with paroxysms of such excitement that they would become quite excited and then sink into a semiconscious state for a while. After the excitement would pass off, the reaction would bring a calm, which the preachers would then tell them was religion. But to me there was no such feelings. Often my desire was to be made to feel my sins as others seemed to feel theirs, but my heart was as unfeeling as a stone. Satan or my evil nature would suggest to me to commit some sinful deed in order to bring on conviction, but still hardness of heart was my lot. What a gloomy state this has since appeared to me. There was no true fear of God, no life toward Him, no knowledge of sins, or the dreadful estate of a lost sinner. It was a state of delusion and deceitfulness, when no truth was preached. If ever the true doctrine of truth was once preached in all that dreary time, it is unknown to me. It was held out by all their preachers that it is left with the sinner to determine about his salvation. The Lord has done all that He can do to save sinners, only He is now standing, waiting and waiting,

willing and ready, but He has no power over the sinner, unless the sinner will step forward, meeting Him halfway, allowing Him to come into his heart and save him. Such a thing, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to Me; and him that come to me I will in no wise cast," (John 6:38), was never hinted. All exhortations were to the ungodly or chiefly so, and the dead sinner was represented as having power of himself to accept or reject, and if sinners did not accept, these preachers would be swift and willing witnesses against them in the final judgment.

IN MY STATE OF UNBELIEF I WAS DRAWN INTO THEIR MISSIONARY MOVEMENT AND SUBMITTED TO THEIR BAPTISM.

When about 21 years of age at one of these meetings, some excitement seemed to get hold of me and my hope was that it was conviction of sin. A few tears were shed and on my way home one night a kind of relief came which appeared to me then as religion. The next day, they received me and baptized me soon. But there was no change in my views of faith or doctrine. The same notion that was held by me in all my youthful days, that salvation is attainable as the result of creature effort, were still held by me, though my mother had often repeated these words in my hearing, "Salvation is of the Lord." Nor was there any change in my inner and outward life or my affections. It may have been that more care was taken that my conduct should give no offense to others, for pride would prompt a young man of my views and aspirations to maintain a decent regard for good behavior.

The question has often been agitated in my mind, whether such a system of religion, wherein preachers and their theories, and not the love and fear of God, controls the minds of the membership of such churches, is any profit to mankind or not. That the converts of this system deny the power of God, yet maintaining an outward show and form of religion, is apparent. For if you will talk with one of them on the subject of religion, his

idea of faith will be that it is first all up to the natural man, and the limit and test of self-denial is to pay the preacher and give a few dimes to save the heathen, and maintain a decent behavior, claiming at the same time that money can send the gospel anywhere. He will tell you that unless the money is sent, the heathen are lost, but that if it is sent, they will be saved, while he himself may be worth his thousands, yet not give ten dollars a year for that purpose. He will not tell you of his personal experience, knows nothing of being a lost, ruined and condemned sinner, has never felt the power of Jesus in his soul, nor the comforts and guidance of the Holy Spirit. He thinks the doctrine held by the Old Baptists the most dangerous and horrible of any ever held by anywhere. He cannot endure the doctrine of election and a life of faith. He thinks there is no kind of drunkenness but that of liquor. Education is absolutely indispensable to qualify one to preach the gospel he holds.

Such were my views before and after the time here spoken of. My glorying was in the Missionary Baptist denomination, and not once did ever the question arise in my mind, "Can they be wrong, or myself either?" Occasionally in an encounter with a Primitive Baptist during the Civil War, as we would argue on subjects and differ, did it occur to me what a dangerous doctrine they do preach and hold, how ignorant, selfish and conceited they must be.

IN THE HUMAN WORLD OF LIFE'S BEGINNINGS MY INTENT WAS TO STUDY LAW AND BECOME A LAWYER, BUT MY ASSOCIATES SAID I WAS MARKED FOR A MINISTER. HERE, MY TROUBLES BEGAN.

Every part of my natural ambition, when a young man, was to be a lawyer. When between twenty and twenty-one years of age and just before joining the Missionary Baptist, my academic course at school began. As soon as they received me as a member, it was remarked that there will be a preacher. This was very distasteful to me. For

amid all my imaginings in my youthful days as to my occupation in after life, it never occurred to me at all that I would be made to carry the name of any kind of a preacher. There was nothing in it of any charm to me. My ambition was to be a lawyer. A few years found me with my legal diploma and damaged morals- damaged not because of the legal profession, but because it was in me before and began to rage. It is not good to charge one's bad conduct to his associates or occupation. The source of the trouble is in the man. If he were right, he would choose good associates and pursue a righteous course of life. Man is weak, morally corrupt, totally depraved, having no margin or reserve force against temptation, and should not presume that he could weather any storm, whether small or violent. Let him choose the safest craft he may and steer in the calmest waters, and even then he may make shipwreck.

Soon my soul was plunged into much trouble in consequence of reckless living. Then it occurred to me that the best way to do was to preach. This was decided upon as the antidote for my troubled conscience. But to be a great preacher was the next step. The Civil War in a few years came on before my course was complete, and I left school. Now, a new trouble confronted me. Debts to the amount of about \$3,000 were on my hands, and I had nothing with which to pay. For the first time a mountain of trouble stood towering and threatening at me. Such had been my thirst for education that this difficulty had not much embarrassed me until now. For one may be so absorbed in the pursuit of a cherished object that he will quite forget or scarcely notice great dangers, even imminent our feelings. My father had always advised me not to make debts, yet my lot so far had been to be in debt from the time of my majority.

During the war (1861-1865) in the town of Goldsboro (N.C.), my marriage occurred. The woman given me of the Lord possessed no worldly goods. In this respect we

were equals. In purity of character she was and is yet far my superior. For the Lord has blessed me among many other things with a good wife. During the War and after my marriage, a friend gave me \$5,000. The Confederate money was used as far as my creditors would receive it in payment of my debts contracted for my education and otherwise, and it liquidated nearly all of them which was a great relief to me.

I MOVED TO SCOTLAND NECK, N.C. TO SERVE THE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH AT THIS PLACE, WHERE "I GLORIED IN THAT DENOMINATION, WHILE MY HEART WAS SO CONDEMNED, RENDERING ME TOTALLY UNFIT TO PREACH TO ANYONE."

After the War was over for about five years we lived at Scotland Neck, in Halifax County, North Carolina. During the War my troubles began in another and severer form more than ever. While attending my usual course of service as a Missionary preacher and glorying in that denomination, in a manner wholly beyond my conception or control, it appeared to me that my heart was completely full of sin, rendering me totally unfit to preach to anyone. The people were kind to me, the congregation large, and prospects flattered outwardly, but there was no pleasure for me. It increased until it seemed to me that to be allowed to crawl under the house and not be seen, but merely suffered to hear someone preach, would far better benefit my desperate case. The thoughts of my heart were foolishness. Sin was an unbearable burden to me. My house was trouble and anguish of soul weighed down hard on me. For months this darkened state of feeling oppressed me. The justice of God appeared so clearly in my condemnation that the words, amen to my condemnation, seemed fittest. God appeared so holy and my nature so vile that it looked to me that no place but hell could be suitable for such a sinner. Sin seemed as a tempest raging in me, and it looked to me that if a great stone were dropped in the

atmosphere, as it could have no power to resist its own fall, but its own weight would hurl it down, so my own sins were driving me justly to destruction, nor did it even enter my thoughts that this was conviction of sin that would end in salvation for me; for there was no hope for me.

WHILE TRAVELING BY HORSEBACK ONE DAY DURING THESE AWFUL MOMENTS, "SUDDENLY JESUS WAS REVEALED TO ME IN A GLORIOUS APPEARANCE IN THE HEAVENS."

In the midst of these awful moments while riding on horseback, suddenly Jesus was revealed to me in a glorious appearance in the heavens, and these words were sounded out as plainly as if spoken to me, "If God give you Christ, how shall He not with Him also freely give you all things." This occurred on the 15th of February, 1865.

A NEW WORLD AND THE DAWNING OF ANOTHER DAY OF BRIGHTNESS HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO ME, ACCOMPANIED BY AN OPPOSITION OF SEVERE RIDICULE, TAUNTING AND MOCKERY.

It did not then occur to me that is salvation. My mind seemed to be wholly absorbed in the contemplation of the glorious character of Jesus. The load of guilt and sin was gone, and peace reigned in my happy soul, and self was lost sight of for a time. The glorious character and kingdom of Jesus appeared to me as it had never done before. It seemed to me as a new world, but with my preaching it was different. At once Christ appeared to me as the only way of truth. This in letter or words for years had been held by me, but now in a new spiritual and glorious form it appeared and possessed my spirit, and thus the character of my preaching was changed; for from that it was that Jesus is THE CHRIST.

New views of the Church and the Truth of salvation opened up to me, so that questions arose concerning Christ and His Kingdom in a manner so distinct and unmistakable that they were answered in my conscience only by preaching Christ as my righteousness and the

righteousness of saints. Jesus appeared to me from that time in power and glory as the Head of the church, having all power both in heaven and earth. There was then nothing else for me to preach but Jesus. All else was excluded from my heart and conscience. Money, Sunday schools, Boards of men, Theological schools, human learning, the force and strength of combinations of men, all disappeared, nor was it in my heart to preach them anymore. Jesus appeared to me as the righteousness of saints, and ever since that time, more than twenty-five years ago, it has seemed to me there is nothing else for me to speak or attempt to preach. We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The matter of preaching has been a grave and serious question to me for many years. It was the most offensive thing to my feelings, and never, if this nature of mine had been suffered to dictate my course of life, would this have been my lot. How it came to pass that I was made willing was the most soul-humbling. It was a crucifying of my nature and caused an immolation of my most cherished objects on earth. But to be made willing to swallow down all that I had endorsed and espoused, to renounce that which had been so dear to me, namely, the institutions and doctrines of modern missionism, and discard all my former associates, and to worship after the way they call heresy, was a sore trial, so much that nothing but divine power could lead me to do this.

They at once began to reprove me for that sort of preaching, and to tell me it was not profitable, and would scatter the congregation of people, and wither the church; that while it would do to talk predestination and election around the chimney-corner to old women, or to serve old established Christians, it was not palatable to a general and mixed congregation composed in considerable part of

unbelievers, and that the experience of their people was that in order to hold, and build the congregations and win converts, the preaching must be abated and watered-down to the taste of the hearers. It may as well be remarked here that the more of such arguments as this were advanced, the weaker their cause appeared to me.

OUT OF RIDICULE, IT WAS SAID THAT MY FACIAL APPEARANCE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MY BRAIN MADE ME "A PREDESTINARIAN," AND THAT MY VIEWS WOULD LAND ME IN THE LAP OF "HARD-SHELLISM."

Others said it is the disposition of some men to take this view of questions and see only the Lord's work in operation. But not until recently had it so appeared to me. A great and radical change had passed over me. Once, I had believed as they did, and encountered lovers of predestination with the same arguments they now assailed me, and that which once appeared to me as glorious had been stripped of its beauty. Now, the Lord appeared to me as the great Operator of all the powers and forces of the universe, and we are only as dust and ashes in His Hand.

HERE AT THE POINT MY SEARCH FOR THE TRUE CHURCH BEGAN, AND TO FIND THE PEOPLE THAT HELD AND LOVED WHAT HAD BEEN REVEALED TO ME.

My search for the true church began, and to find the people that held and loved what had been revealed to me, and to find a people congenial to me, for what would the true church be to one that loved it or not, nor had any of its truth hidden in his inward parts. But if God is in one, then that spirit of truth will lead that soul to cry out for the true and living God, and seek rest, and when the church of Jesus Christ is revealed, there will he find rest and there will he abide.

To suppose that such as God teaches will not love His people and doctrine is an absurdity. No sound of ax or iron tool will ever be needed, nor will it ever be heard, to change a vessel of mercy brought into this temple to

cause it to fit and fill its pre-determined place in the building.

Many and painful were my perplexities, and long and bitter were the trials that for about five years beset me in this search. I became thoroughly convinced that the people of my early choice and myself could not, or would we ever agree. They could not see things as they appeared to me, nor could I be in fellowship with them. My soul thirsted for a people of simple manners, that loved electing grace, that rejoiced in the power of Jesus, that lived in hope, that walked by faith, and contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, a people that worship God as the fathers did, relying alone on the word and power of God, and that believe that all things that God hath spoken by the Psalms, the law and the prophets or in the Scriptures, shall assuredly come to pass, or teaching none other things than the law and the prophets did say should come to pass, that Christ should suffer and should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people (Jews) and to the Gentiles, having hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust, which they themselves also allow. For there are some things which all denominations of the world allow to be right.

But the great question is, "What think ye of Christ?" Of old they rejected Him in totality, but in modern days they preach a christ, but not The Christ, The Lord. They preach a christ that has no power until the sinner helps Him, or becomes willing to let Him try to save them. They preach a christ that died for everybody and rose again for their justification, and still many will not be saved by reason of their own neglect or derelict for whom He died.

THE BLESSED TRUTH IS REVEALED TO ME

It now appeared to me that Jesus is the sovereign, omnipotent King in the holy hill of Zion, and that He has all power both in heaven and in earth, power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as God has given Him, and all the people of God are taught of

Him, and, therefore, great shall be their peace.

When my affection was turning to the strangest people on earth that I had so opposed, I had an interview with Elder John Stamper, and in the conversation I said in substance, it appeared to me that the the child of God is not under the law,****but under grace, that if one is under the law of Moses as a rule of life, he must be under its penalty also, for a law without a penalty has no force, and, if one is no longer under its penalty which is death for any transgression, then there is an abounding love, abiding peace and salvation for a believer in Jesus; but Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and a believer is now under law to Christ who is our Law-giver, our Judge and our King who will save us; for He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. The old brother replied "that is our doctrine, that is what we believe." How good it seemed to me to find that people and that Church that believed as I did, and my soul loved them.

AT THE FIRST THOUGHT OF GOING TO THE OLD BAPTISTS, MY HUMAN PRIDE REBELLED,

But, with the idea of going to that people, my pride rebelled. The more I pressed my searches for the truth, the more the Primitive Baptists appeared to me as worshipping as the fathers of old did, or as God's people had always worshiped and served Him since the beginning of time.

Entangled in the wilderness, what hard fare I had, no peace, no rest. The question between peace of conscience and self-interest, the fear of God or the snare of man, whether to forsake all for and follow Jesus, or remain with those I was with and enjoy natural prosperity and wealth of the people I was then with, whether to unite, if they would have me with a scorned, poor people, few in number and despised, hated, evilly spoken of by all nations, and be ostra-

cized by my former friends for renouncing all I had ever confessed, and contending for the doctrine that never will be popular with the world, or remain as I had been, was a most distressing question. For it is no easy matter for one to be made to change his church relations. One that has never traveled in this way can never know the trouble and distress it will cause. You will have to experience it and those who have traveled this road well know what I am talking about.

It was said, "If you go to the Hardshells they will ram you down in a corner and not help you any, and you will starve for bread." It did look that way. This Scripture was much on my mind:

"And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my sake, and the gospel's shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren and sisters, and mothers, and children and lands with persecution; and in the world to come eternal life", (See Mark 10;29,30.), which has proven true in my case, and the God who begins this delight is able to finish the matter.

Another Scripture was on my mind for months whenever I would attempt to fill an appointment, yet I dared not use it as a text, for its meaning was too plain to me.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, said the Lord Almighty." II Cor. 6:17.

There was no agreement or fellowship between myself and those I was with. Many of them were dear to me and we were good friends, but on doctrine we would not see together. Was it right to them or me for me to stay with them? We could not walk together because we were not agreed; but how hard to leave them and give this offense. When I left them, they would have no more dealings with me, for they called it heresy. It often seems to me now that it would be a great pleasure to

me to visit their congregations and preach to them, (if enabled) the power of Jesus and the resurrection.

I WAS INWARDLY BOMBARDED WITH MANY DIFFICULT, SUNDRY QUESTIONS DURING THE TIME OF MY CONVICTION

The question would often arise, how do you know that you are right? The answer to this would rise up in my deliverance. How did you receive Christ? By works of the law, or the hearing of faith, or was Jesus revealed to you according to or for your works?

Then the question would arise, how will you live if you go? and the words in that Scripture, "I will be to you a Father, etc.," would ring and sound as if He commanded the universe, and, therefore, would supply all my need.

The question would arise, "What about Sunday Schools? Are they not doing great good?" Look at the numbers that advocate them and how they get people into this organization that way when they are young and thus they mold and shape their lives as they please, and bring them up as they wish. Are they not thus doing a great work? Without Sunday schools how can we get along, they would say. They are the greatest institutions in the world. Well, it appeared to me if they were really so important as all this, would there not be some words in their favor in the Bible? For that is the Book to decide all such questions, and the Bible thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto all good work. But on looking into and searching that Book, it is seen that Sunday schools are not once named. So it was with other pet measures of this denomination. None of them are once named.

DURING THE TIME OF MY CONVICTION I SOUGHT COUNSEL AND COMPANIONSHIP FROM ELDER C. B. HASSELL.

I asked Elder C.B. Hassell about feet-washing, for it was on my mind that it is right to wash feet. He said that Primitive Baptists washed feet-that some washed all together after the Lord's supper and others did not wash at that time, but they would wash at sometime whenever it was

on the mind of any member to wash and he would ask others if they would join in with him, and thus they would engage both in the spirit and in the literal act of feet-washing. I well remember the first opportunity offered for Christ's given example after being received by the Primitive Baptists. It was at a brother's house. He brought his basin and water and girded himself with a napkin at night at his own house, and washed my feet and I washed his feet. Since then I have a number of times washed feet with the church after the Lord's supper, and to me there is no difference in the answer of peace in each and every case. Nor is there ever a sweeter feeling of peace received after my experience in the participation of Christ's example of humility. If brethren have this humility in their hearts and are given to perform it, they are happy in the deed.

WHAT ARE TRUE ZEAL AND TRUE REFORM? QUESTIONS THAT WERE BORNE UPON MY MIND AT THE TIME OF MY CHANGE.

The question of reform has been much on my mind. What is true zeal? Jehu boasted of his zeal for the Lord, and asked one to come with him and look at his zeal. He was raised up to kill a wicked king and others, but ah, himself was wicked also in some things.

To not condemn another in which that you allow in yourself is moderation. To require in another more than you render yourself in anything, while you offend at all, is making yourself a judge of evil thoughts.

Whenever a brother pushes his zeal so far as to destroy churches for a point of order, beware of him. There are many things crooked that we cannot make straight. The great place for a reformation to commence is in one's own life. Some would be great reformers, but alas, they do all their work on others, and see no fault in themselves. If you are with a people you cannot fellowship, withdraw from them and let them alone. If you say, I cannot leave them, there is no other place for me to go but to stay, then try to correct evils mercifully, not by

tearing up churches, or wringing the nose to force blood. Take care if you use violence and smite and tear up churches, that you yourself are not smitten in turn.

FOOT WASHING

I am satisfied to have forbearance with the spirit of feet-washing. If Jesus or any one of His disciples had ever said that a church must wash feet every time they commune, thus making feet-washing a test of fellowship among the brethren, or if there is a single example where the church in the days of the apostles observed feet-washing in connection with the Lord's supper after the resurrection of Jesus, then we should require it thus done now; but as this does not appear in the scriptures, it is not wise to enforce this to the destruction of churches. The reason I engage in feet-washing at the Lord's supper, or at other times, is because it is plainly taught that we should wash one another's feet, and the time or place is not so important as the act being done in the right spirit.

Washing feet is taught in such a way as to show and make manifest the very spirit of feet-washing or humility, and so it was impressed on me in those days of affliction and famine wherein the things I am recording were taught me by the Hand of God in the furnace of affliction, and my views were cast and molded in the molten sea of trouble, and searching inquiry, when deep called unto deep at the noise of His waterspouts. Do not tear up churches because they do not wash feet literally; may our God bless us to wait and show the spirit of forbearance and brotherly kindness by washing feet literally and long-suffering towards our brethren, remembering God's long-suffering to us-ward. **FINALLY, ALL OBJECTIONS TO THE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS WERE REMOVED, MYSELF WAS IN THE WAY-MY UNFITNESS, BUT STILL I LOVED THEM SO THAT IT WAS MY DESIRE ALMOST EVERY MOMENT TO BE WITH THEM.**

It was on Saturday before second Sunday in March, 1870, at Old Kehukee Church, and at the old meeting house, that I went and told them but

little, for I have never been able to express my travail in full. They received me into that church, and on the next day Elder C.B. Hassell, a precious brother to me, baptized me. It was in the same stream of water and the same place that I had baptized many when a Missionary Baptist, and many of them were present to behold the stoop. as they viewed it. The time had been when this would have been an intolerable disgrace. But that day it appeared to me that I was a dead man, so quiet and peaceful and so restful. Glory was everywhere and peace and love. It was on that day that the words that had been burdening my mind so long "Wherefore come ye out from among them," etc., were used by me as a text. It did not seem to me, while making my first attempt among the Old Baptists, as preaching, but it was the sweetest ease and relish, as the long pent up matter was emptied and I felt so refreshed. That text has never since burdened my mind.

MY GODLY PARENTS, MILTON AND MARTHA FORTUNE GOLD, WHO WERE BAPTIZED INTO FELLOWSHIP OF THE TRUE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, FOLLOWED THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT, BUT LATER RETURNED TO THE CHURCH OF THEIR FIRST LOVE.

After being received into the fellowship of the church. I visited my father's section, and there was a little church of the Primitive Baptist faith in the neighborhood (back in Cleveland County, N.C.) in which Elder Drury Dobbins had lived and died. A seed had been sown there and a remnant was preserved. My mother heard me speak, though she and my father had both gone off with the New School or Missionary Baptist. When she heard me she said, "Son, you preach as they did when I was baptized, and I desire to live with you." She was received there on a confession of faith and her former baptism. Some time after this, she and my father were in Wilson, N.C., and when he heard the preaching and saw the order of worship of the Primitive Baptist people here, he said it carried him back to

the days when he was first baptized, for it was like that, and he desired fellowship with us and was also received on confession of faith. My grandfather's and grandmother's on each side of my family were also Primitive Baptists, and thus my fathers' God is, I hope, my God. "My father's God and I will exalt Him." Ex. 15:2. Who is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Lord of our fathers? It is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, and the God of all comfort. Him only do I desire to worship and serve. What a blessed mystery to have that blessed hope that one is a child of God, born of God and identified with and related to the whole household of faith and of Israel.

I WAS THAT PRODIGAL SON, WHO AFTER COMPLETING HIS JOURNEY INTO THE FAR COUNTRY, WAS BLEST TO RETURN HOME TO HIS FATHER'S HOUSE. (see Luke 15:11-32).

There was then another matter that was unfolded in my experience. It was the case of what is called the prodigal son. I was that prodigal that had come home, been brought home, and, the fatted calf was slain for me, the ring of love was put on my hand, the garment of praise had covered me, then was feasting, music, and dancing in my soul. This lasted for months. Why cannot one remain in that blessed estate of love, feasting and obedience for life? What a sweet life it looks like it would be. But alas, as we leave our first love, coldness, doubts, barrenness and trouble set in.

GOD REVEALED AND SHOWED ME THE BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ARMINIAN DOCTRINE OF UNLIMITED, GENERAL ATONEMENT AND THE FREE-GRACE DOCTRINE OF UNLIMITED ATONEMENT, AS BELIEVED AND UPHELD BY THE OLD BAPTIST.

One very prominent question that much exercised my mind for years was the nature and extent of the atonement made by Jesus Christ. The Arminians claim an unlimited general atonement and say they preach free grace and free salvation which they

charge the Primitive Baptists in not doing. The Primitive Baptists truly believe and preach an unlimited atonement, and the Arminians can scarcely be said to preach any atonement. God's people here believe that no power on earth or hell can prevent the salvation of the sheep for whom Christ shed His blood and laid down His precious life. For all power both in heaven and in earth is in His hands, and He has power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him. But those who preach that many for whom Christ died are eternally lost, do certainly limit His atonement. While those that preach that Christ hath forever perfected them that are sanctified by the one offering of Himself once, do most certainly preach an unlimited atonement. That is, we hold that so effectual and perfect is the atonement of Jesus, the price that he paid down for the redemption of sinners, that nothing shall ever prevent the coming to Him of any or all those for whom Jesus died. Our God is unlimited in His sovereign power to accomplish this!

The Arminians preach what they call an universal atonement, that Christ died to save everybody, every human being or all mankind, but it is really no atonement at all. It is dependent on conditions to be performed by man that so fetter and clog their so called atonement of Jesus that many man-made things, controlled by man, as they say, may defeat it, or render it ineffectual and powerless. It is left completely with the creature, entirely and altogether, whether he will repent or not. If he does not, although Christ died as much for him as He did for any other person that was actually saved in the eternal covenant, that person never will be saved. They hold that Christ died as much for all that are finally lost as He did for any that are in His election with His Father before the world began. He died for all, they say. The man must first act, however!

Whether the heathen are saved, they say, depends on many contingencies and conditions, such as whether covetous man will give enough

money to send the gospel here and there, and then whether any go to preach to them afterwards, and then whether the heathen will repent and believe, and, further, whether they will live a Godly life and none of these things are at all made certain by the death and resurrection of Jesus; but all are dependent on the creature (so-called) effort. Now according to this belief, where is any guarantee or certainty in the atonement of Christ in the shedding of His Blood or the salvation of anyone? Is this not a most limited and uncertain atonement? Indeed, is it any atonement at all?

The Primitive Baptists preach it is the power of God that quickens the dead, and that Jesus, having all power, quickens whom He will, and makes sinners willing in the day of His power, and that He saves and calls them with a holy calling, and not according to their works; and that all that passively call on the name of the Lord shall be saved, and that everyone that thirsts righteously shall be filled, and whosoever is drawn by God's Spirit will come to Jesus and shall be saved, and that all that are weary and heavy laden are among the redeemed; also, they believe that salvation is free and given without money or price or previous goodness of the creature; nor is it based on his good works foreseen, but contrawise, it causes the sinner to perform good works and lead a Godly life.

Salvation is a free "gift" in every and all senses of the meaning of the word "gift" by grace alone..

Preaching too is a gift, and those that the Lord calls to preach receive their qualifications and preparations of Him.

I HAVE MY TROUBLES AND THEY ARE CONCERNING MYSELF.

It is through much tribulation that we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. My trouble is not with the people my lost is cast among, nor with the doctrine they hold, as Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee," and the feeling of my desire and heart is "Thy people shall be my people,

and thy God my God." (Ruth 1:16).

The Primitive Baptists have faults and know that they are sinners. Nor do we occupy the land or live as we should. Their strength is decayed, and burdenbearers are weak. The strength and force of discipline is much wasted, and we have departed from the living God in many things. Still, they come nearer to the ancient landmarks than any people within my knowledge. They are blessed to know the truth and rest in Jesus alone in Him for salvation.

My trouble is concerning myself. My unbelief and disobedient conduct give me more trouble than anything, and yet it seems to me that it does not grieve me deeply enough, or I would be given deeper repentance. Daily, nothing but grace can reach my case. As I look back and can see my life, how abased I am made to feel. Persecuting the church, reckless in manners, and if called to preach, it is in such a way as to humble me for life, having been brought from the land of Moab. IF a child of God at all, having only a fleshly experience, I was taught the depths of Satan by going through its cheats and practicing in its pretensions; if there is one that can truly say by the grace of God I am what I am, it is myself.

Still, after so much that should humble me, I am yet a sinner, no better, but rather worse.

If others have whereof to glory in works, I have the Lord Jesus to glory in who had mercy on me and saved me. If others may seem to glory in salvation by works, it does seem that none could blame me for loving the doctrine of salvation by grace. For nothing else could save me.

I can never ascertain to a certainty that I am a child of God. We are saved by hope, and we walk by faith. In this faith is the giving of diligence to make our calling and election sure. The true calling of God is a life-time matter, nor is it finished while we are here in this mortal state.

As to the matter of preaching, it has never been clear to my mind that I am called of God to preach, as we know

things naturally. It appears to me, if I could know that God has called me to serve thus in the gospel of His Son, that it would, next to my own salvation, be the greatest thing to know; and if I could know my services thus rendered are of the Lord and to the profit of His people, then it would be the sweetest and best of all labor.

When I was received among the Primitive Baptists, I was made to lay my services at their feet, and said on the day that I was received that if my services were not of the Lord, my desire was to cease, and that if I could quit, I would like to do so immediately.

But with me it is not a matter of choice, nor am I able to keep my mouth shut or hold my peace; yet, I am not able to decide fully without any fear that I am a gospel preacher, and still I am afraid to try to stop, nor do I dare do so.

THE GOSPEL MINISTRY IS A SOUL-HUMBLING LIFE, A LIFE OF TRIALS AND STRAITS.

This is a soul-humbling life, a life of trial and straits. The question is never with me, "what money shall I receive," but it is "What will God bless me to give, if anything?" It is more blessed to give than to receive. Have I anything of the Lord to give? Has He blessed me with the truth to His people? I am poor in this world's goods and expect to be as long as I live. Yet, the Lord supplies my need. He has cast my lot as an editor, and by my own labor I earn my bread for myself and those that are with me, and this is in harmony with my views of labor and natural obligations. When another elder and editor of our faith is in harmony with my views, then my labor is ennobling, and if by word of pen or writing I am blessed of the Lord to serve Him, it is enough for me. It does appear to me that money and the love of it is degrading and that the best employment of man is to seek nobler things than worldly gain. While some suppose that gain is Godliness, it does not occur to me that a soul is ever redeemed with money, or any such corruptible things as silver and gold, and, therefore, money nor the

giving of money, and others can ever atone for sin, nor save a soul, either in this land or in any other country or world for that matter.

The maintaining of these principles, and others that the Primitive Baptists hold, will render one necessarily unpopular with the world. IF ye were of the world, it would love its own. We must be crucified to the world, hated of all men for the sake of Jesus, and our names cast out as evil.

AFTER MY ORDINATION TO THE MINISTRY AT OLD KEHUKKEE CHURCH ON SATURDAY BEFORE THE SECOND SUNDAY IN MARCH, 1870, THE SAME DAY I WAS BAPTIZED, I MOVED TO WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA, WHERE I BECAME EDITOR OF ZION'S LANDMARK.

It was in 1871, contrary to any and all my expectations or thought that I was requested to move to Wilson, North Carolina, where my room has been ever since. A contract had been made for me to live elsewhere and teach school. This contract was canceled by mutual consent.

Soon after moving to Wilson, Elder L.I. Bodenheimer, who was then Editor of this paper, requested me to become Associate Editor with him, and pretty soon afterwards, it came into my hand. All of this was unforeseen by me, unthought of an unsought, but as the way opened, I found myself willing, if enabled of the Lord, to serve in this way. Though feeling incompetent, yet it seems impressed on me thus to serve, and if it is profitable to the household of faith, that is reward enough for me. This, too, seems to be the way divine Providence has prepared and opened for me to support my family and self with food and raiment together with the little help otherwise received. But, it is mainly, indeed, nearly all, obtained in this way.

It has been the disposition of my mind or according to my feelings to serve my home churches. But seldom do I take any trip otherwise than as a pastor, visiting the same churches I've been endeavoring to serve for years, though it would be a pleasure to me to often visit other sister churches.

The brethren have borne surprisingly with me and my infirmities, while they are **accused as sinners and selfish.** I know there is one sinner

among them and that one is myself. They are kind and loving people, and have shown me much kindness.

For about twelve years my health was very poor, and it was unusually much of an effort to keep going; but within the last year or two it is better. It was the Lord that healed me, for in Him we live and move and have our being. Having obtained mercy of the Lord, I continue to this present time, testifying repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

My hope is toward God, if not a deceived soul. Many are my heart-sinkings and heart-searching at times. Heavy burdens of a sense of vileness and friendliness pass over me; yet, the Lord delivers and I trust and hope He will yet deliver. There is hope that when our brief stay on earth has passed, then we shall be partakers of the glorious fruit of the resurrection.

To this end I press on, sincerely desiring to be found in Christ. To have a conscience void of offense toward God and man is the best of all living. There is no such living amid all the wealth and honors of this sin-cursed earth. To be so exercised in the truth so that God will keep our bodies under subjection and live to Him in peace and in good will toward men is the best of all living.

If God be for us, who can be against us? If by the faith of Jesus I am enabled to live in truth, dwelling with Israel in peace, and having good will toward men, this is a good exercise.

May peace be upon Israel and the blessings of the Lord rest on and direct my labor and may it be to the Lord and Him alone.

Brethren, pray for me that my faith fail not. To be dead to the world and all worldly institutions, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord, and to live the life I now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me, and be found unto praise and honor and glory at His appearing, is my desire.

P.D. Gold

(For many years Elder P.D. Gold served the Primitive Baptist Churches in Wilson, Rocky Mount, N.C., (Falls of Tar River), Tarboro and Durham, North Carolina, in a godly, successful manner. Ed.)

MILL BRANCH ASSOCIATION

The 136th Annual Session of the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, with Mt. Pleasant Church, Bishopville, Lee County, South Carolina, on the first Sunday, Friday and Saturday before in November, 2006. The dates are November 3rd, 4th & 5th, 2006.

Directions to Mt. Pleasant Church are as follows: From U.S. 15 south, go through Bishopville about two miles. Turn right on Brown Town Road. Go 2 miles; turn left on Church Road. Meeting House is about 200 yards on your left. From I-20, take Exit 11 to U.S. (Route) 15 north. Go ¾ miles, and turn left on Brown Town Road. Go 2 miles, turn left on Church Road. Meeting House is about 200 yards on your left.

We look forward to and hope for the continued correspondence of all our brethren and sisters in the Lord, and hope you can be with us this year, 2006. We look to the Lord for all our blessings and hope He will bless us all to be together at our association this year.

Ernest Duncan, (Clerk)
Loris, SC 29569
Tele. (843)-756-1626

(REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION)

Dear Elder Mewborn:

Will you please print the following notice in the Zion's Landmark?

LOWER MAYO ASSOCIATION

The 74th Annual Session of the Lower Mayo Association is to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, and will continue through Sunday, the dates being September 29th, 30th and October 1st, 2006.

Spoon Creek Church will host the meeting, and it will be held in Russell Creek Meeting House, which is located approximately 9 miles south of Stuart, VA, near the VA - NC border. Those coming north or south on Route #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road (#653) for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road (#631). Go ¼ mile to church location on right. Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827. Turn on Ayers Orchard Road (#653). Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left, go ¼ mile to church location on right. Those coming west on NC 704, turn right on VA-Line Road, #1730. Go 1 mile and turn left on Moorefield Store Road, #631. Go 2 ½ miles to church location on left.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this 2006 association.

Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(1-276-952-2098)

(REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION)

Dear Elder Mewborn:

Will you please print the following notice in the Zion's Landmark?

LOWER MAYO FIFTH SUNDAY MEETING

The Lower Mayo Association Fifth Sunday Meeting is to be held, the Lord willing, on Sunday only, October 29th, 2006. We hope to start singing at 10:00 a.m., and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

Russell Creek Church will host the meeting, and it will be held in Russell Creek Church Meeting House. It is located appx. 9 miles south of Stuart, VA, near the VA - NC border. Those coming north or south on Route #8, turn east on Ayers Orchard Road (#653) for about 1 mile. Turn right on Moorefield Store Road (#631). Go ¼ mile to church location on right. Those coming east or west on Route #58, turn south on Southfork Loop #827. Turn on Ayers Orchard Road (#653). Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #827; turn on Ayers Orchard Road #653. Go 3 miles to Moorefield Store Road #631. Turn left. Go ¼ mile to church location on right.

We invite the ministers, brothers, sisters and all believers in salvation by grace to come and be with us during this meeting.

Lowell Hopkins, Clerk
(1-276-952-2098)

(Correction)

Dear Elder Mewborn,

Enclosed please find check for renewal of my subscription to the Landmark for another year. There was an error in my Dad's obituary that you published in the May - June 2006, issue as follows. The middle name of one of his brothers was published as William Coleman Norris. The correct name is Willard Coleman Norris. I hope a correction can be made in an early issue of Zion's Landmark. Thank you.

Love,
Betsy Norris
Roxboro, NC 27573
July 24, 2006

(Note: We regret the error very much! Ed.)

them from it. "Wherefore, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith," says Paul, who wrote so clearly upon the two covenants, because the Lord had written them in his heart. And his word is: "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Galatians 2:16) "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant".

"Not according to the covenant I made with their fathers," let us now compare the two, and know wherein the new is not according to the old. The first and chief difference between them is, the old was a conditional covenant, and the people of Israel, themselves, must keep it; for they could not enjoy its promised blessings, only as they fulfilled its required conditions. So, all in that covenant depended largely upon themselves. This was a weakness and defect in that first covenant, and the Lord, Himself, said that it was not faultless. For if it had been, then no place should have been sought for the new covenant. Because there would then have been no need for a better testament or covenant. The same weakness and failure must necessarily attach to any and every conditional covenant wherein the conditional, promised good depends upon the house of Israel or the people, themselves to per-

form, because the people are faulty and will ever fail to "do their part." So, failed Adam and Eve, although they were good and very good, and the Lord requires but one simple condition of them. By this principle and test Moses, himself, failed to enter the goodly land of promise, though the meekest man of God, and the greatest, save Jesus. Likewise, all the Israelites, the subjects of that conditional covenant miserably failed, and the Lord regarded them not.

A covenant cannot be any stronger or surer than is its weakest part. Therefore, any covenant having a conditional provision which depends upon the people of the covenant to fulfill, must be as frail and unreliable as are the people themselves, because they fail to keep the conditions, the covenant, and its weak promises also fail. Paul declares this fact, saying, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh." The weakness here is in the people upon whom the conditions depend. The law within itself was just, holy and good, for God gave it to Israel, His people; but they broke it and forfeited all the blessings of the covenant of works. Thus, the Lord proved to His people their absolute inability to save themselves by their own righteousness, and the impossibility of creature, conditional salvation. This is the one, great, solemn lesson of the law covenant. By it, the children of men are weighed

and found miserably lacking.

But, bless the Lord! The New Covenant is not according to this conditional Covenant of works. Therefore, it is not conditional, or it would be according to the old covenant. Let us again read the several tables of the new and better testament, "established upon better promises", the Lord says, than the old. The Lord declares what He will do, and what Israel shall be — not what they shall do. He makes with them the covenant by putting His laws into their mind, and writing them in their hearts. He told them that He would be their God and they shall be His people! That they should not teach one another to know Him, but that all of them shall know Him. Thus far, the blessed, new covenant, which we are given hope today, is completely without any condition on their part for the Lord makes it and performs it. This covenant, as recorded by the prophet, is "an everlasting one, ordered in all things, and sure," "and will never change, increase or decrease, for he said "God made it not to grow." (II Samuel 23:5) It could not be so if the least condition depended upon the people, themselves, to make it sure. It is called, "The the sure mercies of David," and David, the king, was a blessed type of Jesus.

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." This is most wonderful, and it is (if possible), the richest provision and blessing of the new covenant. This table of the new covenant is radically different from any conditional covenant, for God will not regard in mercy the sins of those who break the conditional covenant, but He will punish "every transgression and disobedience," and will bless them only according to their righteousness and good works of obedience. All who hold to a conditional, gospel covenant and consequent, conditional (time) salvation and blessings, necessarily admit the force and truth of this. For it is a self-

evident fact that according to a conditional covenant of time salvation, only the righteous, who keep the conditions, can be rewarded and blessed with salvation. But the new covenant is the very opposite of this principle of conditional salvation. And it is a rich mercy that it is so, and that in the new covenant, God is merciful to the unrighteousness of Israel. For if He bestowed the gracious blessings of the covenant upon the people in consideration of their righteousness, then not one could ever receive the promised salvation, because, "THERE IS NONE GOOD, NO, NOT ONE." Very sure I am that every son or daughter of Israel with whom the Lord has thus made this new covenant, if personally appealed to, would freely confess that both he and she must flee to the Divine Fountain of rich mercy promised in the new covenant, and there implore the God of mercy and grace to be merciful to the unrighteousness and imperfection of their best services. For we have this treasure of grace in earthen vessels, so that the weakness of the flesh marks and mars all we do.

The new covenant is not according to the old, in that the Lord writes it in the heart; but He wrote, the other upon the tables of stone. Therefore, it existed in the letter only which killeth, because the people failed to keep it. But, the new is in the Spirit, which maketh alive, because Jesus, the Mediator of the New Testament, has fulfilled the righteousness of the old and has taken it out of the way. And now, it is said to the new covenant people, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under GRACE. (It cannot fail them!) And so, to all who are under grace, "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our Lord." (Romans 5:17).

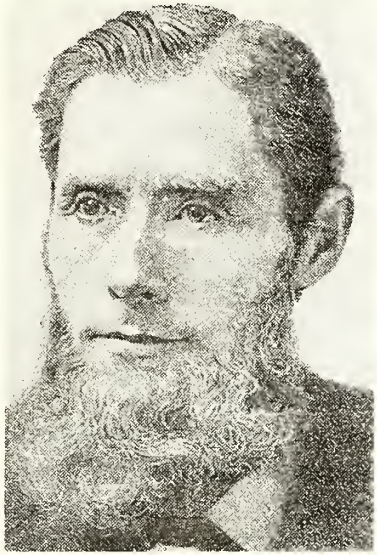
In another blessed feature, the new covenant is not according to the old, in the fact that under the old they were to teach one another to know the Lord (and this is a marked feature in all condi-

Zion's Landmark

"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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Elder David Bartley

He was born in Ohio, 1827, lived in Indiana, and wrote many excellent articles for *Zion's Landmark* and *The Signs of the Times*. Also was author of several Biblical books, *My Early Religious Life*, *Man Redeemed*, *The Resurrection*, and *The Christ-Man In Type*.

promise infinitely superior and better.

The new covenant, itself being unconditional, secures unconditional, unfailing, blessings to all its people with whom the Lord, Himself, makes it even perfect and brings in an everlasting righteousness without works, and full and free salvation from all sin unto eternal life, now and world without end!

The new covenant is not according to the old, where the old has passed away and its people have failed. The new one is everlasting, where the people shall live and abide forever.

Yours in the blessed bonds of the covenant of everlasting life and peace,
David Bartley (Dec'd.)
Crawfordsville, Indiana

THE FOLLOWING QUESTION HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM A SUBSCRIBER, ASKING FOR AN ANSWER IN *ZION'S LANDMARK*. THE QUESTION: "WHAT CONSTITUTES A CHURCH IN GOSPEL ORDER?"

Dear Elder Mewborn,

I enjoyed reading the January - February, 2006, issue of *Zion's Landmark* very much. One of the articles in that issue brought to my mind a question that I have thought of asking you. Concerning the communion of the church, your comments, along with those of Elder P. D. Gold's good article on this subject in that issue, very plainly state where the Primitive Baptists stand, and have always stood, on the question of open communion, that it is unscriptural.

The question that I would like for you to answer for me now is this: "What constitutes a church in gospel order?" The reason I ask is that I often hear ministers and people today refer to what was once a church years ago, that now has only one or two members left, as still constituting a church. I know that it is recorded in Christ's words in the scripture that "where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst

of them." (Matthew 18:20).

However, the New Testament, and especially the Apostle Paul's writings, give those precepts and examples of the offices that a gospel church is to contain. I do not believe that I have ever read an article on this particular subject in any periodical of our faith, and I would be much obliged to see one in publication now in the columns of the *Landmark*, if it be the Lord's will to bless you.

I am your friend, I hope, in the great cause of faith and truth.

Humbly and sincerely,
I trust,
Bill Poindexter,
Martinsville, Virginia
24112
April 1, 2006

(REPLY)

"BUT MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED ACCORDING TO HIS RICHES IN GLORY BY CHRIST JESUS." (Phillipians 4:19).

I have chosen the above scripture, as a topic or heading in my endeavor to answer the question, as set forth in the above inquiry, since this is the apostle's sound, doctrinal position as it relates, not only to the needs of the church of the living God in this time world, but to all things by faith in the life and experience of the child of God, as he is taught here. Our God, through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, gave all needed things that are necessary for His Church, when He established it here in the earth some 2,000 years ago. What He saw as her need at that time has not changed from that day until now, that it be kept in the faith until the end of time. These necessary, God-given things will remain here, unchanged, until that day. He never gave the Church any thing it did not need, and the Church never needed anything He did not give, although men and devils for the past 2,000 years have tried to add *in finitus*.

I am well aware and knowledgeable that our friend's, Mr. Bill Poindexter's question, is of a sensitive nature to many of our dear Primitive

Baptist people today, as many of our churches stand, now at this time, in a very low, declining state of militant existence. To attempt to answer his question, "What constitutes a church in gospel order?", the only true approach, I know, is to go directly to the source of all divine authority, the scriptures, for an answer. It seems that it would be well to find or locate the chronological order and sequence of those laws and ordinances with their approximate time and date, when the Lord Jesus Christ with His twelve apostles, set up and established the gospel-apostolic church in this time world, as has been said, about 2,000 years ago. As I read the scriptures, it was over a span or period of time of approximately 32 years when each one of these laws and ordinances were given by Christ and the apostles to the Church. I will endeavor to list them here and their approximate dates in the sequence and order, as they were brought to pass, recorded in the scripture, to answer the question, "What constitutes a church in gospel order?" I value this question greatly, as one of serious, timely nature, and an answer cannot be taken lightly. All of these things took place in the very beginning of the third dispensation of time, almost 2,000 years ago. The abbreviation, A. D., is Latin for *anno Domini*, meaning since the birth of Christ, that began at that time, prior to His baptism in A. D. 26. I shall begin at this point.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD. ("I WILL GIVE UNTO THEE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." The language of Christ - Matthew 16:19).

1. A.D. 26 - CHRIST INSTITUTED AND GAVE THE FIRST ORDINANCE TO HIS CHURCH, BAPTISM, THE FIRST KEY TO HIS KINGDOM, THAT WAS ADMINISTERED TO HIM BY JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Christ instituted and put in place the first ordinance of

the Church, *Baptism*. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto John, 'Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh US to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he suffered Him." (Matthew 3:13-17).

2. A. D. 31 - CHRIST CALLED HIS TWELVE, CHOSEN APOSTLES FROM AMONG MEN.

Christ called His twelve apostles: "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, his brother; James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother; Phillip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew, the publican; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon, the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, etc." (Matthew 10:2.) (Please note that both Mark 3:14-19 and Luke 6:13 also enumerate the naming of the twelve apostles.)

3. A. D. 32 - CHRIST TOLD PETER HE WOULD BUILD HIS CHURCH, GIVEN TO HIM BY HIS FATHER, BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

Christ informed and promised the Apostle Peter that He would build His Church: "Thou art Peter, and upon THIS ROCK I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18). (Note: Christ, here, was making reference to Himself, as THIS ROCK, not Peter, as falsely believed by millions of people in the world today. Peter served Christ only as His apostle. He was only a man, the same as all other Adamic sinners. The Church of the Living God was not built on Peter, or by him.)

4. A. D. 32 - CHRIST GAVE THE LAWFUL NUMBER, REQUIRED BY HIM FOR ITS EXISTENCE, TO CONSTITUTE HIS TRUE, GOSPEL-CHURCH WORSHIP HERE IN THE WORLD. HE SAID,

"Where TWO or THREE

are gathered together in My Name, there AM I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:2).

5. A. D. 33 - CHRIST PUT IN PLACE AND TAUGHT HIS GREAT EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY, FEET-WASHING, FOR THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD.

Christ put in place and taught the first, great example of humility, Feet-Washing, six days before the passover in Bethany, where "they made Him a supper." "He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. And that He poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." (John 12:1-2 & John 13:4-5).

6. A. D. 33 - CHRIST INSTITUTED AND GAVE HIS ORDINANCE TO HIS CHURCH, COMMUNION, THE SECOND KEY TO HIS KINGDOM, JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEATH AND CRUCIFIXION.

Christ instituted the second ordinance of the Church, His first COMMUNION with the twelve apostles. "And He took bread, and gave thanks, and break it, and gave unto them saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19) "And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves." (Luke 22:17). This consecrated event took place in the large, furnished, upper room in Jerusalem. (See Luke 22:12).

7. A. D. 33 - THE APOSTLES (WITHOUT THE PERSONAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST) ESTABLISH THE OFFICE OF DEACON, AFTER HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN. THIS WAS THEIR FIRST ACT INVOLVING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH.

The Apostles, desirous to have the poor of the Church regarded, appoint the office of deaconship to seven chosen men, namely, "Stephen, Phillip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas", "whom they set before them, and when they had prayed, they laid their hands

on them." Here, the twelve apostles established and confirmed the office of Deacon for the Church. (See Acts 6:1-6).

8. A. D. 46 - THE APOSTLES (WITHOUT THE PERSONAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST) ORDAIN THE FIRST ELDERS IN THE CHURCH. THIS WAS THEIR SECOND ACT INVOLVING THE CHURCH OF GOD. (THEIR ORDINATION OF THE FIRST DEACONS PRECEDED THE ORDINATION OF THE FIRST ELDERS.) (See Acts 14:23).

The Apostles ordain the first elders in the Church after the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Christ. "And when they had ordained them ELDERS in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord." (Acts 14:23).

9. A. D. 58 - THE APOSTLES, TOGETHER WITH THE FIRST ELDERS, ORDAIN OTHER ELDERS AND DEACONS IN THE CHURCH. (THERE IS NO BIBLICAL RECORD THAT DEACONS EVER TOOK PART OR OFFICIATED IN THE 'LAYING ON OF HANDS' IN ANY APOSTOLIC ORDINATION, ANYWHERE.)

The Apostles, together with the first elders, ordain OTHER ELDERS in the Church, "And the Apostles and elders came together for to consider of the matter." (Acts 15:6). When all the Apostles were gone from the earth, the ordaining power in the Church fell to the elders only. There is no record in the scriptures where deacons ever took part in any ordination anywhere, whether for elders or themselves. Only elders have ordained succeeding elders and deacons, since the days of the Apostles until the present time in the churches, and are still doing so today. Deacons have no scriptural authority to lay hands on any candidate in any ordination ceremony, whatsoever, according to scripture at any place.

Now, to reply to the question, "What constitutes a church in gospel order?", it is seen from reading the above scriptures that Christ

put in place every needed entity in time, and in order and place, in correct precision, to establish His Church in this time world. This great work also included those three Acts, Nos. 7, 8 & 9, (above) of His Apostles to complete it, as shown from the scriptures after He had left this time world and entered into Heaven and immortal glory, where He is now at the right Hand of God. Let us review them again, viz:

1. A.D. 26 - He gave the first ordinance of BAPTISM,

2. A.D. 31 - He called His twelve apostles,

3. A.D. 32 - He declared that He would build His Church, to Peter,

4. A.D. 32 - HE GAVE THE REQUIRED NUMBER TO CONSTITUTE THE TRUE GOSPEL WORSHIP, "WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM." (Matthew 18:20).

5. A.D. 33 - He put in place His wonderful example of humility, FEET-WASHING,

6. A.D. 33 - He gave the second ordinance of COMMUNION just prior to His crucifixion and death,

7. A.D. 33 - The Apostles ordained the first DEACONS for the Church,

8. A.D. 46 - The Apostles ordained the first ELDERS for the Church,

9. A.D. 58 - The Apostles with the first elders then ordained succeeding elders and deacons for the Church.

(Note: It is to be observed by close reading of the scriptures that after all the Apostles had departed from this time world, only the elders in the churches, since that day, have ordained succeeding elders and deacons, and that deacons, scripturally speaking, have no 'laying on of hands' right to take part and participate in the ordination ceremony, either for the elder, or deacon, in the true apostolic Church. Christ and His Apostles set the pattern and order for the true Church by the gift of the above nine points of practice that constitute the true, gospel church that still exists in this time world today.)

In attempting to answer our inquirer's question, "What constitutes a church in gospel order?", he indicates in his request that we have left today churches "that now have, *only one*, or, maybe, two members left, as still constituting a church." May we differentiate with a line of discrimination drawn between one-member-churches, compared with two or more member churches. It is our understanding that the scriptures do not support the existence of the former, one member churches, and we give our reasons why below.

THE SCRIPTURES ARE CLEAR THAT THERE CAN BE NO LESS THAN TWO MEMBERS PRESENT IN ATTENDANCE TO CONSTITUTE LAWFUL, GOSPEL (NEW TESTAMENT) CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND WORSHIP, AS PER THE WORDS OF CHRIST

With the interdependent relationship of all the above irreplaceable, wondrous acts that Christ and His Apostles did to constitute the true gospel-church's identity and existence, I hasten to say, early on, strictly speaking, there can be no finagling with any of them, especially with heavy emphasis to Item #4 in the above listing, where Christ declared and specified the divine existence of His Church here, viz: "WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM." (Matthew 18:20). There can be no less than two members, legality in the Spirit, gathered together, to constitute the true operation of the Church in Christ. Christ emphatically instructed the Apostles in Matthew 18:16, "In the mouth of TWO or THREE witnesses every word may be established." (A one-member-church has no witness). These two witnesses, where every word is established, are the same two who are gathered together, where He is in the midst of them. They have been gathered by Christ, and He is in the midst of them. They are the same TWO people and interchangeable. They witness together and to

each other. "That if TWO of YOU shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven." "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." (Matthew 18:18). This teaching of Christ gave the Church the power to receive members, and also to exclude members, when gathered by Christ and with Him in their midst. The keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, baptism and communion, are stronger than all the combination of all earthly powers "to bind" and "to loose", when it comes to the power of the Church of the Living God with Christ as their living Head. The earthly kings and rulers have never been given, nor will they ever possess, this power. The highest courts in the land today cannot overthrow her decisions and verdicts. Even the natural world in the operation of its human affairs uses what is called a quorum, which is the number of members, when duly assembled, deemed legally competent to transact business. The word "quorum" is non-Biblical, but its principle is found laid down in the scriptures for the Church of God, "in the mouth of two or three witnesses," gathered by Christ with Him in their midst. It is to be made unmistakably clear, after reading these scriptures, that one individual (one person only) cannot constitute the existence of the true, gospel Church. There necessarily must be (1) one to make the motion, (2) the second person to second the motion, and better still (3) the third person to sanction, agree, or disagree (object), to the same motion. ("Where TWO or THREE are gathered together in My Name," etc.) This is the proper way that Christ gave to constitute His Church in gospel order in this time world. These "two" or "three" must belong to the same individual church collectively, to transact her own business without participation with assistance by motions and seconds made

by members from outside, sister churches!

HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS THAT ILLUSTRATE AND PROVE THE SPIRITUAL PRACTICE, "WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM", TO CONSTITUTE THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD IN GOSPEL ORDER.

I will bring to light by way of historical precedent a case at point of a church that was organized at the beginning of the 20th century by the Old School Baptists in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Elder Silas H. Durand lived in Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and had close ties from the church of his membership at Southampton with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Ontario, Canada, and the (Scotch) McColl family, long-standing members of that Church. His daughter, Sister Edith Durand McColl, and her husband, Brother Gilbert B. McColl, lived in Winnipeg, where they held meetings in their home, conducted by her father, Elder Durand. Brother Ebenezer McColl, close relative of Brother Gilbert B. McColl, Sister Edith Durand McColl with her husband, Brother Gilbert McColl, the three of them, felt to organize an Old School (Primitive) Baptist Church in that city. Quoting from Elder Silas H. Durand's book, *Fragment's*, from the preface page, it reads, "During Elder Durand's visits, regular meetings were held at the home of his son-in-law, Gilbert B. McColl, there being at that time quite a number of believers and friends to the cause of the Baptists in that city. Before his last visit in 1918 a church there was organized." (The total number of three members gave them the legal, scriptural right to constitute that Church, two of them being male gender. Ed.)

During the days and times of the life and ministry of Elder Silas H. Durand, he was considered by his brethren at large in this country, the United States, as a standard-bearer of the faith, and



Elder Silas H. Durand
1833 - 1919

He was pastor of the Old School Baptist Church, Southampton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, from April 12, 1884, where he resided from that date, until his death in 1919, a period of 35 years. In early life he served several churches in New York State, Maryland, and, just prior to his death in Winnipeg, Canada.

the constitution through him of the Church at Winnipeg, Canada, with the three members, as listed above, was never questioned. His son-in-law, Brother Gilbert McColl, was ordained deacon for the church after its organization, and Elder Durand was called by the Church to serve the body as pastor. The traveling distance in those days by rail was approximately 1,500 miles between his home, near Philadelphia to Winnipeg. He was once asked by a friend, "Why do you travel so far, all these hundreds of miles, just to preach to so few?" Elder Durand's reply was, "three sheep get just as hungry as five hundred." It was not a matter of quantity, numbers, with Elder Durand, but rather a matter of quality, faith. This man was wonderfully blest and taught from the Spirit of God! The Lord blest him with the "three witnesses." That was sufficient! (Elder Silas H. Durand was a faithful man of God! Ed.)

Another church of historical credence, as a case-example, where we have records to prove the guidelines that those old brethren used and followed to constitute a church in gospel order is found in the Willow Spring Primitive Baptist Church's

organizational record in the year 1826, 180 years ago. We will show how the establishment of this church came about by publishing abstracts from the first record, minute book. The first entries in the old record book are as follows:

"On Saturday, May 21, 1825, a meeting was held at Willow Spring Meeting House. A conference was called consisting of Elder Thomas Freeman from Eno Church, Jesse Jones, William Cutts, Abram Jones, and Elder Nathan Gulley from Neal's Creek Church. A door was opened for the reception of members with the hope of organizing a church at said Meeting House, where upon Ann Myatt and Lydda Stevens came forward and were received by experience (they formerly were members of the Church at Pleasant Spring Meeting House, but that Church being dissolved, they could not obtain letters of dismissal.)

"On Sunday, the 22nd, ult., being assembled in conference, James Deford came forth with a letter from Neal's Creek Church and was received. Also, a negro man named Samuel came forward, related his experience and was received and is to be baptized next meeting. Resolved, that all others who shall be received here shall be received, (as the four above named persons were received), agreeable to the following scriptures and doctrine contained in them, which is recorded in the following articles:

(FOR THE SAKE OF BREVI-
TY THE ARTICLES ARE
HEREIN OMITTED)

"On Saturday, March 25th, 1826, the members at Willow Spring Meeting House sat in conference. All were in peace. Then made a way in conference for the reception of members, and Candance Partin, Pinkney Partin, Patsy Partin and William Partin came forward with a letter from Holly Spring Church, related their experience, and were received.

"June 25th 1826. Met in conference. All in peace.

Then made a way for the reception of members, and Acrill Myatt came forward, related his experience, was received to baptism. Sunday 26th, was baptized.

"August 26th 1826, set in conference. All were in peace. Open the door of the church and Elder Nathan Gulley came forward with a letter from Neal's Creek Church, related his experience and was received. Then the ten members unanimously agreed to call for a presbytery to examine and constitute them a church, if found to be sound in the faith. Agreed to call Elders George Nance and William Wall, as a presbytery. Then dismissed.

"September 23, 1826. Set in conference. Then the church members made known their desire and Elders Wm. Wall and Nathan Gulley proceeded to examine them and found them sound in faith and in fellowship, and, therefore, constituted them a Church." (Note: This old church book reveals that the church went from 1826, the year of constitution, until the 4th Sunday in November, 1849, 23 years without a deacon, when Brother Abel Gower, was ordained for that office. This information proves that a church can survive and exist in this time world without the existence of a deacon within the body. This information was taken from page nos. 60-64 and 66, Book #1, Willow Spring Primitive Baptist Church, Wake County, North Carolina.)

Let us return now to our inquirer's initial question in the outset of this article, "What constitutes a church in gospel order?", with his additional statement that our Baptist brethren are today recognizing churches with "only one or two members, as still constituting a church." It is made clear from the evidence and proof given, both from the scriptures quoted and case examples cited from the 19th and 20th centuries, that a single, one-member (church) body does not Biblically constitute a church. Churches with two members and three mem-

bers, respectively, however, are permitted and allowed, under these two criterion or guidelines, as outlined. The question is asked, "What is the make-up of a so-called one-member church?"

A ONE-MEMBER CHURCH

This observation has been, where the one member, be it either a brother or sister, who calls that constituency a church, is the custom for that one member to meet in a conference in the presence of an ordained elder or pastor with outside (church) visiting members in attendance from sister churches. These visiting members from sister churches are seated with the one-person member, assisting him or her by seconding the motions. Such practice will not pass the test and is below border line, Biblical yardstick measurement and understanding, as taught in the scriptures, for the requirement of no less than two, true witnesses to constitute the legitimate Church in gospel order.

I would like to mention two more incidents of sub-standard practice that are not in conformity to past usage and practice of the church, as far back as I can remember for over sixty-five years, that are now being used and recognized by today's current church members. They are:

A SUBSTITUTE CHURCH

The word, substitute, means to replace, or to put in place of another. A substitute church is described where all the members of a given church have died or passed away with the exception of one member, who is no longer physically able to attend any meetings anywhere. Members, deacons and ministers from sister churches visit this one, remaining member in the home, sometimes in a rest home, or in a nursing home, and there obtain from that person what is called a (signed) proxy with a notary public's certificate of oath and seal affixed to the document. Then these members, deacons and elders from the sister churches take the proxy with the key to the

meeting-house where they enter and hold preaching service. After preaching on Saturday, they go into conference, where they report this church in peace, agreeing to commune the following day, Sunday. Accordingly, they return next day with preaching service followed by the act of passing the bread and wine among them. (Please keep in mind there is no bona-fide member of this church present in any of these activities.)

I have heard all my life that deacons and elders are servants to the church (through the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, as their center-Head). In this instance they cannot be serving this purported church because it is not there. They are doing something in this building (a number of people) and the question has been asked, "Just what are they doing?" The answer: They are serving themselves. In plain English, this is what is called and known as a farce, empty show, or even worse, a hoax. It is pure mockery and an abomination in the sight of God. I do not find the words, proxy, and notary public in the Bible. The true Church of the Living God has the Seal of the Holy Spirit and the Oath of God in their presence, not the works of man! (Please read Philippians 3:17-19 for an accurate scriptural description of this man-made ploy).

A NULL and VOID CHURCH

(The words, or expression, null and void, mean having no force, binding power, or validity.) A null and void church exists when all the members of a given church have died with the exception of one member. The church property in most instances has been sold. The one member, whether a brother or a sister, in the name of that church, never holds any meetings or conferences, whatsoever. This includes no upholding of the two church ordinances, baptism and communion, which practice is in total, direct conflict with what Elder C. B. Hassell declared in his *Church History* of the Kehukee Primitive

Baptist Association, as the Third Mark of the Apostolic Church. We quote him from his history on page 283, as follows:

"The Third Mark of the Apostolic Church was that the members, being baptized believers, came frequently around the Table of the Lord, and commemorated the sufferings and death of their precious Redemmer, by partaking of common bread to represent His body broken, and common wine to represent His blood shed for them. The two practices of Baptism and Lord's Supper, or Communion, were called ordinances of the church, AND WERE STRICTLY OBSERVED BY THEM!"

Once each year, prior to the time of the association, this brother or sister, sits down by himself, or herself, without any conference, and writes a letter to the association, where the church purports to have membership, appointing himself or herself, as the case might be, a messenger, and then signs the letter as Church Clerk. The letter is presented to the association in time of conference where the one-member-church (and also same, self-appointed messenger) is formally recognized and seated in that body of churches with the other messengers in the organization of the association's business. The one-member, self-appointed (church) messenger is given all voting privileges in the association (business) conference, and accorded all rights and privileges, the same as the other church-appointed messengers.

FAITHFUL, TRUE BRETHREN HAVE ALWAYS STOOD UP FOR CHURCH ORDER AND PRACTICE IN YEARS BY-GONE, AND A CASE AT POINT IS RECALLED HERE:

The following incident that took place in the July 25, 1891, conference of the Sandy Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Randolph County, North Carolina, is a case-example, that proves, while a church conference may have three members in attendance, yet, the necessity of the presence of a male mem-

ber to preside as moderator, is an absolute requirement. At the time of this occurrence in 1891, the Sandy Creek Church was a member of the Abbott's Creek Union Association. I quote here directly from the record:

"July 25, 1891. We, the Primitive Baptist Church at Sandy Creek, met in conference. Having no preacher or moderator, *three female members* proceeded to the business of the Church."

"1st. Inquired into the peace of the Church. All in peace. No reference."

"2nd. Proceeded to appoint our messengers to our next Abbott's Creek Association to be held with the Church at Rock Hill, 4th Sunday in August, next. We appoint our brother, John Hayes and our sister, Mary Curtis."

"3rd. Made up contribution to pay for printing minutes of 65 cents."

"4th. Read and approved obituary notice of our dear, faithful member and deacon, Henry Rivett." (Note. Obit. Not printed here for sake of brevity and space.)

"5th. It was agreed to adjourn conference. Vandora E. Jones, Clerk"

"August, 1891. At a special meeting at Sandy Creek Church, held by Elders F. L. Oakley and Y. I. Chandler, the Church chose Elder Oakley moderator. (1st) Preaching was by Elder Oakley and Elder Chandler. (2nd) Inquired into the peace of the Church. All in peace. (3rd) Called for reference, none. (4th) Opened the door of the Church to receive members. Agreed to adjourn. Vandora E. Jones, Clerk."

"October 24, 1891 - We, the Primitive Baptist Church, at Sandy Creek, met in conference:"

"1st, Prayer & discourse by Bro J. H. Boroughs,"

"2nd, Chose Bro. Boroughs moderator."

"3rd, Inquired into peace of the Church. All in peace."

"4th, Called for reference. None. And opened the door of the church to receive members."

"5th, Brother Boroughs informed the Church that the (Abbott's Creek Union)

Association, held at Rock Hill Church did not consider it scriptural to receive OUR SISTER, as a messenger in the Association. Therefore, they REJECTED her. Vandora E. Jones, Clerk."

The record of the Sandy Creek Church is published here only to show in those days over one hundred years ago that the churches of the Abbott's Creek Union Association did not condone disorder in their ranks. It is easy to understand, through the lack of understanding, these three sisters of Sandy Creek Church on their own, could not scripturally hold the leadership of a church conference without the involvement and presence of a male member. 1st Corinthians 14:34-35 reads, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." In the instance of this conference in 1891 the three sisters constituted the whole church. The deacon, old Brother Henry Rivett, at age 92 years, had died, and, no doubt, it was for the lack of understanding on their part, when they attempted by themselves to hold a conference in this manner, that it would be wrong.

After the Abbott's Creek Union Association had rejected Sister Mary Curtis, as a messenger to that body, Elder F. L. Oakley and Elder Y. I. Chandler from the Bush Arbor Church of the Country Line Association, former pastors of Sandy Creek, visited there and showed them in a godly manner and way the error of their way. The matter was soon cleared up and Sandy Creek continued afterwards in gospel order with the other churches in the Abbott's Creek Union Association for years in full fellowship.

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

May I close this article with six quotations from the

scripture to verify that the true Church of the living God in this time world has always consisted of more than one member, person or individual. (It has always been plural, not singular. Plural means in every instances more than one.)

1. Jesus Christ called His Church, saying, "Fear not, LITTLE FLOCK; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." (Luke 12:32). (A little flock represents a small group, plurality, or more than just one.)

2. The Apostle Paul called the Church a REMNANT. "Even so then at this present time also there is a Remnant according to the election of grace." (A remnant is a small, surviving group, plurality, meaning more than just one.)

3. Moses said concerning the Church of the living God, "The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the FEWEST of all people." (Deut. 7:7). (The word, fewest, means a very small number, plurality, but more than just one.)

4. David referred to the true Church of the living God, "When they were but a few men in number; yea, VERY FEW, and strangers in it." (Psalms 105:12). (The words, very few, mean made up of just a small number, plurality, or more than just one.)

5. Peter said, "When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing, wherein FEW that is eight souls were saved by water." (1st Peter 3:20). (The word, few, again means not many, but some, plurality, or more than just one.)

6. And Christ said, "Where TWO or THREE are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of THEM." (Matthew 18:2). (The pronoun, them, as used here, definitely denotes plurality, or more than just one. They have been, and always will be, namely, a

1. LITTLE FLOCK,
2. REMNANT,
3. FEWEST OF ALL PEOPLE

- 4. VERY FEW IN NUMBER
- 5. FEW - (ONLY EIGHT SOULS),
- 6. TWO or THREE (OF THEM).

Now to return to the question, "What constitutes a church in gospel order?", the answer is found in the fine-line difference between the two words, *plural*, vs *singular*. Plural always denotes more than one. Singular (or single) means relating only to one separate person or to something considered by itself, or alone. I ask my reader to bear in mind that our usage of the word *constitute* in this article applies only to church existence, not to the formal founding or organization of a church body. Based upon all data herein submitted, one sole member can never constitute gospel church existence.

J. M. Mewborn,
November 14, 2006

CHRIST SAID,
"I HAVE POWER TO LAY
MY LIFE DOWN
AND I HAVE POWER
TO TAKE IT AGAIN."
(John 10:18)

Deity, wrapped in humanity, could not die, but humanity unsupported by Divinity could and did die. The sinless, guiltless body of Jesus was weighted down under the stupendous load of the deepest and vilest of sins and forsakened of His Father, became cold and lifeless at the touch of death. This torture, our Mediator endured, and that willingly. Nature drew back, recoiled and said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass," (Matthew 26:39), but something spoke and said within Jesus, "Not my will, but thine be done." (Luke 22:42.)

Let it be remembered that it was the Lord of Glory who died for men. He laid down His life for the sheep. These were chosen from among men. By nature dead in sin, the Vessels of Mercy and the vessels of wrath are the same. Jews and Gentiles are from the same, original stock of the total depravity of all Adam's race, and it has well been said that "God has

no other material, but sinful men, out of which He forms saints."

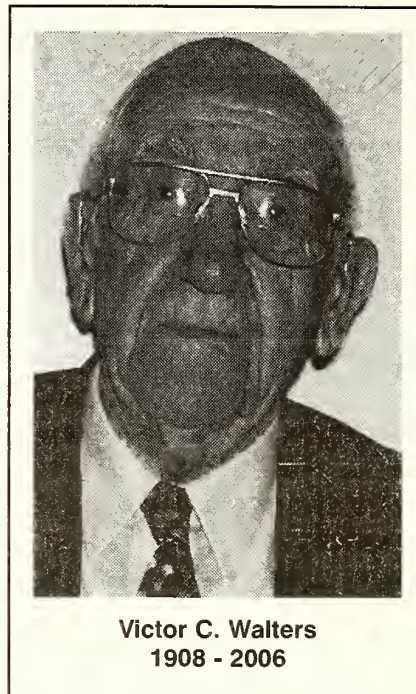
What a wonder of wonders that God should take of clay of the same lump and form Vessels of Mercy to sing redeeming love in eternity's ages! Such are the purchase of His own blood, the whole election of grace, called to be saints. They were set apart and ordained separate from the vessels of wrath first in eternal election before the foundation of the world in everlasting love, adopted so to speak. In God's own time they receive the spirit of adoption (See Romans 8:15) by which they call God their Father, and in ultimate glory the whole family of God will consist of Adamic sinners, reborn in both soul and spirit, and shall ultimately enter into the fulness of that final adoption, to-wit the redemption (and resurrection) of their vile bodies into eternal glory. All of this depends upon His purpose, faithfulness and power.

Christ said, "I have power to lay my life down, and I have power to take it again." That power was amazing, unlimited. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee." (Isaiah 54:7.) The members of Christ's body were always in Him, their Head, arose in Him when He came from the dead, and also were in Him when He entered into glory. He now has their souls and spirits with Him there, and will return with them at the last day, when He will raise their sleeping dust to incorruptible bodies and reunite the three of them (both body, soul and spirit) together to be glorified and carried to that bright world of eternal bliss. What a blessed hope!

J. M. Mewborn

VICTOR C. WALTERS, SR.

Brother Victor Carl Walters, Sr., was born December 13, 1908, and passed from this earthly life April 27, 2006, at age 97 years. It is in much humbleness that I must attempt to write of one so precious to us here at Wheeler's Church, Person County, North Carolina. He was one, who would be the first to say, "not what I have done, but



what our magnificent Father has done for me, lo these many years." He was so forthright in answering questions laid at him, when troubles came. I am made to feel so lonely in his absence.

Brother Victor Walters was a native of Orange County, North Carolina, the son of the late Edward Pickett Walters and Mary Alice Brown Walters. He was a retired tobacco farmer, and after retirement, continued to raise a big garden. It was his delight to have plenty, and to share with neighbors and friends. He was a deacon of Wheeler's Primitive Baptist Church, Person County, North Carolina, having moved his membership by letter from Mebane Primitive Baptist Church, Mebane, North Carolina, when it closed and disbanded on April 2, 2000.

His helpmate of many years, Sister Lucille Bradsher Walters, passed away May 16, 2003, and we admired his loyalty to her in her afflictions; yet, he never murmured nor complained. He continued to bring much good food for our pleasure to our meetings. His son, Victor Carl Walters, Jr., died of cancer February 5, 2005.

Survivors include two daugh-

ters, Betty Jane W. Hill, Richardson, Texas, and Rose Marie W. Dunn, Efland, North Carolina. His daughter-in-law, Mrs. Elizabeth T. Walters, Efland, North Carolina, and his sister-in-law, Geneva Coates, Roxboro, North Carolina, also survive with 11 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Visitation and viewing of the body was at 2:00 p.m. at Wheeler's Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday, April 30, 2006, followed by funeral service conducted by his pastor, Elder Pete Hendrix, Elder O. J. Wray and Elder Bobby Daughtry. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beside the resting-place of his faithful wife.

We, the Church at Wheeler's, realize our great loss, but could not wish him back in this sinful world.

Approved in conference
this 11th day of June, 2006
Elder Pete Hendrix,
Moderator
Reuben Bowes,
Church Clerk

(My personal record reveals that it was August 9, 1959, when Brother Guy W. Phelps, of Burlington, North Carolina, united with Wheeler's Church. On September 12, 1959, following, Brother Victor Walters, and his wife, Sister Lucille Bradsher Walters, united with Mebane Church. On September 13, 1959, the two churches met at the baptismal site for Wheeler's Church, Person County, North Carolina, where the ordinance of baptism was administered to these three people. That was almost 47 years ago, but my memory today is that the event occurred with much rejoicing and love. This event will never fade from my mind, as long as I have any. The rite was administered by Elder T. Floyd Adams and my unworthy self to a large crowd witnessing it.

J. M. Mewborn

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J. M. Mewborn, Editor
January 10, 2007

THE TRIALS AND INWARD EXPERIENCES OF A CHILD OF GOD (An Old Baptist Hymn)

I am a stranger here below,
And what I am 'tis hard to know;
I am so vile,
so prone to sin,
I fear that I'm not born again.

When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me fear that I am wrong.

I find myself out of the way,
My thoughts are often gone astray;
Like one alone I seem to be;
Oh! is there any one like me?

'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself as I would wish to be;
What I desire, I can't attain;
From what I hate I can't refrain.

So far from God I see to lie
Which makes me often weep and cry,
I fear at last that I shall fall;
For if a saint, the least of all.

I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things come in my way;
Thus filled with doubts,
I ask to know —
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?

So by experience do I know
There's nothing good

that I can do;
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope nor comfort from it draw.

My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean;
That when I count up all the cost,
Without FREE GRACE,
I know I'm lost.

Primitive

THE BIBLICAL EQUATION OF TERRORISM

The definition or meaning of the word equation is a relationship of a combination of two factors affecting a process; also, a complex of two variable elements or components with an associated, joined quality to form an end result. (Basically, or simplified, it is "2+2=4" by way of illustration.)

In this instance of our today's current, international dilemma and plague, appropriately called terrorism, that has been ongoing for the past twenty years, or more, and has now reached dreadful, world-wide proportions, is the Biblical, prophetic unveiling, end-result of a domestic wrangle by way of a spiritual wonder that began in Abraham's household about the year B.C. 1918, almost 4,000 years ago. It all began when Sarah, wife of Abraham, demanded that he throw Hagar, his bond, servant-maid wife, and their son, Ishmael, out the door, when she saw Ishmael mocking. (Read Genesis 21:9). According to the scripture, Sarah gave Hagar over to Abraham early on because she wanted no children, and at the time despaired of ever having any. As a result of Abraham's and Hagar's relationship, Ishmael, his oldest son, was

born. Ishmael through his father, Abraham, was a descendent of Noah's oldest son, Shem, and also through Noah's second son, Ham, through his mother, Hagar, who was from the land of Egypt, or the land of Harn. (See Psalms 105:23).

After Abraham at Sarah's demand put Hagar and Ishmael out of their household, they wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba until their provisions gave out. It is recorded that the two of them would have died of thirst had not the angel of God directed them to a well. It was God's will that Ishmael would survive the wiles of the wilderness, where he became a mighty warrior, marrying an Egyptian woman, chosen for him by his mother, Hagar, also an Egyptian. Hence, Ishmael was by blood one-half Egyptian (Hagar, his mother, was an Egyptian — Read Genesis 1:1 and 3), and by marrying an Egyptian made his children or off-spring, $\frac{3}{4}$'s greater from the blood of Ham, than of Shem, through his father, Abraham. Both Shem and Ham were brothers, and were the two oldest sons of Noah.

It is recorded in the scripture, "and Ishmael became an archer." (Genesis 20:21). An archer is one who is skillful with the bow and arrow — sometimes called 'a bowman.' Besides being a skillful archer, this mighty warrior, Ishmael, the angel of the Lord told Hagar, concerning him, "he will be a WILD MAN; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." (Genesis 16:12). Wild by the very best definition means growing up in a state of nature and not ordinarily tame or domesticated, uncontrolled, barbaric, uncivilized, without regulation or control, unre-

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strained, and originated from an uncivilized world. When we see the combination of all these extraordinary, infamous traits combined into one man who was a mighty warrior, skilled with the bow and arrow (weaponry), we have the first factors or variable elements that go into the equation of terrorism.

Now Esau, who God said He hated, (Read Malachi 1:3 and Romans 9:13), called Edom in the scriptures, twin brother of Jacob, grandson of Abraham and nephew of Ishmael, married Mahalath, the only daughter of Ishmael and sister to his twelve sons. Esau is tagged in the scriptures as a "cunning hunter, a man of the field." (Read Genesis 25:27). This signifies he was a man of the world and knew how to operate well and successively within it. Esau's characteristics as a "cunning hunter and a man of the field" are the second factors or variable elements that go into the equation of terrorism.

The Equation

Now, let us first consider from the above Biblical descriptions of both Ishmael, and his nephew, Esau: first, the nature and characteristics of Ishmael, plus, second, the nature and characteristics of Esau as follows:

(1) ISHMAEL, A WILD-MAN AND AN ARCHER, WHO IS SKILLFULL WITH THE BOW AND ARROW,
+ (plus)

(2) ESAU, A CUNNING HUNTER (OR SHARP-SHOOTER),
= (equal)

TERRORISM.

All that is necessary to understand the origin of the vast destruction we saw on September 11, 2001, in New York City is to examine the nature, traits and inborn (or inbred), inherited or hereditary characteristics that have followed these bloodlines of both Ishmael and Esau of 4,000 years ago: to-wit, a wild-man, a skillful archer, one who is against everybody and everybody is against him, and a cunning hunter (cunning implies skilled accuracy with weaponry, dexterity, slyness, crafty, etc.) The sum-total of all of the above traits and characteristics of these two individuals, Ishmael and Esau, son and grandson, respectively, of Abraham in the early days of the second dispensation of time give rise now to the creation of TERRORISM! When these people fire their weapons, they seldom miss their targets: car suicide bombs, human suicide bombs, airplane suicide bombs, and roadside bombs that kill any number of people anytime, anywhere.

The acute marksmanship of terrorism proved to be $\frac{3}{4}$'s per-cent accurate when two of the terrorists' shots made two direct hits on 9/11/01 in New York City, destroying the two World Trade Center towers, a direct hit was made on the Pentagon Building in Washington, D.C., and a third attempt was successively thwarted by the rebellion of the passengers on board the jet-liner, bringing it down and caus-

ing it to crash in a farm field near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In these three attacks, several thousand people were killed.

In March, 2003, our president of the United States, George W. Bush, declared war on Terrorism by invading Iraq, that as of December 1, 2006, had piled a national debt on our country of borrowed money from China and other world nations in the amount 8.2(+) trillion dollars that averages out to each individual citizen of our country who now owes at the rate of \$28,000 per person. At the end of last year, December, 2006, 3,000 American soldiers from all branches of the military or armed services had been killed (or died) from hostile action, including 22,565 wounded, since the inception of the war in March, 2003.

All of these incidents and things reach back to Galatians 4:29-31, "now we, brethren, as Issac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, EVEN SO IT IS NOW. Nevertheless, what saith the scripture? CAST OUT THE BOND-WOMAN AND HER SON: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free." "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the won by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise." The lineage of promise was passed from Abraham to Issac, and from Issac to Jacob, the latter to whom God gave the new name ISRAEL. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in ISSAC shall thy seed be called." (Romans 9:7-8). The seed of the bond-woman was passed from Abraham to Ishmael and from Ishmael to Esau to today's conflict.

The descendents now of Ishmael and Esau give rise to the (anti-Christ) religious world of Islam, and its human foundation of Muslim. The Sunni and Shi'ah sects make up the greater number of them. 4,000 years have not changed the disposition of these people from another civilization, as we have described early on in this article, including their manners, habits, occupations, government, or dress. So far, 8.2(+) trillion dollars plus the deaths of 3,000 American servicemen, notwithstanding the coalition support from the international community of countries, have even daunted their existence and determination to strike within their world of terrorism, whether internally among themselves, or externally in the outside world. WILD is the name of the game of their world!

This enmity between the seed of the woman (Israel) and the seed of the serpent (anti-Christ) will never be reconciled. At this time the seed of the serpent (anti-Christ) is bruising the heel of the woman (Israel). The end-result of the equation of terrorism one day will finally end when the seed of the woman (Christ) will permanently bruise the heel of the serpent (Satan). Whether the United States stays in Iraq, or whether they pull out, will not hinder, nor hurry, the fulfillment of the latter. It will come to pass. Divine prophecy of the scriptures is fast being fulfilled.

J. M. Mewborn
January 10, 2007

THE LORD REIGNS

The Bible tells us that God made the earth and all things in it, and we Old Baptists believe what the scriptures teach. He is the King and only supreme Ruler of all the earth, and will do right in adversity and prosperity. The Eternal God is our only hope.

In the midst of this fearful drought, now afflicting our beloved nation, (1930) God is reigning, and will mete out to all nations, people, and individuals only that which is just and right. We have

Zion's Landmark

"Remove not the ancient Landmark
which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28

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turned away from Him and His judgments are now upon us. Christ told His disciples and people, when upon the earth concerning their trials, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and SENDETH RAIN ON THE JUST AND ON THE UNJUST." (Matthew 5:45). He promised to send the rain both upon the just and the unjust and withholds it also when He pleases. We believe by faith that all His ways are right, and when He judges and punishes us, it is for our good and His glory. Then it is we learn most assuredly, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11).

I once heard the late Elder Andrew J. Moore, who lived in Whitakers, Nash County, North Carolina, say that in the thick of one of the worst battles of the Civil War in which he was engaged, when as yet he had no hope, a bullet whizzed by his ear so near that he felt the wind of it. A still-small Voice said to him instantaneously, "GOD REIGNS!" He answered, "WHAT? HERE AMONG THESE BULLETS?" The Voice replied, "YES, HERE AMONG THESE BULLETS!" And so they (the bullets) could not kill him. He was to ultimately preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God.

So, despite all our fears, anxieties and worries in every affliction He sends upon us, that always come at His appointed time, the dear Lord will do the thing that is right, according to His love and His mercy. If we are brought to want and suffering, the Lord deals with us in righteousness. And He sends His judgments that men should fear before Him.

It seems the world has gone wild over what it calls a good time. "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." (II Timothy 3:4). It appears sometimes that many of the Lord's people are

gone after the world and the things that are in it. I am here reminded of the poet, who said,

"Scarce in this cold,
declining day,
Can one for God be found;
Christians have lost
their zeal to pray,
And yielded
up the ground."

Yes, many have forsaken the assembling of themselves together for the worship of God. (Read: Hebrews 10:25). They are too tired, or not well enough, but can attend to their secular affairs without any problems, seemingly not stopping to consider that without God's blessing upon their labor, it will not bear the desired fruit, that they would be unable to accomplish it.

The old prophet foretold of our weaknesses in this instance, "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; AND HE THAT EARNETH WAGES EARNETH WAGES TO PUT IT INTO A BAG WITH HOLES. THUS SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS, CONSIDER YOUR WAYS." (Haggai 1:6-7). The Prophet, Malachi, continues the admonition, "Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." (Malachi 3:9). Make no mistake, God does not change! So, He will as surely judge and punish us for our sins, as He judged and punished His people in the days gone by.

May the God or our Salvation lead us to consider our ways and return us unto Himself, Who will have mercy and abundantly pardon: and to His blessed Name be the praise forever.

(Elder) Joshua Tillman (J. T.) Rowe, (Deceased)

(Note: Elder Joshua T. Rowe was an Associate Editor of Zion's Landmark during his life-time, and the above article was an editorial that he wrote for the September 15, 1930, issue of the paper. He was a resident of the City of Baltimore, Maryland, where he lived and resided for many years; he was also pastor of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in this City, (now closed), and Black Rock Church, Butler, Maryland, where his body is interred in the cemetery. Editor).

**IF IT HAD NOT BEEN
THIS WAY, HOW WOULD
IT HAVE BEEN?
(THE DOCTRINE
OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR
EXFOUNDED)**

We take things from the creation to this time and consider them under the head of the above question, and what will be our answer?

I will answer for myself that it is impossible for me to say. For this very cause I must say that I believe that all things have come to pass just as God knew they would come, and that they could not have been in some way which He did not know, and which was not in some way connected with His holy, divine purpose, either in His providence or in His grace.

There are many, yes, very many things for which we can see no use. I do not know why it was in the providence of God that such things should be, and, yet, I see they are there.

The fact that He is almighty, and could have had this or that thing differently, if it had been His holy and divine will to have done so; and to see that He did not have it differently is enough to tell us that it was under His Hand and control, and that He controlled it either directly by His Holy Spirit, or by the hands of second causes. "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Romans 13:1-1.

When God created man, He created them male and female, and, yet there was but one visible being. While in this single state, God blessed them, and gave to them His commandment to, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." Genesis 1:27-28.

Therefore, man received the commandment in both the male and the female, for they were not yet separated into two personages.

Could they, while in that state, have obeyed the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it? No. They must be male and female, and in separate bodies. When the Lord was pleased to make the

woman a separate body from the man, "He caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of His ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man, made He a woman." Genesis 2:21-22. He gave the woman no law after she was separate from her husband. The law was given to them while there was but the one being. Now they are two individuals; were they in a proper condition "To multiply and replenish the earth?" The Lord Jesus said not. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24.

Adam was the corn (grain) of wheat of the human race, and to "multiply and replenish the earth," or to bring forth fruit, he must fall into the ground and die. Just as Jesus, the "Corn of Wheat," of the church of the Living God must also fall into the ground and die to save His people, His bride, from their sins.

We may say where there is no sin, there can be no death, "For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. The Lord does not give that which is not due. Hence, the man must fall into the ground and die a sinner. He could not fall otherwise. Our Jesus must also fall as the sin-bearer. He could not fall otherwise.

All of these things are in the purpose of our Heavenly Father, and all of it came to pass just as He had purposed it. Without His purpose the Corn of wheat of the human race, Adam, could not have fallen, and without his fall, he could not have multiplied as God commanded him. This was for the purpose of development. Then in His purpose, Jesus must die to save His people, the Church, who are brought forth in that development. There is no salvation but by His blood. The sins of the ten thousand times ten thousands and thousands of thousands were laid on Him,

and He bore all of them. This is beyond the finite power of mortal men to comprehend.

If these things had not been in God's divine purpose, why did He prepare a body for His Son? Read Hebrews 10:5, and I quote: "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body has thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure." If there was not to be a need for a divine sacrifice, why should a divine sacrifice be prepared? See both Psalms 40:6-8 and Hebrews 10:5-7, and I quote: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering has thou not required," and many other places. Also, otherwise salvation would have been in some other way than the way it is.

There is no reason for stumbling over this truth. We must abide by the Code of the government of our God. His Providence and His Grace are alike of Him, and we will so see and believe it, if our legs are equal. Solomon said, "The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools." Proverbs 26:7.

What can we say more? Why should we attempt to charge that God is the author of sin because these things are so? To attempt to do so proves that we are not reconciled to God! "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, **BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD.**" (II Corinthians 5:20.) Why should we rebel against that which works together for our good? For our salvation? And that without which we could not be saved?

When Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose," (Romans 8:29), just what did he mean? Did he mean "All Things," as he said it, or did he mean just simply good things? It appears to me that

all we have to do to decide this matter is to decide whether it is a thing, or if it is something other than a thing. He tells us in Romans 11:36, "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen." Then in 1st Corinthians 8:6, he says; "But to us there is but one God, the Father of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." Then in Colossians 1:16 and 17, he tells us, "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible, and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist," Then in Hebrews 2:10, he tells us, "For it became Him, for whom are all things in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Now, may I ask this question: Are these references sufficient? Will this doctrine kill or divide the churches, as some now claim?

Now, we will return to the expression, "There are things in God's wise Providence which come about by a violation of His Holy Law." Now, these are "THINGS", links in the chain by which our dear Lord Jesus came into the world.

There is a curse fixed on the man who will lay with his sister, because the daughter is so near of kin that she was not spoken of in the law. Yet, Lot, in a drunken state, lay with his daughter, and by that cohabitation, she became the mother of Moab. His generation proved to be enemies to Israel, so that a curse is fixed upon that people. "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation, they shall not enter the congregation of the Lord forever." Deut. 23:3. And, yet, in the Providence of God, this very law is violated in the bringing in of Ruth the Moabitess, into the congregation

of the Lord, and she is a link in the chain of events by which our Lord came into the world in the flesh or incarnation.

In Leviticus 18:15, it is recorded concerning a law, "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter-in law," etc. In the Providence of God this law is violated in Judah lying with Tamar who was his daughter-in law, and yet this is a link in the chain of events through which our Lord came into the world.

The Ten Commandments said, "Thou shalt not kill," and "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Exodus 20:13 and 14. Both of these commandments are in the Providence of God, in each case, violated in the case of David, Uriah and Bethsheba, and yet all this is in the chain of events by which our Lord came into the world.

But why should I say more? All these things the Apostle Paul understood them to be of God, by God, and for God; and, also, that all of them are working together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to His purpose.

Here, I want to relate a case which is given to us in the year 1915, in London, England, and which appears to me to be to the point if our legs are equal.

The Chemist's (Druggust's) Mistake

Endeavoring to arrest the attention of those who were passing by, as he stood in the midst of a small crowd at the side of the promenade, an earnest servant of God was telling of the love of God to sinners. But, presently the speaker was interrupted by a rude voice. "That is all wrong; the Bible is false; there is no God and no heaven."

But, notwithstanding the discourteous interruption, the speaker went on with his address until he had finished his discourse. Then the meeting was closed, and the people separated.

We shall follow this interrupter. Poor fellow, his heart was filled with such bitter

enmity against the truth, and he tried to persuade himself, and others too, that religion was all a sham. But it was poor success in spite of his loud talk.

He was a chemist, (druggist), turning into his shop, looked at the clock, and he decided that it was time to close up for the night. But just then, there came a timid, little girl.

"What do you want?," was the impatient question, he asked. "Please, sir, my mother is so very sick, and will you give her this medicine?" "Too late, come back in the morning." "Oh!, please do, she is so sick; please give it to me now."

With a grumble, he made up the prescription, and away went the little girl.

As the chemist proceeded to replace the bottles and turn out the gas, his eyes caught the label on the last bottle he had taken up, and to his horror he saw at once that he had made an awful mistake, and had put in some deadly poison as he compounded her prescription.

He exclaimed aloud, "What can I do; the girl is now home; I know absolutely nothing of her — don't even know where she lives in this metropolis, or who she is? Perhaps her mother has taken it even by now,"

As he thought, the cold perspiration seemed to come out of every pore in his skin, and he just stood there, speechless, in great terror.

While in this condition, he had these thoughts of himself, "What hope, what comfort could there be for one — a man who had publicly stated that he did not believe in God?" In spite of his bold denial, it was just an hour or two later when he was made to fall upon his knees just where he was, behind the counter, and he cried aloud: "O GOD, DON'T LET THAT POOR WOMAN TAKE THAT MEDICINE!"

Now, God, who leads the blind by a way they know not, was surely leading this poor, restless sinner to the knowledge of Himself.

Scarcely able to move in



ELDER LEMUEL H. HARDY
1853 - 1930

Elder L. H. Hardy, author of the article, "If it had not been this way, how would it have been?", served as an ordained minister in the Church from 1877 to 1930, a period of 53 years, which included for this same period of time pastor of Hunting Quarter Primitive Baptist Church, Atlantic, Carteret County, North Carolina. His service as a minister was blessed with great usefulness. He fell dead in the pulpit of Simpson Creek Church, Loris, South Carolina, March 29, 1930, with these words falling from his lips, "Go tell my brethren I died at my post."

utter helplessness, the chemist (druggist) knelt, repeating his prayer.

Just then, he heard someone open the door: Looking up, there stood this same little girl again, the second time, crying.

She said, "Oh! please sir, I am so sorry! I was hurrying home and, stumbling, fell down on the way and broke the bottle. Oh! please Sir, give me some more medicine!"

The chemist (druggist) was overcome with joy, for by God's mercy the child's fall had prevented the terrible thing that he had just recently been fearing most.

He exclaimed aloud, "GOD — yes, there is a God, and, He has, indeed, heard my prayer!" "Yes, my dear, I will quickly (and gladly) give you some more medicine; please do not cry anymore."

With trembling hand and beating heart, with his mind all aglow with wonder and relief, the chemist (druggist) carefully made up the prescription again, and, the little girl gleefully ran off once more, her lips full of thanks and happiness for his willingness to help her!

The lights were put out, the door to the shop locked, and the chemist (druggist) went home to his room to be alone with his God — the God, whom he had treated so terribly in the past, and whose Word had been so mercifully fulfilled in his behalf.

"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." Jeremiah 33:3. To me the above experience of the English chemist (or druggist) is a wonderful evidence of the great works of God. Was it not the purpose of God to bring that chemist (druggist) to a knowledge of His power to save? Was not that the very way He had purposed to do His wonderful work? Yes, there was a mistake made by the chemist (druggist), to be followed by what man calls an "accident," by the little girl, but was there an accident with God? Or did God make any mistake in this matter?

It was the happen of Ruth to light on a part of the field that belonged to Boaz, but was it a happen so with God? Did not God send Ruth to Boaz's field to be the wife of Boaz?

Here, I shall rest the case, feeling that I have written the undeniable truth according to the word of God.

In the hope of and in the love for the truth, I am,
Yours in a blessed hope,
L. H. Hardy (Deceased)
Atlantic, North Carolina

(The circumstances of the above article entitled, "The Chemist's (Druggist's) Mistake," occurred or took place in London, England, sometime during the middle 1800's and the account is believed to have been published in the GOSPEL STANDARD, a publication of the Strict Baptist church in that country.

In England the druggist is called a "Chemist," and his store is called a "shop" rather than a drugstore or pharmacy, as we know it in America, today. We are grateful that such articles have been preserved and left on record for the benefit of the Church

of God throughout the ages of time, as they support and uphold the true doctrine of our omnipotent God.

This excellent article by Elder L. H. Hardy appeared in the October 15, 1922, issue of Zion's Landmark. According to the record, he with his double first cousin, Jesse L. Mewborn, united with Mewborn's Church, where they walked together in July, 1873, almost 122 years ago. Both men were baptized by Elder Shadrack (Shade) Pate of Wayne County, North Carolina, who also walked about 20 miles to serve the Church.

Elder L. H. Hardy was a grandson of Elder Parrott Mewborn, who led in the organization of Mewborn's Church in 1829. Both Elders were true predestinarian Baptists as this article substantiates.

J. M. Mewborn
January 15, 2007

FOUR UNKNOWN THINGS IN SOLOMAN'S WISDOM THAT GOD DID NOT REVEAL TO HIM.
(Proverbs 30:19)

We find on record in II Chronicles 1:10 the words of Solomon, the son of David, entreating the great God of creation, asking Him, saying, "Give me now wisdom and knowledge." God answered Solomon's prayer, replying to him, "Wisdom and knowledge are granted unto thee." II Chronicles 1:12. "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men." "And God said unto Solomon, wisdom and knowledge are granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like." Solomon, himself, recognized the power of wisdom, saying, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom, and with all thy get-

ting, get understanding." (Proverbs 4:7).

Solomon declared, "There be many things which are too wonderful for me," by way of God's revelation to him of the truth, but admitted, "YEA, FOUR (THINGS) WHICH I KNOW NOT." He gives these four, unknown things here, as written in Proverbs 30:19, as follows:

(1) "THE WAY OF AN EAGLE IN THE AIR."

(2) THE WAY OF A SERPENT UPON A ROCK,

(3) THE WAY OF A SHIP IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA, (AND),

(4) THE WAY OF A MAN WITH A MAID."

While the above four instances, as written above, all have natural mysteries beyond the power of the minds of mortal men to comprehend, the wise man, Solomon, admitted freely, although the scriptures having said that he was one of the wisest natural men, if not the wisest of all that ever lived, he did not know them! In the scripture above it is recorded his admission that he did not know them. We will offer here our comments on Nos. 2, 3, and 4 of these unknown things to Solomon, reserving comments on No. 1, a mystery that mortal man has never known, "The Way of An Eagle In the Air", until I close the article below.

(2) The Way Of A Serpent Upon A Rock: We look at a smooth, hard rock, or boulder. It is a marvel wonder that the serpent (or snake) should creep or crawl upward without legs, where it leaves no impression, no marks by which it can be traced, as it may do in soft and sandy places. In the anti-type we see the temptations of Satan, the old serpent, with which he attacked Christ, the great, High ROCK, but could not imprint any sign or tokens of his malice and wickedness upon Him, nor could he find anything in Him to work upon, nor leave any cue or footprint upon Him, the last Adam, (The Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ), as he did the first man, Adam, in the Garden of Eden in the morning of time.

(3) **The Way Of A Ship In The Midst Of The Sea:** It is again a marvel wonder that a ship or vessel should be supported upon the sea or ocean, that it should weather the storms and tempests of it. That it should be steered through the trackless ocean to distant ports and countries, and definitely so when it makes furrows in the waters and divides the powerful waves, when they quickly close in behind it again, and there is no path to be seen in which it goes. There is no visible, beaten road made by it, nor by the many ships that follow in the same course, which a man can see with his own eyes and follow it. But in the anti-type, the natural ship being a figure of the true Church of the Living God, when brought through and distressed with many storms and tempests of persecution, trials, and false doctrine. Yet, it has never suffered mystically any permanent injury or loss, nor will it ever suffer shipwreck, because Christ is always in it and is its eternal Pilot, Anchor and irreplaceable Captain for all of His passengers safely on board, whose port of arrival is the eternal Home in Glory, predetermined and fixed for them before the foundation of the world. He is both Pilot, Captain and Anchor, both sure and steadfast for their souls to take them home to glory on the morn of that blessed day.

(4) **The Way Of A Man With A Maid:** A man has many artful ways and methods he uses to positively get into her (the maid's) company, who is kept in recluse, and to convey the sentiments and affections of his heart unto her to gain her love for him, and to obtain her in an honorable way of marriage; (or to negatively decoy and deceive her, and draw her into impure embrace, which may design the private, secret way of committing fornication with her.) In the anti-type of "The Way Of A Man With A Maid", we think of the early beginnings of Christ's ministry, when He told Joseph and His mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" This

business was to make manifest outwardly before men the betrothal of His beloved bride, The Church, the Lamb's wife of His ministry upon earth, as well as those who would yet be brought by the Holy Ghost after His resurrection and ascension to glory, saying "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." (Jeremiah 31:3). Being called from the ruins of Adam's race, they included then, as well as today, as Christ told John the Baptist, "the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." This Maid, The True Church with Her Husband, Christ, is still pure in her sinless relationship with Him, completely unadulterated, kept and free from the doctrines and teachings of men and devils in this time world.

"The Way Of An Eagle In The Air"

Like the lion, a well-known symbol of both beauty and power, that is said to be the king of beasts, the Eagle, likewise, is said to be the king of the aviary, or bird world. The strength and power of the Eagle with its God-given maneuverability and skill of flight points to and represents the omnipotent power of the Spirit of the Almighty God. The Eagle is one of the largest and most powerful birds in the world. In endeavoring to write upon the subject of the Eagle, we will confine our comments primarily to its mysterious, unknown trait of mastering flight in air and space, as Solomon declared, "The Way Of An Eagle In The Air, I know not."

Many Eagles build their nests on very high, lofty, mountain cliffs and peaks. Jeremiah confirms this fact, "Thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the Eagle." (Jeremiah 49:16). From that very high, elevated and vantage point with its acutely sharp eye of vision, the Eagle can see objects in the air, as well as on the ground,

miles away from its lofty, motionless perch. Some Eagle's visual perception and jurisdiction reaches out, defends and covers a territory of 20 to 60 square miles. Like the all-seeing Eye of God, as the wise man, Solomon said, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good". (Proverbs 15:3); also, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." (II Chronicles 16:9). In likewise contrast, so are the sharp eyes of the Eagle with a tremendous scope of vision, covering within its area of natural habitat and domain. The Eagle's vision takes in every movement and motion of the smallest mouse running below on the ground, or the fish swimming beneath the surface of the water, catching them into its sharp talons in a matter of seconds. The mother Eagle can retrieve the falling eaglet, when she pushes it out of the nest of accumulated corruption at maturity, with the motions of its powerful wingspan of 8 feet, plummeting straight downward at a speed of over 100 miles per hour from a soaring height of 2 miles, catching the tiny mouse or the swimming fish, or securing the safety of her young, that cannot, at that point, fly. Moses so beautifully described this Heavenly action of the Holy Spirit of God in Deuteronomy 32:11, "As an eagle sirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so they will not be destroyed and dashed to pieces on the jagged, sharp rocks and surface that lie on the ground beneath them. This is a wonderful example of God's protecting Hand over His people. He said so when He told Moses in the wilderness to tell the children of Israel, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on EAGLES' WINGS, and brought you unto myself." (Exodus 19:4).



THE BALD EAGLE

The bald eagle, showing here its snowy, white-feathered head, penetrating eye, and powerful beak. Contrary to its name, the American (Bald) Eagle is not at all bald. Its common name comes from the old English word "balde", meaning white, and aptly refers to the snowy white feathers covering its head, which is a figuration of the innocence and purity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. Its powerful, pointed beak contains invisible hooks at the tip that tear up its prey, indicating the power of the Holy Spirit of God in dealing with dead, alien sinners.

The magnificent bald Eagle is the symbol of the United States of America, and was chosen by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in the year 1782. Today, the Eagle appears on the great seal of our President, our coins and money, all currency and coins, all Federal buildings, departments, cabinet heads, and the three branches of the Federal government.

Contrary to its name, the American Eagle is not at all bald. Its common name comes from the Old English word "balde", which means white, and aptly refers to the snowy, white feathers covering the mature bird's head. The white, feathery head of the bald Eagle points to and is a figuration of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church. White in this instance points to the sinless, pure life that He lived when upon this sin-cursed earth and of the many traits and characteristics we have mentioned in this article. The large Eagle's nest, always filled with accumulated corruption and filth, represents and prefigures this natural, putrid, vile world.

The only two eggs, laid each year by the mother Eagle, represent the true Church, where Christ said "where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20). At the appointed time, the mother Eagle necessarily pushes and separates them out of this corrupt nest, and, like us, they will fall; but it is only the Higher Power that saves them from destruction, as we have mentioned already. It is an escape from death to the little one, (by faith), when it first learns to fly during the fall.

Bald Eagles, like the dove, mate for life, and will always cling tenaciously and closely to their chosen, nesting site. So, likewise, do the children of God have only one Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, and will cling closely to Him and their divine habitation, the Church of the Living God, the General Assembly of the first born, wheresoever! This Church, their Heavenly home, is dearer to them than all the world. One glorious day this Church will take its final flight homeward-bound, as described by one in these words,

"There, there on eagle's wing to soar

And sin and sense molest no more;

And Heaven comes down our souls to greet,

And glory crowns the mercy-seat."

J. M. Mewborn
June 21, 2006

HARD TRIALS OF TWO MINISTERS (OR SERVANTS) OF THE LIVING GOD

The following interesting accounts of the trials of two God-called elders (or ministers of the Living God), one almost as by death, are both found recorded today in the historical records of our church. The first one of Elder John Tanner is located in A Concise History of the Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association — Its Original Rise From 1769 to 1803 by Elders Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, pages 58, 59, and 60. The second one of Elder Isaac Hicks is located

in the History of the Sandy Creek Baptist Association, at pages 283-284. The former incident was a threat on the life of Elder John Tanner that was carried out, while the latter one of Elder Isaac Hicks, also a threat on his life, culminated into a wonderful blessing for all parties involved in this incident.

John the Baptist lost his head for being made to stand faithfully for the truth against the adultery of Herod and Herodias. (See Matthew 14:10). Herod had the Apostle James murdered with the sword to please the Jews, and would have killed Peter, but God's Angel intervened and prevented it. (See Acts 12:2). Approximately 1,700 years later Elder John Tanner had his body filled with large buckshot for performing one of the ordinances of the church, baptism, and almost died as a result thereof. The ordeal of his trial is described here:

"Elder John Tanner

A certain woman by the name of Dawson, in the town of Windsor, North Carolina, had reason to hope her soul had been converted, forgiven of her sins, saw baptism to be a duty for a believer to comply with, and expressed a great desire to join the church at Cashie, Bertie County, North Carolina, under the care of Elder Dargan. Her husband, who was violently opposed to it, and a great persecutor, had threatened that if any man baptized his wife, he would shoot him; accordingly, baptism was deferred for some considerable time. At length, Elder Tanner was present at Elder Dargan's meeting, and Mrs. Dawson applied to the church for baptism, expressing her desire to comply with her duty. She related her experience, and was received; and, as Elder Dargan was an infirm man, he generally, when other ministers were present, would apply to them to administer the ordinance in his stead. He, therefore, requested Elder Tanner to perform the ordinance of baptism at this time. Whether Elder Tanner

was apprised of Dawson's threatening or not, or whether he thought it was his duty to obey God rather than man, we are not able to say; but so it was, he baptized Sister Dawson. And, in June following, which was in the year 1777, Elder Tanner was expected to preach at Sandy Run meeting house, and Dawson, hearing of the appointment, came up from Windsor to Norfleet's Ferry, on the Roanoke River. There, he lay in wait near the banks of the river, and when Tanner (who was in company with Elder Dargan) ascended the bank from the ferry landing, Dawson, being a few yards from him, shot him with a large horseman's pistol. Seventeen shot went into his thigh, one of which was a large buckshot, that went through his thigh, and lodged between his breeches and thigh on the other side. Elder Lemuel Burkitt was present when the doctor (who was immediately sent for) took part of the shot out of his thigh. In this wounded condition Elder Tanner was carried to the house of Mr. Elisha Williams, in the town of Scotland Neck, North Carolina, where he lay some weeks, and his life was despaired of; but, through the goodness and mercy of God, he recovered again. Dawson seemed somewhat frightened, fearing Elder Tanner would die, and sent a doctor up to attend him. And after Elder Tanner recovered, he never attempted to seek for any recompense, but submitted to all of it patiently as persecution for Christ's sake." (Burkitt & Read's History, pages 58, 59, and 60.)

"Elder Isaac Hicks

"The conviction, conversion, and baptism of Brother William Drake of Gum Spring Baptist Church, Chatham County, North Carolina, during the year 1802 was of a peculiar nature.

"During an annual meeting of this church on the above date, Mr. Drake's wife had received a hope in the Lord, and requested baptism by the church. This very much enraged the feelings of her

husband, who was very disinclined to religion.

"Previous to the baptism of his wife, he affirmed that, if Elder Hicks drowned his wife (a thing that he was fearful of), he would shoot him. When the baptism took place, he was so much excited that he followed her into the water to a considerable depth, without conscious of it. God blessed the obedience to Christ in the baptism of his wife, to his own conviction. He went home greatly distressed, took to his bed, and was unable to be up for some weeks. He did not know what was the matter, but was certain he would die.

"At his request Elder Hicks came and preached at his house one night. After preaching, he related his experience to the brethren, and was received for baptism. Mr. Drake then said to Elder Hicks, "You must baptize me." Elder Hicks replied, "I will in the morning." "No!" said Mr. Drake, "I ask that it be done right now." Elder Hicks consented. The servants obtained some torches of lightwood, and they all set out for Haw River, which was nearby. Mr. Drake, being unable to walk, was manually carried in the water. After being immersed, he came up out of the water and walked home, happy and rejoicing in the love of Christ, and free from any bodily or mental affliction!

"This statement was made by Brother and Sister Drake, to the writer, at their own fireside. He (Brother Drake) was later set apart and ordained for the office of deacon, where he served faithfully and honorably in this calling the remainder of his life." (End of quote).

Sandy Creek
Baptist Church History,
Pages 283-284

In both instances here of Elder John Tanner and Elder Isaac Hicks it is most evident that the great fear of God had been placed in their hearts by Him. This fear of God is stronger than Satan, death and hell. When it (this Godly Fear) speaks, we will see the manifestation of

God's power in this wise: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: But, rather FEAR HIM who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matthew 10:28). Both Elder John Tanner and Elder Isaac Hicks possessed the latter, The Fear of God in their hearts, and not the fear of man. They were two faithful servants of the most High God.

J. M. Mewborn
August 6, 2006

VICTOR CALVERT PHILLIPS

Victor Calvert Phillips, age 89 years, of Willis, Virginia, went to be with his Lord on Monday, April 24, 2006. He was founder of Phillips Brothers Builders, and constructed numerous, nice homes throughout Floyd and Montgomery Counties, Virginia, until his retirement in 1980. He was also a retired rural mail carrier with the U. S. Postal Service. Our grandfather was an avid woodworker, specializing in clock-making. He made countless clocks and wood treasures for his family, church family, friends and neighbors. He was a very gifted artisan, as a craftsman in his calling.

He was a faithful member and deacon of Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Indian Valley, Floyd County, Virginia. He was blest to share his love and devotion for his church and his Lord and Master. Many were the times when he and Grandma had their home filled with company from their Primitive Baptist church meetings and associations, and they visited many churches of their like faith in the church in several states.

His kind manner and way was gentle with everyone with whom he had contact, and he was highly respected by his business associates in the area of the business world with whom he had almost daily contact in the construction calling.

We, as a family, feel that we are the ones that are truly blessed to have had such a wonderful husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, and great-great grandfather for so many years. He touched us with his courage, patience, his laughter and his wisdom, and most importantly his unconditional love for everyone he met along life's journey.

Now our hearts are aching, our minds have become unclear, and an emptiness has come into our lives that we beg our Heavenly Father to enable us to bear. At last we rejoice, knowing that he can now see again. Praise the Lord! (He was declared legally blind a number of years ago.) We are given to know many people in our natural lives here, who come and go, but then there are those who touch our hearts in such a way that a lasting impression is left inwardly in our souls that will live forever. PaPa will be greatly missed.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Andrew "Curtis" and Lena Phillips, a beloved son, Joe Phillips; grandchildren, Vicki Belcher and Andrew Phillips; great grandchildren, Misty Joe Cox and Alex Love. He is survived by his wife, of 66 years, Nannie T. Phillips; sons, Wayne Phillips, Willis, Va., Nelson and Gelia Phillips, Indian Valley, Va., and Tobias and Kathy Phillips,

Pearisburg; daughter-in-law, Evelyn Phillips; brother, Carlisle Phillips, Willis; grandchildren, Rebecca and Lloyd Cox, Lonnie & Cindy Phillips, Victoria and Michael Barrett, Donna and Tony Quesenberry, Lisa and Steve Love, Mark and Callie Phillips; 18 great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren, with countless family connections and friends.

His funeral service was conducted April 27, 2006, at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Indian Valley, Virginia, with Elder Kenneth Hopkins and Elder Thomas C. Pegram in charge. His body was laid to rest in the Indian Creek Cemetery nearby.

Our Grandma today has a broken heart and is grieving herself to death over losing PaPa. The sixty-six years of their married life were lived every day, side by side, until his death. We hope her many friends, who loved them, will not forget her, and that all of you will remember her in your prayers.

Rebecca Phillips Cox, and,
Victoria Barrett,
their granddaughters
November 7, 2006

(My memory goes back for almost 50 years concerning this fine couple. They had united with Indian Creek Church in the New River Association on May 25, 1957, and that fall (the same year) they came to the Seven Mile Association, held at Bethsaida Church, Harnett County, North Carolina. Elder Golden Harris had baptized them with quite a number of other new members, possibly 15 or more at one time. From reading these sketches of his life, one can see that he was no idle man, having been a Building Contractor, Artisan in wood-working, Clock-maker, Dairy Farmer and Rural Mail Carrier. God richly blest him with a lifetime faithful companion, Sister Nannie Phillips, and a family of loving children. Editor.)

INDIAN VALLEY SWEETHEARTS HAVE BEEN MARRIED 65 YEARS AGO

Victor and Nannie Phillips have known each other all of their lives. They went to the same two-room school, and were both raised and lived in the same neighborhood since birth.

Sixty-five years ago, they said their wedding vows, and when you ask them the secret of their long marriage, you get a couple of replies, "It takes some give and take, that's for sure", says Nannie. The good Lord has been good to us," Victor adds.

Victor and Nannie, both 87, live on Indian Valley Road, Indian Valley, Virginia, in a house he built. In younger years he worked in construction. He later began making wood crafts. He made so many grandfather and mantel clocks for family and friends — "I made everybody in the country one" — he became known as "the clock man". He is still humbly proud of that title.

Born with one bad eye, Victor never let that be a handicap. He was a skilled craftsman and always worked hard in whatever he did. "He was blest with a talent with his hands and he used it", says his oldest granddaughter, Becky Cox. He has now completely lost his eyesight, but he continues to be an inspiration to others, she adds. "Even though PaPa had been blind for nine years, he has a special God-given talent. He now sees with his heart."

Nannie has always worked in the home, where she cared for their children and helped with the family's

small dairy farm. She also has God-given talents she has shared with the others. "Her family has been blessed with her quilts, doilies and afghans," says Cox. "You always looked forward to Christmas because you knew you were getting a handmade item."

Nannie continues to amaze her family by planting a garden and canning the vegetables. She drives Victor and herself to Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church just down the road on fourth Sundays and Saturdays. And as Victor puts it, she also "takes care of the little babies".

The couple's family has now reached several generations. Victor and Nannie had four sons: Joe, who passed away in 1989; Wayne, who resides in Willis; Nelson, who lives in Indian Valley; and Toby, who resides in Pearisburg. The couple has six grandchildren now surviving; two other grandchildren who are deceased, 19 great-grandchildren, five great-great grandchildren and one great-great-great grandchild "on the way." Victor and Nannie both came from big families, too. Nannie was one of nine children, and Victor was one of 12.

Nannie and Victor attended the local, two-room Wade School. "He'd help me with my arithmetic." Although school only went to the seventh grade in those times, students could go as long as they wished. Nannie liked it so much she kept "repeating" the seventh grade voluntarily. She went two extra years until she got "bored" and quit.

Both walked about three to four miles ("depending on which way you went") to school every day. "You had a time getting a little education" back then, Victor remembers.

Nannie did not realize Victor was interested in her until he kept showing up to visit her brothers at her home. "Mama told me, 'he's coming to see you'". Victor says he knew Nannie was the one for him "right from the start."

The couple courted in her family's parlor. At first he walked to get to her house. In his later years, as a teenager, her was able to purchase a Model A Ford.

On July 15, 1939, the two went to the courthouse to get a marriage license. They say they had really not talked about the possibility of getting married that day. A Brethren preacher, Waddie Akers, "came slipping in behind us," remembers Nannie. "Well, you're here, you might as well marry us now," Victor told him. The preacher performed the ceremony, and then Victor says he gave him five dollars.

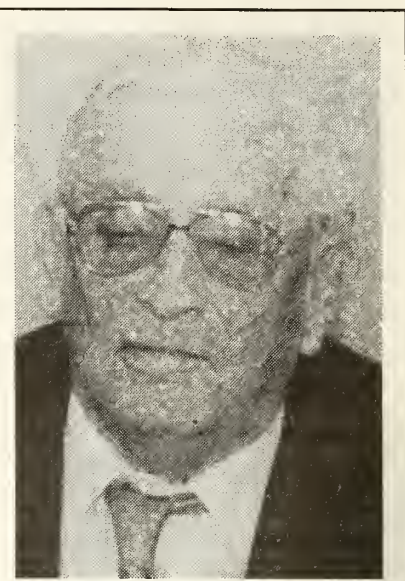
The couple has lived their entire lives in Floyd County, Virginia, and although they have enjoyed traveling in the past throughout the south, mostly to attend various Primitive Baptist church meetings in several states, they have never strayed far from home.

One time, Victor's work took him to another state, but that did not work out, Nannie says. "He went to West Virginia to work. He told me he thought about me so much, he couldn't stay there." "No," Victor says, "that trip up there did not last long."

By Wanda Combs, Editor
THE FLOYD PRESS
Floyd, Virginia
(Taken from a July, 1995, issue)

VICTOR C. PHILLIPS

The Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Indian Valley, Floyd County, Virginia, bows in humble submission to the will of our Lord in the calling



VICTOR C. PHILLIPS
1917 - 2006

home of our brother and friend, Brother Victor Calvert Phillips.

He was born March 23, 1917, and was called from us to his heavenly home April 24, 2006, making his stay on earth 89 years. He was preceded in death by his parents, Andrew "Curtis" and Lena Phillips; a beloved son, Joe Phillips, and grandchildren, Vickie Belcher, and Andrew Phillips; great grandchildren, Misty Joe Cox and Alex Love. Survivors include his wife of 66 years, Sister Nannie T. Phillips; three sons, Wayne, Nelson and Tobias Phillips; one brother, Carlisle Phillips, six grandchildren, eighteen great-grandchildren, and six great-great-grandchildren.

Brother Victor joined Indian Creek Church on May 25, 1957, and was baptized on June 23, 1957, by his pastor, Elder G. P. Harris. He was ordained to serve as deacon of Indian Creek Church on April 26, 1986, and was blest in serve in this capacity until his death. He had also served as Clerk and Assistant Clerk of the church.

Brother Victor was the founder of Phillips Brothers Builders' and constructed numerous homes throughout both Floyd and Montgomery Counties, Virginia. In 1978 the Phillips Brothers' Company built the present Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church (meeting house). Before Brother Victor lost his eyesight, he hand-crafted many, many beautiful clocks for family, church members and friends. Brother Victor was blest to travel many, many miles to corresponding churches and associations in several states, and believed firmly in the doctrine of Salvation alone by the grace of God. He showed his love for his church, family and many friends.

His funeral service was held at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church at 11:00 a.m. on April 27, 2006, by his pastor, Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins, and Elder Thomas C. Pegram. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour. Arrangements were handled by Maberry Funeral Home, Floyd, Virginia.

Done by order of Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church in conference on May 22, 2006. Resolved, therefore, that one copy be given to his family, one copy to the Signs of the Times, one copy to Zion's Landmark, and one copy for the church record.

J. B. Mitchell, Jr., and
Jean Mitchell, Committee
Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins,
Moderator